

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

501 CHESTNUT STREET EMMAUS, PA 18049

TELEPHONE: 610-965-9885

E-MAIL: OFFICEMANAGER@STJOHNSEMMMAUS.ORG

WEBSITE: WWW.STJOHNSEMMMAUS.ORG

2024 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION

STATEMENT OF MISSION

God's Purpose for St. John's is
to GROW in relationship with Christ
to GO share God's love and serve others.

Guiding Principles

1. We believe that Jesus is Lord and Savior.
2. We gather weekly to praise and thank God and to be strengthened by God for the week ahead.
3. We serve others as an expression of God's love for all.
4. We invite all people to join us to learn about and to serve God.
5. We ask God to help us adapt to change because it is a constant in our lives.
6. We are family (with all that that entails).

2024

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
501 Chestnut Street • Emmaus, PA
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
January 26, 2025 11:45 am

2024

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor.....The Rev. William Maxon
Music Ministry Director..... Timothy M. Ginder
Office AdministratorRebecca Williams
BookkeeperAnna Galante
Custodian..... Brian P. Dunton
Pastor EmeritusThe Rev. Fred S. Foerster

2024 OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

President.....Elise Spayd
Vice President.....John Ashcraft/William Lake
Secretary.....Brad Albright
Treasurer.....Brad Albright

2024 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Member	Term expires in January of
Elise Spayd.....	2025*
Brad Albright.....	2026*
Peg Duelfer.....	2026*
Jane Harps.....	2027*
Cheryl Kraemer.....	2027*
John Ashcraft.....	2028*
William Lake.....	Resigned
Rebecca Crilley.....	Resigned
Kevin Schmidt.....	Removed

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Emmaus, Pennsylvania

January 28, 2024

Meeting Attendance: 47

Welcome: Elise Spayd, Council President, welcomed everyone to St. John's Annual Congregational Meeting. Elise called the meeting to order at 11:18 a.m.

Devotions: Pastor Woody led the opening devotion.

The headcount of those members present was 47. This number constitutes a quorum under the constitution. (Quorum = 7% of voting members, CCC of 200 (those who communed and contributed) = 14 persons required). The meeting was held in-person, with a Zoom option as well.

Elise presented the minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting held January 29, 2023 as printed on pages 1 – 2. There were no additions, deletions, or corrections. The minutes were approved as printed.

A motion was made to accept the Reports of Pastor Jeff and Pastor Woody as printed on page 3 – 4 by Dave LaMotte and seconded by Bill Lake. The motion carried.

A motion was made to accept the Tim Ginder's Report of Music Ministry Director as printed on page 5 by Dave LaMotte and seconded by John Ashcraft. The motion carried.

The following reports were presented and acted upon as a block: Report of Council President as printed on page 6, Report of Congregation Council Secretary as printed on page 7, Report of St. John's Membership for the year ending December 31, 2022 as printed on pages 8-9, Memorial Fund Receipts as printed on page 10, and Financial Reports as printed on pages F1 – F6 which include A Balance Sheet, An Investments Summary, The Statement of Income and Expenses for the Current / Property Fund, The Statement of Income and Expenses for the Endowment / Memorial Fund, The Statement of Income and Expense for the Preschool, and The Balances for Dedicated Funds. A motion to accept the reports was made by Dave LaMotte and seconded by Matt Berner. The motion carried. All financial reports will be accepted pending the annual audit.

The following reports were presented and acted upon as a block: Worship and Music Committee as printed on page 11; Acolytes, Advent Wreath Readers and Lighters and Altar Guild as printed on page 12; Communion Assistants, Eucharistic Ministers, Gift Presenters, and Lectors as reported on page 13; Christian Education Committee as reported on page 15; Bear Creek Camp as

reported on page 16; Preschool Committee as reported on page 17; Property Committee as reported on page 18; Mutual Ministry Committee as reported on page 19; GIFT / Parish Life Committee as reported on pages 20-21; People Over Fifty as reported on page 22; Stewardship as reported on pages 23-24; Support the Troops as reported on page 25; Outreach Committee on page 26; Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank Volunteers and Knitting for Charity as reported on page 27; Finance Committee as reported on page 28; Audit Committee as reported on page 29; and St. John's Christian Preschool Director on page 30. A motion to accept the reports as printed was made by Dave LaMotte and seconded by Bruce Buchman. The motion carried.

