



Mothers in the Bible Trivia

Can you choose the right mother for each question?

1. Who is the first mother mentioned in the Bible?
a. Eve b. Rachel c. Lilith d. Sarah
2. Whose mother-in-law did Jesus heal?
a. Peter b. James c. Matthew d. John
3. Whose mother placed him in an ark of bulrushes?
a. Moses b. David c. Joseph d. Paul
4. Which mother in the Bible had a set of twins?
a. Mary b. Sarai c. Rebecca d. Elizabeth
5. Which disciple did Paul commend for having the same faith his mother had?
a. Silas b. Timothy c. Luke d. Mark
6. Whose mother took him a little coat once a year?
a. Samuel b. David c. Jesus d. Samson
7. What did Athaliah do when she saw her son, Ahaziah, was dead?
a. Destroyed her husband b. Held a huge feast
c. Put on sackcloth and ashes and wept d. Destroyed the rest of the royal family
8. Who instructed her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptist?
a. Salome b. Maray Magdalena c. Herodias d. Martha
9. Whose mother drank no wind or strong drink during her pregnancy?
a. Barak b. Samson c. Isaac d. Joseph
10. Which female judge described herself as "a mother in Israel"?
a. Delilah b. Rachel c. Rahab d. Deborah
11. Which Israelite woman had two Moabite daughters-in-law?
a. Rachel b. Naomi c. Rebekah d. Bethsheba
12. Whose mother got him a wife from Egypt?
a. Ishmael b. Esau c. Jacob d. Isaac

Answers on Pg.16



May 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
Facebook: [SJELC.StJohnsPA](https://www.facebook.com/SJELC.StJohnsPA)
Website: 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 (last class is May 18th)

Catechism Classes

Catechism Classes for youth in grades 6, 7, and 8th 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 Officers/Members

Don Wenner, Jr. - President

Melody Hinderer - Vice President

Jane Krouse - Secretary

Jan Jacobus - Assistant Secretary

Jennifer Cipriani - Treasurer

Sherry Grenzberg - Assistant Treasurer (not on Council)

Janet Brady

Patty Phile

Betty Wenner

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, Chairperson

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:

The church was filled to capacity; voices raised in song and the excitement and enthusiasm that filled the space, you can't help but feel the joy of Easter Sunday. On Monday, someone reflected on all the events that had transpired over the weekend and said, "If only they were all there next week and every Sunday after." Is that too much to ask? Why is it that we willingly and actively invest in other aspects of our life, but so often fail to invest in our spiritual welfare. Can't every Sunday be Easter Sunday? A time to celebrate the joy and fellowship of our Christian community? A time to pause from the hectic world to contemplate and strengthen our relationship with God?

The sabbath is a time of joy, a time to engage with God, and with each other in praise, to take time out from time, in which we are scheduled, and busy, and focused on doing, and to take time to enter into God-time, that fullness of time, in which we just can "be," in which the Eternal presence of God interrupts time for a brief time, and we can leave all that interrupts us, bothers us, worries us, harms us behind us, and revel in the joy of God's presence and power. We can take time out of time to recognize the hand and the outstretched arm of God in our lives, and to feel God's smiling face upon us, blessing us and renewing us.

I am an extrovert. Surprised? I suppose not. But even I on that occasionally Sunday morning have to pull myself out of bed and get myself ready for church. And yet, once I get there, my mood changes and I am energized by your presence and the conversations that take place. One day following service, I had to drop off some paperwork to someone in town who just happened to attend another church. Of course, I was in a jovial mood, and that person said to me, "Oh you're happy today...must have had communion!" And my response was "Yes we did, but that little bit of wine has nothing to do with my mood. Maybe you should try my brand of religion!"

I suppose it's like everything else in life; you get out of it what you put into it. And personally, I believe we walk away gaining more than we invest when we allow God to work in and through us. The Sabbath is a time to engage with the almighty God personally and relationally, to feel God's blessings, to radiate God's joy with our hearts, souls, and voices. You mean, the Sabbath day isn't just our day off from work to sleep in, get a little R&R, get me some "me time"? If only that were true. My understanding is Sunday for many becomes one more day to be filled with everything else that doesn't get done the rest of the week.

Trust me on this: invest in your spiritual well-being and everything else will fall into place or as the Psalmist says: "Be still and know that I am God" (46:10).

President's Corner:

Hi St. John's and Friends.

