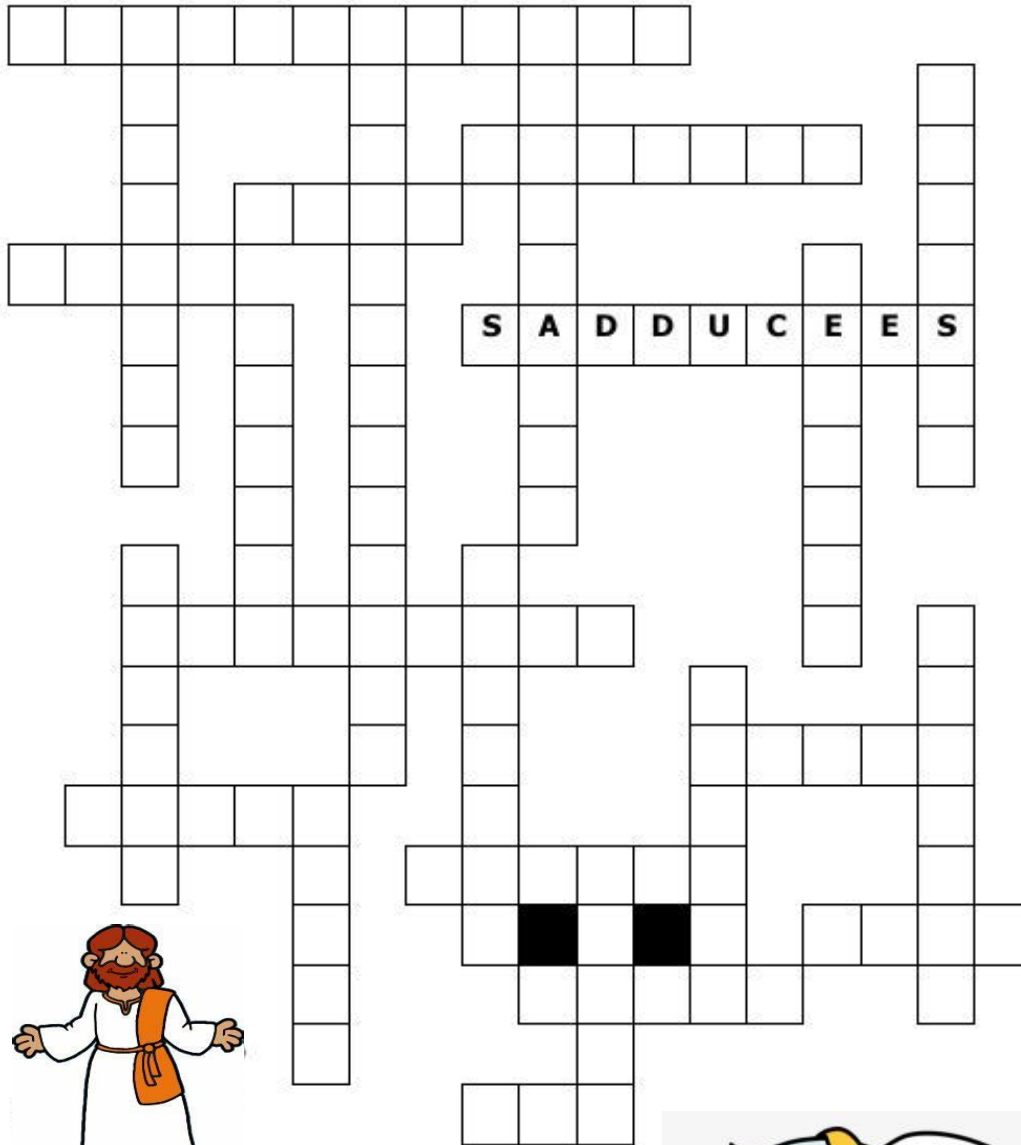


# CLUELESS CROSSWORD

This crossword has no clues! Fill in the squares according to the length of the word.  
We've filled in one word to get you started.