The following reports were presented and acted upon as a block: St. John's Lutheran & Reformed Cemetery Association as printed on page 31 and St. John's Women of the ELCA on page 32. A motion to accept the reports as printed was made by Dave LaMotte and seconded by Kathy Cheryl Kraemer. The motion carried.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Nomination for Congregation Council: Sandy Farkas, Myron Yoder, Stacy Kemmerer and Alanna Kemmerer are the outgoing members. Elise thanked them for their service on Council. There were no preselected nominees for Congregation Council. Elise Spayd opened nominations from the floor. There were no new nominations. Dave LaMotte moved to close nominations. John Ashcraft seconded the motion. The motion carried. This constitutes a ten-member Council.

Proposed Budget for the Work on Ministry in 2024: The proposed 2024 budget is presented by the Finance Chairman Annette Roth, Treasurer Brad Albright and the Finance Committee members. The budget is presented on pages B1 – B5 of the Annual Report. Discussion was had about state of the finances. The budget for 2024 has a deficit of approximately \$3,935.

The Budget Proposal comes as a recommendation from the Congregation Council and therefore does not need a motion. The 2024 Budget is adopted as presented.

Good of the Church:

In appreciation of their faithful work of ministry in daily life and in the life and mission of St. John's Elise Spayd thanked the following people who have helped accomplish God's work at St. John's this past year: everyone who helped prepare and serve the meal for this year; the Staff, Congregation Council, Volunteers, Committee Chairs and Members, all the Members of St. John's.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:47 am with a closing benediction from Pastor Woody.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Albright

Council Secretary

Interim Pastor's Report for 2024

We have shared a year together that has been filled with good activities and opportunities for fellowship. This year we celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the Sanctuary. We did so while doing some much needed repair to the roof of the Sanctuary. All the regular activities of the congregation happened with enthusiasm and excitement.

Worship: I am very pleased that worship attendance has continued to be strong. We have maintained a good level of participation. Some Sundays we have exceeded attendance expectations. Christmas and Easter seasons were well supported. The Choir and Bells provided good additions of music to Worship. Thank you to Tim who not only conducts the Bells and Choir, but also puts time and effort into our worship services. I personally have enjoyed having children in worship and doing a "Children's Sermon" with them.

Christian Education: This year I provided support to the Confirmation Class taught by Faith Drescher. I also taught an Adult Forum class in early Spring. We continue to have a Sunday School with children which is better than a number of churches around us are able to do. Vacation Bible School went well with many neighborhood children in attendance.

Events: We were not able to have the German Service in 2024 but it will happen again in 2025. Some of the people who provided support for this service are not able to do so. Fewer people are familiar with the German language but there still seems to be interest in doing the service. The Sanctuary Anniversary Service went well. Thank you to Pastor Roger Timm for his support of this event and the Anniversary Committee for their hard work. Celebration Sunday continues to be showcase for the ministries of St. John Church.

I continue to spend two days per week in the office taking care of administrative issues and hospital calls. As needed, I also visit shut ins and people in need. I mainly work with the Worship Committee and Council. My goal has been to make sure that there continues to be a pastoral presence at St. John.

I have committed to being with you through May of 2025. As the process continues with Synod leadership, I am open to extending my time with you. Looking at possibilities for the future, we are considering a variety of options for pastoral leadership. That is both scary and exciting. The Good News is that God never abandons us but always walks beside us in our journeys.

Pastoral Acts	Hospital Visits	37
	Shut in Visits	36
	Meetings	233
	Contacts	215
	Baptisms	4
	Weddings	1
	Funerals	10

-Pastor Woody Maxon

Director of Music Ministry

2024 can be reported as another good year for St. John's Music program. In keeping with traditions at St Johns, again during the holidays the music program was able to share seasonal music during Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas, all of which would not be the same without the music we appreciate during these seasons. The congregation, church leaders, fellow staff members, volunteers and donors make the music program possible. In sharing the 2024 report, we have been able to bring in more guest musicians, make updates to the music library and continue to work with all the volunteers that make the church choirs possible. To end the music season, our choir sang very well for Christmas Eve and we continue to be able to expand the choir voicings (parts) because of each members dedication to the many behind-the-scenes rehearsals; 90 percent of the music program is the work done through administrative details and rehearsals with the remaining 10 percent being what is scene at the services.