As spring moves into summer and folks are about, be mindful of the heat and weather conditions. Stay safe and watch out for those around you. You can see from the April Council meeting minutes below, that our congregation has been very busy and will be going through the summer.

Treasurer's Report March: All approved.

Minutes: March 13, 2025 Council Meeting: All approved.

Special Congregational Meeting Minutes, Carillon: March 30, 2025: All approved.

Minutes: January 26, 2025 Council Meeting, Officer Selection: All approved.

Cemetery Treasurer's Report: no report

Pastor Kaufman's Report/Mileage Report: March 2025. All approved.

- Pastor Oliver Brown's church in Hobbie may be leaving the ELCA. They will be having another vote.
- Pastor did a few shut-in visits and communion in March and is going to Fritzingertown next week before they leave for vacation.
- Pastor will be away from April 27th to May 8th. ***Please call the church office if a need arises. Rose or I will contact the person covering for her. When the office is closed, all calls are forwarded to me.***

Team Reports

Worship and Music: Next meeting May 13th @ 10:30 am.

May Supply Pastors:

May 4th: Pastor Chip Fairchild

May 11th: Pastor Virginia Heimer

May 18th: TBD

May 25th: Pastor John Hazel, Jr.

S.E.R.V.E. Team: Chairperson Donna Cassarella

- For Memorial Day, red, white and blue pinwheels can be purchased for \$1 in honor/memory of loved ones until May 25th. The proceeds will benefit PA Wounded Warriors.
- A collection for "Holy Joe's Café" will be set up in the St. Stephen's Room through the month of September.
- A collection for VBS will be held in June and another collection will be taken in July for Lutheran Services Carolinas (Asheville).
- The Sausage Supper is on Saturday, May 3rd. Ticket sellers and helpers are needed, along with 600 cupcakes.
- A Spring Mother/Daughter Tea is being considered.
- Saturday, June 14th we will be having the Men's Breakfast for Father's Day.
- Donna asked about having the church service at the Sauer Lake prior to the annual picnic on Sunday July 20th. A discussion was held regarding proceeding with this idea. We would need to set up an Altar with a cross, a white tablecloth and 2 candles. The S.E.R.V.E. Team will discuss further at their next meeting on April 24th at 6:30 p.m. and bring to Council next month to vote on it.

Learning Ministry Team: Chairperson Donna Cassarella.

- VBS: being planned for a "Cave Quest" program. The Mission Project will be "Carolina Lutheran Disaster Response – Asheville" to benefit 50 refugee children that were severely impacted by the flood this year in the Carolina's.
- Sunday, May 11th is Mother's Day. The kids will hand out carnations to all the women in the congregation. Kim Washko is donating the flowers. Jacob Bennett will sing a solo for Mother's Day.

Continuation of President's Corner...

- Bear Creek Camp – West Hazleton Trinity Lutheran Church has made a scholarship available. Please contact the office if interested. The deadline is May 11th.
- Adult Bible Study – The next study will begin after Easter on Sunday, April 27th at 8:45 a.m. with a selection of individual topics.

The next meeting is April 22, 2025.

Property Team: Chairperson Jim Cassarella.

- Parking lot will be resealed. Lines will need to be painted in the parking lot, awaiting quotes.
- Heat in Shuster Education Building to be looked at – Jim and I looked at the boiler, after talking with him, and since the heating season is about over, we are going to wait till May, and I will take a look at it.
- Elevator inspection? Don Wenner, Sr. and Jr., are meeting with Gary from the inspection company tomorrow. It was last inspected Nov. 23rd, 2023.
- Still need to look into Steve's Lawn Care and Four Diamonds for snow/ice removal. Don Wenner, Jr., is getting a quote from both of them. We need to have sidewalks taken care of also.
- Building a display case for church artifacts.
- Building inspection went well. Report came back and only had links to areas we might want to review.

Lay Eucharist: Visits are being made.

Call Committee: Melody Hinderer – Chairperson.

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

No word back from Pastor Shankweiler or Bishop deForest on the person who was interested in our church.