## 3 letter words

God

## 4 letter words

Holy

John

Plot

## 5 letter words

Faith

Guard

Jesus

Peter

Satan

## 6 letter words

Beggar

Isreal

Nation

Spirit

## 7 letter words

Ananias

Miracle

Priests

Prophet

Servant

## 8 letter words

Sapphira

## 12 letter words

resurrection

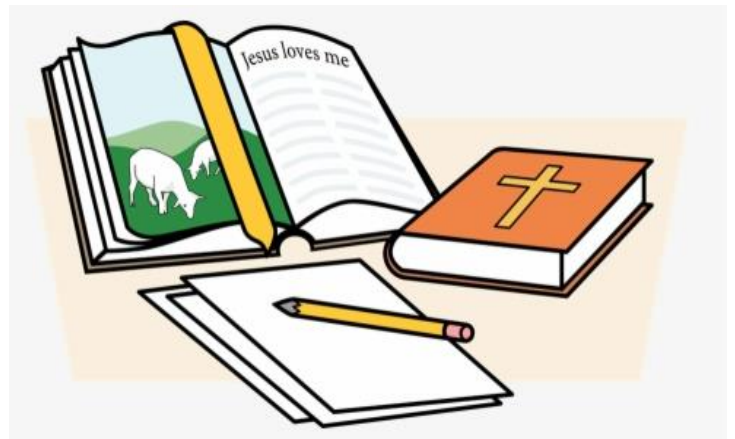
## 9 letter words

Ignorance

Sanhedrin

## 13 letter words

encouragement



# February 2025 Newsletter

## “On Wings Like Eagles”

...but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength  
They shall mount up with *wings like eagles*,  
They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.  
Isaiah 40:31



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
PO Box 2, 772 St. Johns Road  
Saint Johns, PA 18247

Church Office Phone Number: 570.788.2685

Email: [stjohns@epix.net](mailto:stjohns@epix.net)

Facebook: [SJELC.StJohnsPA](https://www.facebook.com/SJELC.StJohnsPA)

Website: [www.sjlutheran.org](http://www.sjlutheran.org)



Pastor Designate: Reverend Michele Kaufman

Organist: Brenda Zimmerman

Church Secretary: Rose Fox

Phone: 570-788-2685

Office Hours: M-W 9 am to 1 pm; F – 9 am to 12 pm

### Our Purpose

(Our sense of what God is calling us to be and do in the mission of the Church)

**God's purpose for our congregation is to be a Christ-centered community, glorifying God and sharing the gospel and blessings with our neighbors.**

### Sunday Mornings

Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am

Youth Sunday School is held at 10 am/during Worship

Coffee Hour following Worship on the first Sunday of the month

### Catechism Classes

Catechism Classes for youth in grades 6, 7, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades is available.

Parents and P. Kaufman agree to a schedule that is compatible for all.

**All are invited to join us for our worship/fellowship opportunities.**

## **Contact Information**

**Pastor Michele Kaufman – Pastor Designate**

**Phone Number: 570-881-2371**

If you have a pastoral need such as a request for a hospital visit, pastoral care need, or spiritual counseling, please contact P. Kaufman.

For other requests such as a baptism, funeral, or wedding, please contact the church office @ 570-788-2685. If necessary, please leave a message including your full name, phone number, the reason for your call, and the best time to contact you.

## **2025 Church Council Members**

*(The council positions /officers to be announced)*

**Janet Brady**

**Jennifer Cipriani**

**Melody Hinderer**

**Jan Jacobus**

**Jane Krouse**

**Patty Phile**

**Betty Wenner**

**Donald Wenner, Jr.**

**Donald Wenner, Sr.**

## **Church Ministries – See Calendar for Scheduled Meetings/Events**

**Finance Team – TBA, Chairperson**

**Lay Eucharistic Ministry Team: Melody Hinderer, Judy Mundie**

**Learning Ministry Team: Donna Cassarella, Chairperson**

**Prayer Circle Ministry: Kim Deliman, Chairperson**

**Prayer Shawl Ministry: TBA, Chairperson**

**Property Team: Jim Cassarella, Chairperson**

**S.E.R.V.E. Ministry: Donna Cassarella, Melody Hinderer, Co-Chairpersons**

**Worship and Music Ministry Team: TBA, Chairperson**

**We offer many opportunities for ministry. If interested, please contact the church office, a council member, or the chairperson(s) listed above.**



### **From Pastor Michele Kaufman:**

*Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you . . .”* Isaiah 60:1

We are now in the season of Epiphany. Epiphany begins with the wise men following a distant light and continues through the celebration of the Transfiguration--when we see Jesus in all his glory.