Once again, our church organ was taken apart and put back together to ensure the safety of its inner workings such as the pipes and windchests, the Peragallo Company came timely when called to take apart the organ in ample time to have the roof work started. Now that the organ has been in use for over two years and is well acclimated to its home, the opportunity arose to have the organ re-voiced since its initial voicing upon installation. This 2nd voicing has made the instrument have a more rich and warmer sound but also clarified many of the sounds that come from the hundreds of pipes in the pipe chambers. The Peragallo Company and I worked closely together for this voicing. This voicing was done along with the final pipe tuning of 2023 in time for the Christmas Eve Service. In addition to the organ, the pianos have been expertly maintained by John Zeiner including their climate control systems which help to offset maintenance expenses. Also, all the hand bells have been kept in good working order.

I am sure I speak for everyone involved with church music that we look forward to more good things in 2025 and the years following this years.

Timothy Ginder
Director of Music Ministries

Council President

As I close out my term as Council President, I would like to thank everyone for their support and kindness over the last four years. It was an honor to be president of St. John's Congregational Council.

During 2024 the Congregational Council held 11 regular meetings, one Special Congregational meeting to approve the roof replacement and several joint meetings with the Call Committee to work on the call process.

Thank you, Pastor Woody and Linda, for staying at St. John's longer than you initially agreed upon. I hope you both know how happy and grateful we all are that you are still here. Your positive attitudes and perspectives have been so helpful to me.

Thank you so much to the office staff, Rebecca and Anna, I honestly don't know what I would have done without either one of you. Tim, as always thank you for sharing your musical gifts with us. Brian, thank you for taking care of our church building.

Thank you to all the members of Council, especially Brad Albright for getting me the minutes every month and John Ashcraft for agreeing to be Vice President. Thank you all for all your help and support over the years. We had some fun times at those meetings!

Thank you to all the amazing committees we have, you all do such wonderful things for St. John's and the community. You all truly make St. John's the great church that it is.

There are so many people who work for the good of this church, there's not enough space to thank you all personally. Thank you all for everything that you do!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has offered me encouragement and support, those kind words meant more to me than you will ever know.

Finally, I don't think we can even call this a Report of the Council President without thanking Ron Schuler for his work on the boiler. Great job Ron!

Respectfully submitted,

Elise Spayd

Council President

Congregation Council Secretary Report

Following is a list of all the regular monthly meetings of Congregation Council, special meetings of Congregation Council and the Annual Congregational Meeting held in 2024:

January 9, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
January 28, 2024	<u>Annual Congregational Meeting</u>
February 13, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
March 12, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
April 9, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
May 14, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
June 11, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
August 13, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
September 1, 2024	Special Meeting for Church Roof Repairs
September 17, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
October 8, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
November 12, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting
December 10, 2024	Regular Congregation Council Meeting

The minutes from all of the above meetings have been properly recorded and are incorporated as part of the permanent records of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Emmaus, and Pennsylvania.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Albright, Congregation Council Secretary

**INFORMATION ABOUT ST. JOHN'S MEMBERSHIP
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
1. Membership at the end of 2023	1,187	679
2. Members received during 2024		
a. By Baptism: (children 15 & younger)	4	--
b. By Baptism: (adults 16 & older)	--	--
c. By Affirmation of Faith	--	--
d. By Transfer from ELCA congregation	--	--
e. From other Lutheran congregations	--	--
f. From non-Lutheran congregations	--	--
g. From other sources & statistical adjustment	--	--
h. Total Members Received	4	0
3. Baptized youth who were confirmed in 2024		1
4. Total	1,191	680
5. Members removed during 2024		
a. By Death	10	10
b. By Transfer to other ELCA congregations	--	--
c. To other Lutheran congregations	--	--
d. To non-Lutheran congregations	--	--
e. For other reasons & statistical adjustment		
e. Total Members Removed	10	10
6. Membership at the end of 2024	1,181	670
7. Number of Confirmed Members who Communed <u>and</u> Contributed during 2024	(211)	
8. Communing Members: Confirmed	(239)	
9. Average Weekly Worship Attendance in 2024	(80)	

2024 BAPTISMS

February 4	Jerec James Bencivenga
June 2	Noelle Blanche Earich
August 18	Luca Rivera
December 15	Edward Philip Brandt

2024 CONFIRMATIONS

May 12	Austin Lake
--------	-------------

2024 RECEIVED INTO MEMBERSHIP

There were no new members added in 2024.