Old Business:

- Our constitution needs to be reviewed every 3 years. We should have an updated constitution that is on the synod website.
- Discuss legal language for functions held on our grounds. Possibly have a lawyer review/draft a document for a Hold Harmless and general coversheet. Is Jordan Pecile still practicing? Jane Krouse will find out, as he may be retired.
- Pastor Michele will ask the representative from Thrivent to speak at a coffee hour about members joining Thrivent so that more members can get Thrivent Action cards to be used at our events. Pastor Michele can handle this at a time that our congregation is all together, possibly the Semi-annual Congregation meeting in the summer. An Associate Membership with Thrivent is \$20 and the member is able to apply for one \$250 Thrivent Card to fund different projects/events held at our church. Thrivent Insurance Policy holders can apply for two \$250 Thrivent Cards.
- SYNOD Assembly is May 30 – 31, 2025 at Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church, Stroudsburg, PA, need 1 male and female to represent us. The deadline to sign up is April 24th.
- We are hosting the next Hazleton Leighton Council Presidents' meeting on June 8th at 2:30 to 4:30 pm. Lite snacks need to be available.
- March 29th, protecting our Children meeting, Melody Hinderer and Betty Kushner went to this.

New Business:

- Bishop deForest sent out a letter concerning in appropriate behavior among its rostered and non-rostered leaders at all levels. A discussion was held regarding this matter.
- Discuss cancelling "coffee hour" and what it means. Is it the one before service or the once a month? At the March Council meeting, council voted to stop the morning coffee before church services. The monthly coffee hour was still open, subject to sponsors. Several members questioned why this was done. After discussion of concerns, Jan Jacobus moved to have the weekly morning coffee hour before church services and the monthly Coffee Hour once a month after services

Continuation of President's Corner...

resume. If nobody signs up to host the monthly Coffee Hour after church for any month, it will be cancelled for that month. Janet Brady seconded. All approved. The S.E.R.V.E. Team will handle prior concerns and procedures moving forward.

Next meeting: Thursday May 8th @ 7 pm.

Gods Speed.
Don Wenner Jr.
Council President

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**

May Supply Pastor Schedule

4 – Rev. Chip Fairchild
11 – Rev. Virginia Heimer
18 – to be announced
25 – Rev. John Hazel, Jr.

Altar Flower Sponsors

In Loving Memory of Thelma Christman by Mary Ann Rooney
In Loving Memory of John Zamba by Sandy Zamba
In Loving Memory of Carole M. Horlacher by her brother & sisters
In Loving Memory of Jason Boyer by Family

Bulletin Sponsor for the weeks in May: Anonymous

Bulletin Sponsors

You may sponsor our weekly church bulletins for 2025. The cost for one week is \$10.00. Available Dates are listed, 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 July are available.**



Altar Flower Chart



A reminder that our 2025 Altar Flower chart is available in the St. Stephen's Room. Several Sundays are available to sponsor: June 29, July 20, September 14, 28, November 2, 30, and December 21, 28. The cost to sponsor flowers is \$25.00.

May Birthdays and Baptism 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!



- 3 - Peggy Hawk
- 10 - Nancy Bevans
- 10 - Donald Cressman
- 12 - Joyce Bigelow
- 17 - Tiffany Barbush
- 21 - Cody Hinderer



- 1 - Sandy Zamba
- 18 - Judith Mundie
- 21 - Brent Sims
- 24 - Joyce Bigelow
- 24 - Marcella Good
- 28 - Nicholas Barbush

Food Pantry



Thank you for your generous giving of the "cans of Peas" for the Easter baskets. What an overwhelming response, and your generosity is appreciated! Items needed are coffee, tea bags, cans of chili, sloppy Joe sauce, mustard, mayonnaise, canned fruit, and snack crackers. **Please make sure the items are within the expiration date.** THANK YOU in advance for your generosity! No medications/vitamins, etc., are accepted.

Prayer Circle



Prayer Requests

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.

Psalm 4:1 Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God.

Give me relief from my distress; have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

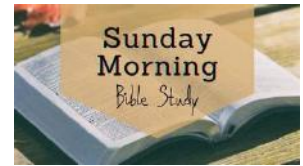
Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you knit or crochet? We meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month for about 2 hours. If interested, call the church office at 570-788-2685



Adult Bible Study

Adult Bible Study classes have resumed. We will be studying a selection of individual topics. Feel free to bring a friend. The last class is on May 18th, and we will take a break for the summer. Classes will begin again in the Fall of 2025.



Volunteers Needed



The Mission District and Synod Assembly will be held on May 30-31 at Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church in Stroudsburg, PA. We need 1 male and 1 female to attend and represent us. If you are interested, please contact Don Wenner, Jr.

St. John's Cemetery Association



On May 13th, the Cemetery Association will hold its meeting at St. John's UCC at 6:30 pm.