Epiphany is not only a season of the church year; it has also crept into secular usage. When we say that someone has had an epiphany, we usually mean that that person has had a moment in which they have achieved a realization, an awareness or a knowledge of something, after which events are thrown into a new light. Such epiphanies may be life-changing. The symbol of light is an appropriate one in this, the darkest season of the year. Light is a favorite symbol throughout the Scriptures. Christ said about our witness that we do not light a candle and put it under a bushel. Christ himself is seen as the light of the world. When Isaiah sought to proclaim the coming of the anointed one of God, he declared, “Arise shine your light is come (60:1). During this season we read stories of how Christ is revealed to the world. For those who experience his “presence”, they have that “ah ha” moment; that “there you are Jesus”.

Christ is our light and in him is no darkness at all. For just as light is the appropriate symbol for Christ, darkness is the appropriate symbol for a world without Christ. Professor Harold DeWolf, in his book *The Religious Revolt Against Reason*, tells of an experience he had as a young man. He went swimming at midnight one night with a friend in the Atlantic Ocean at Massachusetts Bay. He said the water was full of phosphorescent light. Every dip of his hand in the water produced something like “a circle of flashing gems and every breaker looked like a cascade of fireworks.” To ride the waves they went out some distance from the shore. Then turning toward land DeWolf was gripped by a strange fear. The lights from the shore no longer shone. So he looked up to the sky to get his bearings. But the sky was like the water--full of the spectacular confusion of the northern lights. “No star was visible. Then panic overtook him, for in all that glittering display there was no fixed reality. He could not tell the way to shore. He started back with a helpless terror engulfing him.” He learned that, with no fixed star to guide him, it was almost impossible to chart out his course. Thank God we have a star to follow. It is the same star that guided the magi long ago. It is the light of Christ. Christ is our dependable guide, whose love never fails.



## **PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH**

**Almighty God,**

**My parish family is composed of people like me.**

**I help make it what it is.**

**It will be friendly, if I am.**

**Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.**

**It will do great work, if I work.**

**It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver.**

**It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, if I invite and bring them.**

**It will be a parish family of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a parish with a noble spirit, if I, who make it what it is, and filled with these same qualities.**

**Therefore, with the help of God-**

**I will dedicate myself to the task of being all the things that I want my parish family to be.**

**Bless my journey Lord God, that I might build the Church through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**AMEN**

## Highlights from the Church Council Meeting on January 9, 2025

**Attendance for December:** P. Michele Kaufman, Melody Hinderer, Jan Jacobus, Jane Krouse, Donna Cassarella, Jim Cassarella, Jennifer Cipriani, Sherry Grenzberg Excused: Patty Phile

**Treasurer's Report:** Approved December 2024 bills.

- Discussion held concerning how to pay P. Fairchild and P. Mundie that would best benefit them tax-wise. P. Fairchild will be paid with a 1099 Form, P. Mundie will be considered a Part-Time employee and will receive a W2.
- Bank year-end statements have not been received to complete the 2024 financial reports.

**Cemetery Treasurer's Report:** No report

**Council Minutes:** Church Council Minutes of December 12, 2024, approved with a correction that Sherry Grenzberg is excused from the December 2024 meeting.

**Pastor's Report:** Approved December 2004 hours: 32.5, miles 319

- Blue Christmas Service, few attended.
- Fritzingertown Services are being held monthly. Pastor Michele is requesting a set schedule to have the services.
- Chat & Chew Meeting, January 22<sup>nd</sup> from 6-8 pm @ Christ Lutheran Conyngham. The Bishop will be there along with Deacon Kat Tigerman. The meeting is open to everyone.