2024 TRANSFERRED/REQUESTED RELEASE FROM MEMBERSHIP

None

2024 DEATHS

SallyAnn Mohr
Thomas Vernon Reed
Ruth E. Kerstetter
Julius Schneider Jr.
Arlene Elsenbaumer
Mae Sara Kemmerer
Geraldine Schafer
Ronald E. Miller
Peter G. Gross
Rev. David C. Newhart
Sandra A. Miklos
Harvey McGarry
Robert B. Wieand
Rev. Fred Foerster

Memorial Funds Received in 2024

St. John's gratefully acknowledges receiving contributions to the Memorial Fund totaling \$24,627.00 in memory of the following individuals:

Ron Gerhart

Sally Ann Mohr

Julius Schneider

Nancy Reimert

Arlene Elsenbaumer

Mae Kemmerer

Geraldine Schafer

Ron Miller

Peter Gross

Rev. David Newhart

Sandy Miklos

Harvey McGarry

Robert Wieand

Richard B. Wieand

Franklin W. Reimert

Susan A. Peters

Worship and Music Committee

The Worship and Music Committee met regularly throughout the year. The members of the committee include. Faith Drescher, Annette Roth, Kathy Mintzer, Tim Ginder and Peg Duelfer.

First and most importantly, the committee would like to thank Ginny Himler for her many years as Chairperson. Ginny “retired” in June and the committee decided no one could replace her, so we decided to work together as a group and lead each other in decisions that are best for our church family.

Thank you to the following persons who serve as coordinators for the area of service noted: Acolytes; Faith Drescher; Altar Guild, Annette Roth; Communion Assistants, Kathy Mintzer; Gift Presenters, Faith Drescher. Thank you, Dave LaMotte, for assisting with lectors and Rebecca for scheduling Eucharistic Ministers.

We continue to have only one service and thank Pastor Woody Maxon for guiding us through this process. Pastor Woody has been a true blessing to St. John’s. Many thanks to Tim Ginder and Rebecca for all their work in completing the weekly tasks of preparing the bulletins. So many things can be accomplished when working as a team.

We are continuing to honor many church traditions including adding the German Christmas Service back into the schedule. Thank you, Tim Ginder, for taking the reins on this special service that honors our roots and 100 years of being in our church. Thanks to the Stewardship Committee, we were able to bring back parts of the original dedication service to the 100th Anniversary Service.

We will be looking to the future and supporting the Call Committee on their task of searching for a new Pastor and help in any way to hopefully transition a new Pastor in the coming year.

But most important, just be....be a part of your spiritual nourishment each week.

Submitted by:

Kathy Mintzer

Worship Volunteers

Acolytes

Thanks to those confirmation students who serve in worship as acolytes. We are blessed to have 3 post confirmation students who serve occasionally as they are able. The acolyte's specific duties continue to be lighting and extinguishing candles only – including those for All-Saints Day and pew candles for the Christmas Eve service. On Festival Days acolytes also may carry the processional cross and/or Bible and assist the Pastor by holding the Bible during the gospel reading and holding the Pastor's book during a Baptism. Acolytes can now sit with their families after lighting the candles until they become comfortable staying in their bench in the chancel for the entire service. Students who are not yet confirmation age but attend church and are interested, can and do acolyte with a parent or church adult friend and then sit with family.

We're still working on a photo board to be posted in the Sacristy for a quick reminder on a Sunday morning as to the order of candle-lighting and extinguishing. This is available in email form thanks to Jessica Becker, parent of 6th and 8th grade daughters Avery and Olivia, who also acolyte.

Thanks to the families of all the acolytes who provide the support and encouragement needed for these young people to be able to serve. In addition, thanks to everyone for your flexibility and understanding. Life demands and interests make it harder and harder to schedule.