In preparation for Memorial Day, the Cemetery Association is asking for volunteers to help plant flowers. If you are interested, please contact Frank at 570-788-7222.

Graduations



If you have a member of your family who will be celebrating a graduation this year, please e-mail the church or call with the graduate's name, where they are graduating from, and what their future plans are. We would like to put their information in our newsletter. We would like to acknowledge all of their accomplishments, and we wish all our graduates the brightest future God has planned for them.

May Friendship Day - Church Women United

A program will be held on Friday, May 2nd at 1 pm at Christ Lutheran, Conyngham. A collection of wrapped pennies will be taken. A sign-up sheet is available in the St. Stephen's Room. For more information, please contact Patty Phile (570-956-2948) or Dawn Klick (570-788-4355).



Church Picnic

Save the date for our annual Church Picnic on Sunday, July 20th, to be held at Solon's Pavilion. More details to follow.



Patriotic Pinwheel Benefit



During the month of May, we want to cover the front lawn with Red, White & Blue Pinwheels in honor of the brave men & women who have fought for us and our country. We will have the patriotic pinwheels available in the St Stephen's room all month. They will be put out in the lawn with hopes that we can cover it by Memorial Day weekend. Pinwheels will be available for a \$1.00 donation, which will go to benefit PA Wounded Warriors. Help us to memorialize those who have fought bravely for us and our country and have gone to heaven to be with our Lord

Mother's Day Tea

Sign up in the St. Stephen's Room
for a delightful afternoon.
Bring a friend!

Lots of Goodies!



Fun & Games

Saturday, May 10th @ 2:00 pm.
Downstairs in Luther Hall.



Free will offering

Sponsored by the S.E.R.V.E. Team

Easter Greetings to Your Congregation

from Pastor Carl Shankweiler

Hazleton Area Gathering

Trinity, West Hazleton, is inviting all Hazleton area congregations to a gathering on:
Sunday, May 18 from 2 pm – 4 pm.

All are welcome to attend, including pastors, council members, and anyone who may be interested in sharing news about your congregation outreach ministries and other happenings you are excited to share with others.

The focus of the gathering is to discuss the possibly of sharing ministries with each other.

Please share the above information with the members of your congregation.

If you are planning on attending, please contact John Soltis with the number attending from your congregation by calling 570.788.3733 or by sending an email to mbandjs5@gmail.com or you may text the following number 570.497.9602 by May 11th.

If no one from your congregation will be attending, it would be helpful to contact John Soltis as well.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you on May 18th @ 2 pm.



Sunday School

A new addition has been added to the Sunday School Room! A life-size tree bookshelf has been crafted to fit into the theme. Stop in and check it out!

Please note that the last class will be held on **May 18th**, and classes will resume in the fall of 2025.

Bear Creek Camp

Would your child/grandchild like to attend Bear Creek Camp? West Hazleton Trinity Lutheran Church is offering the Mary Steward Scholarship. If you are interested in applying, please contact the Church Office at 570-788-2685 for an application. The deadline is May 11, 2025



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

LEARN MORE AT:



NATURE DAY CAMP

Onsite day camp available!

For ages 5-14, campers grow while having fun and discovering ecological connections in the world around them.

bearcreekcamp.org/nature-center/nature-day-camp



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
772 St. Johns Rd., Saint Johns (Drums), PA

SAUSAGE SUPPER
DRIVE-THRU "TAKE OUT" ONLY!
Saturday, May 3, 2025

Pick-up times: 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Dinner - \$13.00

Menu: sausage, pancakes, baked potato,
green beans, coleslaw, applesauce and a cupcake



For tickets:

570-582-7193 Jim

570-436-2168 Donna

570-788-3938 Betty & Don

570-788-2685 Church Office





**Get Ready...Summer's coming!
Plan for VBS!**

CAVE QUEST
August 4th - 8th
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

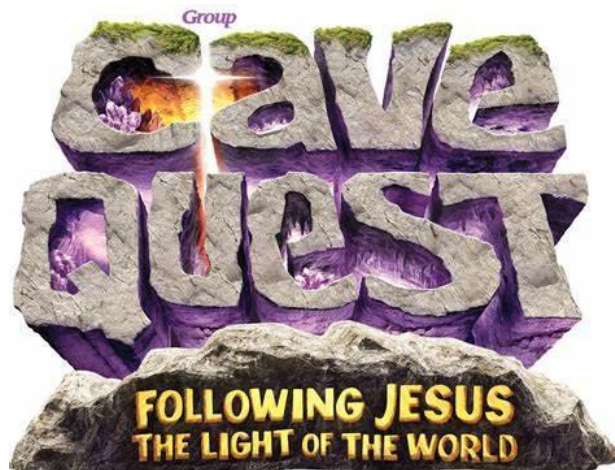
St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church
772 St. Johns Rd, Saint Johns, PA

**Sign up your kids by calling
the church office (570-788-2685)**

Jesus is the light of the world. He gives us hope for each new day and is our rescue.