**Worship Team: Chairperson needed.**

- Supply Pastor Schedule for February 2025:  
February 2nd: P. John Hazel, Jr.  
February 9th: P. Chip Fairchild  
February 16th: P. Mel Mundie  
February 23rd: P. Chip Fairchild

**SERVE Team: Donna Cassarella and Melody Hinderer – Co-Chairpersons**

- Next Meeting Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 @ 6:30 pm
- No Craft/Bake Sale this spring.

**Learning Ministry Team: Donna Cassarella – Chairperson**

- SS began again on Jan 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Adult Bible Study resumed Jan 12<sup>th</sup>, Dr. David Jeremiah's "The Coming Golden Age"
- Meeting to be scheduled in Feb to discuss VBS

**Property Team: Jim Cassarella – Chairperson**

- Heating issues in the Shuster Education Wing will be addressed when time allows.
- Disposable toilet seat covers are installed in the restrooms.
- Suggestion for our parking lot to have lines painted.
- Water coolers need to be cleaned or replaced
- Elevator needs to be inspected
- Broken chairs in Luther Hall need to be thrown out

**LCW:** Meeting held on December 29<sup>th</sup> to officially close the checking account.

- All monies left at the end of the year will be put in the Mundie Fund to be used at councils' discretion.

**Lay Eucharist:** Melody Hinderer and Judy Mundie

- Along with Betty Kushner, visits were made on Friday, Jan 10<sup>th</sup>, members will receive the Anniversary memorabilia that were received on the day of the Anniversary service on Oct 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Call Committee Team: Melody Hinderer, Chairperson – No update**

- Members: Jim Cassarella, Jane Krouse, David Leitner, Judy Mundie, Sheila Maslo

Continuation of church council meeting...

**Carillon Team:** Members: Dave Cunfer, Judy Mundie, Arlene Poltrock, Peggy Hawk, and Sherry Grenzberg.

- No update.

**225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Team: Melody Hinderer – Chairperson**

- Time capsule burials will be held in the spring.

**Old Business:**

- Melody Hinderer applied for a \$ 500 Grant from the Hazleton/Lehighon Mission District to help pay for food supplies for the Divine Providence in Hazleton.
- Feb 26, 2025, is the next scheduled meeting for the Hazleton/Lehighon Mission District.
- Possible meeting with Thrivent to be held.
- Annual meeting Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, quorum needed of 15 voting members

**New Business:**

- 25 nominations received for church council; 5 have consented to have their names placed on the ballot: Janet Brady, Jenifer Cipriani, Betty Wenner, Don Wenner, Sr., and Don Wenner, Jr.
- All are 3-year terms.
- Book Tree to be completed by spring.
- Outdoor Free Library at our church was discussed.
- Melody thanked Donna and Jim Cassarella (6 years), and Sherry Grenzberg (3 years) for their service on the church council.

The next council meeting is February 13<sup>h</sup>, 2025 @ 7 pm.

The meeting adjourned @ 8:16 pm; and closed the meeting by praying the Lord’s Prayer.

\*\*\*\*\*

**February Supply**

**Pastor Schedule**

2 - Rev. John Hazel, Jr.  
 9 - Rev. Chip Fairchild  
 16 -Rev. Melvin Mundie  
 23 - Rev. Chip Fairchild

**Altar Flower Sponsors**

In Honor of Don & Betty Wenner’s Anniversary  
 In Loving Memory of Lucille Boyer by Family  
 In Loving Memory of Pricilla (Chich) Mundie by her brother & sisters  
 Sponsored by Brenda Zimmerman

**Bulletin Sponsor for the weeks in February: The Mundie Family**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Bulletin Sponsors**

You may sponsor our weekly church bulletins for 2025. The cost for one week is \$10.00. Available Dates Chart and forms are available in the St. Stephen’s room. Please fill out the form along with your check payable to St. John’s Lutheran Church and return it to our church secretary. **All weeks in April are available.**



\*\*\*\*\*

**2025 Altar Flower Chart**



A reminder that our 2025 Altar Flower chart is available in the St. Stephen’s Room. Several Sundays are still open to sponsor flowers, but they are starting to fill up. **Dates available to sponsor are March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.**

## February Birthdays and Baptisms Celebrations

We publish these celebrations with permission and information given by our members. If your celebration is missing from our list, please call the church secretary with the information and your information will be updated. Thank you!