This year's VBS takes the kids underground: Following Jesus the Light of the World. The kids will explore how in our darkest times Jesus gives us hope, courage, and powerful life-changing love. Through crafts, songs, skits, immersive Bible lessons, and fun-filled games that focus on Jesus, our light, when the world is often filled with darkness.

John 8:12 "Jesus said I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"





Saying Yes to God: A Personal Witness to Licensed Lay Ministry

Written by: Michael Haspe, Licensed Lay Ministry Candidate

I am a lifelong member of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tamaqua, PA, where I currently serve as the Christian Education Director. I felt my strongest pull to ministry during the pandemic. It was during the shutdown that God began to utilize me in new ways. I was one of four people—including the Pastor, camera operator, and organist—tasked to broadcast our services live. During this time, I learned to serve as a Cantor, Lector, and Communion Assistant, and I found I really enjoyed being a part of worship leadership. When the congregation came back, the anxiety I had previously experienced that kept me from serving (even though I really wanted to) was gone. I finally felt free to step into the roles God had been preparing me for all along.

Yet how did I get here? Near the end of 2020, I witnessed an unexplainable life-saving miracle. It was then I felt the urge to share my testimony and to preach. At the time, there was no Synodically Authorized Lay Minister (SALM) or Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) program in place, and I didn't feel called to rostered ministry. I wasn't sure what path was right for me, but the desire to be in deeper service was undeniable.

Then, in 2023, my partner of 19 years was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer. My world collapsed. I had a good cry with my Pastor and told her that even though I trusted God, I was afraid. She encouraged me to go home and rest and assured me we would talk more the next day. The very next morning, she called me with news: the synod had approved the LLM program. I knew in that instant it was God commanding my attention.

It felt as though God was saying, "Michael, during this time of uncertainty and fear, YOU WILL FOCUS ON ME." I shared this with my Pastor, and no sooner did it come out of my mouth than my fear turned to calm. There aren't words to describe the sense of peace and clarity that followed.

So that's what I did. I enrolled in the LLM program and kept my eyes LASER focused on God. The anxiety didn't return. Late last year, my partner underwent major surgery to remove the cancer. The pathology report stunned the medical team—what had looked and behaved like Stage 4 cancer was downgraded to Stage 2. Today, my partner is cancer free. While doctors still can't explain it, I can. I had just witnessed a second miracle.





So that is why I am here, and that is why I am so passionate about the Licensed Lay Ministry program. It has given me a pathway to serve others and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, while I continue to discern whether rostered ministry might be the next step. For years, people in my church and community have said to me, “Michael, you are a Pastor.” And whether that becomes a career goal for me or not, this program enables me to explore ministry in meaningful ways. Through it, I can share the Gospel and lead others to Christ.

It’s no secret there is a shortage of Pastors. Being a Licensed Lay Minister allows me to serve in ways that are within my current gifts while also challenging me to grow in areas I may have once feared. LLMs can help address the pastoral shortage across our synod. No congregation is too large or too small to benefit from the presence of a lay minister. I believe the LLM program can be a catalyst to grow our churches, open new doors, and revitalize ministries.

The LLM retreats have been one of my favorite parts of this journey. The preaching retreat especially stands out. It provided me with practical tools to write and deliver sermons with confidence. I now feel my preaching is more focused and effective because of what I learned there. Pastor Peggy Wurtele has been a huge inspiration to me. Her motto—“Proclamation, Proclamation, Proclamation!”—encourages us to seize every opportunity to proclaim the Gospel and remind people that grace is FREE and abundant through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a perfectionist, I hold onto her other phrase too: “...and Jesus loves us anyway.” It helps me focus less on small details and more on the heart of the message. That reminder has been freeing and empowering.

I want to leave you with a few questions. Ask yourself honestly: “Do you love Jesus Christ? Do you believe in the free gift and promise of grace and eternal salvation? Do you love telling others about Jesus? Do you love people?” If you answered yes to any—or all—of these questions, then the LLM journey might be right for you. Talk to your Pastor or the LLM Coordinator. Take time to pray and discern if this is your next faithful step.

One excuse I frequently hear is, “I would love to do this, but I’m too old.” Let me tell you—you are NEVER too old to proclaim the Good News! Your ministry could change someone’s life. If you’re even a little bit curious about LLM, talk about it. Ask questions. You might be surprised where God is leading you. The most surprising thing I’ve learned is the impact one message can have. I’ve preached dozens of sermons, and the most humbling moments come when someone quietly tells me that something I said encouraged them, gave them hope, or inspired them to try something new. That’s the greatest reward of all.

Discover how Licensed Lay Ministry is equipping lay leaders for faithful service. Learn more at godslove.org/LLM, or email Licensed Lay Ministers Coordinator, Pastor Jira Albers at llm@nepssynod.org

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 lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit godslove.org/missionsupport



- 2 – Church Women United – May Friendship Day @ 1 pm – Christ Lutheran, Conyngham
- 3 – Sausage Supper – pick-up from 1 to 5 pm
- 4 – Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Coffee Hour (to be determined)
- 5 – Scouts @ 6 pm
- 7 – Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am
- 8 – Church Council Meeting @ 7 pm
- 10 – Mother’s Day Tea @ 2 pm – Luther Hall
- 11 – Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Mother’s Day
- 12 – Scouts @ 6 pm
- 13 – Music and Worship Meeting @ 10:30 am; Cemetery Meeting – St. John’s UCC @ 6:30 pm; Kids Night @ 6 pm
- 15 – June Newsletter Deadline
- 18 – Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Hazleton Area Congregations Gathering at Trinity West Hazleton from 2 to 4 pm.
- 19 – Scouts @ 6 pm
- 20 – Leaning Ministry Meeting @ 6:30 pm
- 21 – Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am
- 25 – Church @ 10:30 am
- 26 – Memorial Day; Church office closed
- 29 – S.E.R.V.E. Meeting @ 6:30 pm
- 30 & 31 – Mission District & Synod Assembly Meeting - Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church in Stroudsburg, PA.



Rummage Sale – St. John’s UCC – May 10th, 9 am to 3 pm. Homemade food, desserts & drinks. Bag Day on May 12th, 9 am to 12 pm.




Hoagie Sale – St. John’s UCC – May 21st pick-up 9:30 am-10:30 am & 5:30 pm-6:30 pm. Order by May 14th, call Gale 570-788-5606

Take-Out Chicken BBQ Dinner - St. John’s UCC – June 7th pick-up 2 to 4 pm. Ticket sales end May 25th. For tickets call Chris Hunsinger 570-956-9657, Frank Costello 570-788-7222, or Gale Kubida 570-788-5606.

Annual Spring Fling Flea Market – St. John Bosco Catholic Church – May 17th from 7 am to 3 pm. Full kitchen open, bake sale, tricky tray, and cash raffle. May 18th – Box Day from 1 to 3 pm.

Answers for front page: 1. A, 2. A, 3. A, 4. C, 5. B, 6. A, 7. D, 8. C, 9. B, 10. D, 11. B, 12. A

MAY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am Church & SS @ 10 am Coffee Hour	4	5	6	7	8	9
Scouts @ 6 pm	Scouts @ 6 pm	Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am	Church Council Meeting @ 7 pm	Church Women United @ 1 pm Christ Lutheran, Conyngham	Mother's Day Tea @ 2 pm Luther Hall	Sausage Supper Pick-up 1 – 5 pm
Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am Church & SS @ 10 am Mothers' Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
Music & Worship Meeting @ 10:30 am Kids Night @ 6 pm Cemetery Meeting @ 6:30 pm – St. John's UCC	Scouts @ 6 pm	Scouts @ 6 pm	Learning Ministry Meeting @ 6:30 pm	Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am	June Newsletter Deadline	
Adult Bible Study @ 8:45 am Church & SS @ 10 am Trinity W. Hazleton Meeting 2 – 4 pm	18	19	20	21	22	23
Scouts @ 6 pm	Scouts @ 6 pm	Scouts @ 6 pm	Scouts @ 6 pm	Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am		
Church @ 10 am	25	26	27	28	29	30
Church @ 10 am	Church Office Closed	Memorial Day Church Office Closed			S.E.R.V.E. Meeting @ 6:30 pm	Mission District & Synod Meeting
						Mission District & Synod Meeting