Feb. 1 - Karen Schell Howley  
 Feb. 1 – Sheri Klick  
 Feb. 7 – Donald Wenner Sr.  
 Feb. 8 – Debra Fulton  
 Feb. 20 – Betty Wenner  
 Feb. 27 – Brad Koch  
 Feb. 28 – Betty Kushner  
 Feb. 28 – Matthew Barbush

Feb. 6 – Jared Crawford  
 Feb. 10 – Camden Coxe  
 Feb. 14 - Arlene Poltrock  
 Feb. 15 – Shelia Maslo  
 Dawn Klick

Feb. 1 – Betty and Donald  
 Wenner Sr.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Monthly Coffee Hour

The next Coffee Hour will be on **February 2<sup>nd</sup>** celebrating the February birthdays sponsored by the S.E.R.V.E. Committee. A another coffee hour will be held on **February 9<sup>th</sup>** hosted by the Scouts. If you are interested in sponsoring the month of March, please sign up in the St. Stephen’s Room.



\*\*\*\*\*

### Kid’s Night

Come out and join us for Kids' Night, on **Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 pm.** All are welcome. Please contact the church office to register.



\*\*\*\*\*

### Valley Food Pantry



Thank you for supporting the Valley Interfaith Food Pantry. There is a growing need for personal care items, and the Valley Food Pantry has decided to have a distribution of these items every 3-4 months, it will be held in February. All the churches are asked to donate. Items suggested are lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap, deodorant, hand sanitizer, shampoo/conditioner, feminine products, and shaving cream. Food items needed are coffee, tea, pasta, tomato sauce, canned vegetables, canned fruit, jelly, snack crackers, and paper products (toilet paper & paper towels). **Please make sure the products are within the expiration date.** No medications/vitamins, etc., are accepted.



## Prayer Shawl Ministry



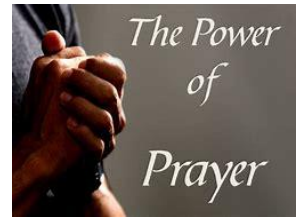
Do you knit or crochet? We meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month for about 2 hours. If the winter weather is bad or for some reason we aren't meeting, we will call. If interested, call the church office at 570-788-2685.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Prayer Circle

Mark 11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours

Do you have a prayer request for yourself or someone else? Please contact Kim Deliman at 570-788-4459. Tell me if you would like the prayer request to be included in the bulletin and placed on the prayer circle list? Do you want to be contacted by Pastor Michele Kaufman? You may also call the church office or, sign the Prayer Request list located on the table in the St. Stephen's Room.



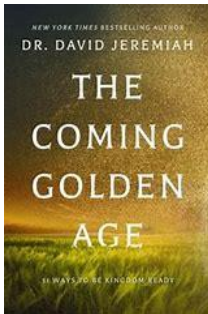
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## Adult Bible Study

### **THE COMING GOLDEN AGE**

BY Dr. David Jeremiah

**Imagine a Thousand Years of Peace on Earth.**



Our world longs for peace. For an end to wars and conflicts. And yet peace is elusive, and our hope often feels light years away. But what if the promise of the victorious return of Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom can offer us the peace we need to face today—to get us through this moment?

In this Bible study, trusted Bible teacher and pastor Dr. David Jeremiah unfolds the Second Coming of Christ and His millennium reign here on earth with stunning clarity while also showing how the correct interpretation of these pivotal events changes how we live in the here and now. Join us on Sundays at 8:45 am.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Reimbursement Forms

New for 2025 – If you need to request a reimbursement for expenses paid personally for the church or you are submitting a bill to be paid directly to a vendor for items you picked up, please complete a Check Request and Payment Approval Form, available outside the office in a marked mailbox slot, and place the form and the receipt(s) in Jennifer's mailbox. A check will not be issued without an approval form.



## The Kindness Tree

During the month of February, the SERVE Team will be selling “hearts” for \$ 1.00.

Members can purchase a heart in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone.

Every heart sold will be placed on **The Kindness Tree** located in the St. Stephen’s Room.

The SERVE Team will meet in late January and decide where the profits from this sale will go to. The congregation will be informed once that decision is made.



\*\*\*\*\*

## “Souper Bowl” Sunday – February 9<sup>th</sup>

What we know for sure, is that our members love football, no more exciting than if your team has won enough games to reach the championship game to be held in New Orleans Ceasar’s Superdome.

We, at St. John’s, support the ELCA Hunger Appeal every year which has their own version of the championship game. Our version is a special event called the “Souper Bowl”.

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, we will take up a special collection which will go towards those whose stomachs are not full, those who are suffering from malnutrition, those who have no idea where their next meal is coming from.

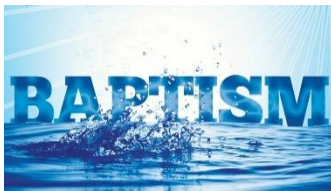
The ELCA Hunger Appeal wants every person to win. By that, I mean, that all should be fulfilled.... fulfilled as no hungry men, women, or children in this world.

Our giving does and has made a difference in our world. Let’s not give up that one day, there will be no one hungry. Until then, please consider giving to the “Souper Bowl” collection on February 9<sup>th</sup>.



\*\*\*\*\*

## Baptism



On January 26th, St. John’s celebrated the baptism of **Nora Brooke Kresge**. She is the daughter of Elizabeth and Joshua Kresge. Please welcome our newest member by baptism and hope of the future.

# Running on



You're invited!



Join us at  
Sunday School  
(for ages 3-12)

**Our Sunday  
School time  
has  
Changed to  
10:00 am**

Bring your child/grandchild to our new Sunday School Program where they can learn about God's love through interactive stories, songs, and activities.

We begin in the main worship service and then they are released to go to their classroom following brief words from the pastor.

We look forward to welcoming your child/grandchild to our fun and supportive learning environment.





  
**BEAR CREEK CAMP**  
**SUMMER 2025**

**SUMMER CAMP:**

Our week-long overnight program for grades 1-12 is centered on spiritual growth, outdoor living, and small group development.

**FAMILY CAMP:**

Experience the many amazing things that camp has to offer with your family.

**ARTIST'S RETREAT:**

Surround yourself with the beauty of nature to support and inspire your art.

**JOIN US THIS SUMMER!** 

- SESSION 1: June 15 - 20 \*
- SESSION 2: June 22 - 27 \*
- SESSION 3: June 29 - July 4 \*
- SESSION 4: July 6 - 11 \*\*
- SESSION 5: July 13 - 18 \*
- SESSION 6: July 20 - 25 \*
- SESSION 7: July 27 - August 1 \*
- SESSION 8: August 3 - 8 \*

\* Try Camp is available (Sun. to Wed.)  
 + Family Camp, Artist's Retreat  
 # Rafting trip option available

 /BearCreekCampOfficialPage   
  @BearCreekCamp

Learn more and register online:  
[bearcreekcamp.org](http://bearcreekcamp.org)

**LEARN  
 MORE  
 AT:**



**If you know of family or friends that would be interested in attending, please call the church office for more information at 570-788-2685.**



## Engaging the Stranger Within: The Northeastern PA Synod's Racial Justice Work

Growing up in the American South, much of what was taught about racism dealt with history-slavery, annexation, Jim Crow, and integration. What (and how) we were taught in school, and the ways our community and churches remained unofficially segregated were "just the way things were." There was a disconnect between the way things were and *why*. Racism was something that had happened, and we were living in the status quo of the Civil Rights Movement. And with that history focused so heavily in the South, it was like racism was somehow localized and intensified in that region, and we were more directly impacted by its legacy.



The privilege of my seminary formation and exposure to different contexts have shown just how limited my awareness of racism's pervasiveness extends. Racism is a part of every community, congregation, home, and heart. It isn't localized more intensely in one place or another. Our communities, workplaces, and churches in Northeastern Pennsylvania face the same legacy and challenges of confronting racist prejudices and practices, even if they expose themselves in different ways.

Cultural isolationism, unawareness of our past and current exploitation of the Lenni Lenape and Delaware peoples, emphasis on the immigrant heritage of our congregations while dismissing immigrant communities across the street, and an apathy to acts of violence against persons of color permeates our pews. Confronting personal, local, regional, and national instances of racial prejudice

is as important now as ever. The gospel gives us the assurance that the way things are is not how God calls us to be. To get from here to there, we need help learning what we don't know, and hearing firsthand from our neighbors how we can work together to resist racism.

Through your Mission Support generosity, our Synod has the opportunity to walk together in more intentional ways as we learn about our communities' and congregations' complicity in racial prejudice and work for racial justice. Loving the land we steward in Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and the people who occupy it, and healing the hurt of our ancestral and contemporary practices, begins with engaging the stranger we do not wish to see in ourselves so that we can better engage the stranger we do not currently see in our neighbors.



Pastor Jennifer Hall and Pastor Samantha Drennan at the 2024 youth pre-gathering event representing the Racial Justice Team

Racial Justice Boundary Training for rostered leaders, Synod Council and Staff, and congregational lay leaders has been an invaluable resource for beginning this work in our Synod. In January, we collaborated with [Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley](#) and our own Synod's [LGBTQ Task Force](#) at the Lutheran Center for a day of worship and action called MLK Jr. Day of Prayer and Service. Partnership with [Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Pennsylvania \(LAMPa\)](#), [Liberty Lutheran's](#) MLK Day of Service, and local ecumenical and interfaith agencies committed to the course of justice in our neighborhood are but a few crucial ways we are already naming and confronting racism together as Christ's church, along with our

support of the [ELCA's Truth and Healing Movement](#). All of these endeavors are bolstered by your Mission Support giving, and reflect our shared commitment to growing together as disciples of Jesus who are gospel filled and Spirit led.

Just as the Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed (Psalm 103:6), so too does God charge the people with upholding the cause of justice for those most vulnerable (Deuteronomy 16:19-20; 24:17). To get involved in our shared work of racial justice and reconciliation, [reach out to a member of our Synod's Racial Justice Team](#), participate in local or regional educational opportunities with partnering colleges and universities, confront practices that reinforce barriers based on race and ethnicity, and have conversations with other disciples in your congregation about how your baptized community can work for justice and peace in in the world.

*Submitted by: The Rev. Brandon M. Heavner, Weisenberg- New Tripoli, NEPA Synod Racial Justice Team*

**DID YOU KNOW** that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's directions of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the values of Loving, Healing, and Engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit [godslove.org/missionsupport](http://godslove.org/missionsupport).

A banner for Racial Justice Training. On the left, the words 'RACIAL JUSTICE TRAINING' are written in large, bold, white letters on a dark background. Below this text are three small icons: a heart with roots, a heart with a cross, and a heart with hands. In the center, a stack of hands in various skin tones is shown, symbolizing unity and support. On the right, a QR code is visible. At the bottom right of the banner, the date 'FEBRUARY 8' is written in large, bold, white letters.

All Northeastern PA Synod rostered leaders (pastors, deacons, and synodically-authorized lay leaders) are required to have **Anti-Racism** at least once every three years. Training will be presented by The Rev. Carla Christopher.

**9:30AM TO 3:00PM**  
**LUTHERAN CENTER**  
 2354 GROVE ROAD, ALLENTOWN  
 For more information & how to register, visit [godslove.org/racial-justice-training](http://godslove.org/racial-justice-training)



- 2 – Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Coffee Hour
- 3 – Scouts @ 6 pm
- 5 – Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am
- 9 – Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Scouts Sunday;  
“Souper Bowl” ELCA Hunger Appeal collection; Coffee Hour hosted by the Scouts
- 10 – Scouts @ 6 pm
- 11 – Kids Night @ 6
- 13 – Church Council Meeting @ 7 pm
- 15 – March Newsletter Deadline
- 16 – Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am
- 17 – Scouts @ 6 pm; Presidents’ Day
- 19 – Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am
- 23 – Church & Sunday School @ 10 am
- 24 – Scouts @ 6 pm
- 27 – S.E.R.V.E. Meeting @ 6:30 pm