Thanks also to Joe Harps who creates sign-up genius which hopefully has made it easier for families to select a date for their student to serve.

Respectfully submitted, Faith Drescher - Coordinator

Advent Wreath Readers and Lighters

Thanks to all who continue to accept the call to serve as Advent wreath Readers and Lighters. This is an opportunity for families and friends to serve in worship. All that is needed is to commit to attend worship on one Sunday in Advent, come forward to lead the congregation in the short Advent Blessing, light the Advent Candle(s) and return to your seat.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Drescher - Coordinator

Altar Guild

Thank you to the small group of volunteers who continue to set up and clean up for our weekly Sunday service. We also assist with the decorating of the church for Advent and Christmas. With the approval of the Finance Committee, 5 new banners were purchased using the remaining funds from our own account, as well as memorial funds. If you are considering involvement with St. John's and do not have a lot of spare time for a major commitment, please consider becoming a part of the altar guild. We do not have meetings and you would be assigned to prepare the sanctuary for the Sunday service once every other month.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Roth - President

Communion Assistants

2024 where have you gone? Wasn't it just yesterday that I was submitting this report? Thanks go out to all the Communion Assistants who come to worship and help with communing the congregation. I appreciate how everyone signs up...or approves my scheduling. We are a small but mighty group of folks.

As I have said before.... doesn't matter whether I am "backstage or in the audience" ...I can worship God in either spot! Would you like to try being backstage? We are always in need of new faces to serve as Communion Assistants. Please contact me or just ask any Communion Assistant if you are interested.

Faithfully yours,
Kathy Mintzer, Communion Assistant Coordinator

Eucharistic Ministers

St. John's Eucharistic Ministers are lay people and one pastor, who have been trained to visit homebound members and share communion with them. These volunteers visit each person monthly on a rotating schedule to offer not only the sacrament, but in-person contact and fellowship as representatives of our congregation.

We send our appreciation to the Eucharistic Ministers- Faith Drescher, Deb and Dennis Herman, Sandy Kulp and Pastor Roger Timm continue to serve as ministers. Thanks to all of you for your time and dedication to this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Williams, Eucharistic Ministry Coordinator

Flower Delivery

This year church members have been called on to volunteer to select the dates they are able to serve and to help prepare and deliver the altar flowers to our homebound and hospitalized members. Those who sponsor the flowers also have the option of taking their flowers with them after the service and even requesting who they would like them to be delivered to. This ministry, an extension of care and connection for folks who are unable to be present at worship, is valued and appreciated. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board near the Parish Hall. Please sign-up when you can to support this shared ministry of care. Many thanks to our delivery folks.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Drescher - Coordinator

Gift Presenters

I am always looking for volunteers to bring the elements forward; families, friends, and congregants can all share in this simple yet meaningful and important part of worship. If you attend worship, can move to the back of the church toward the end of the Peace, then walk forward and then back to your seats - you're hired! There's no speaking or preparation involved.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Drescher - Coordinator

Lector

St. John's Lector's are a dedicated group of volunteers who read the lessons at weekly services as well as Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and other special services.

A sincere thank you to those faithful volunteers for their commitment of time and talent as well as Rebecca Williams, St. John's Office Administrator, for her help in getting the readings to assigned lectors each week.

If you are interested in becoming a lector, please contact me at mafreer@ptd.net or Rebecca at the Church office.

Respectfully submitted,
Maryann Freer, Lector Coordinator

Prayer Chain

This is a ministry to those who request prayer. Members are asked to check e-mail daily. Once a request is received, you include it in your daily prayers. Although these intercessory prayers are often for immediate and specific needs, we also offer prayers of praise and thanksgiving. I try to be as timely as possible. The last half of this year has been difficult for me to compose emails; not sure why. I certainly made sure prayers were passed on, probably far too informally, and that Rebecca was kept up to date for Care Notes. Much thanks to her for compiling the Care Notes for inclusion in the weekly bulletin insert so that all in the congregation can join in prayer.

Prayers are offered for anyone in need, not just church members. There is no limit to the number of people participating in this ministry of praying for others/intercessory prayer. Folks find comfort in knowing others are praying for and caring about them. We pray with confidence to our Lord that he listens to and answers our prayers. I John 5:14-15.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Drescher – Coordinator

Christian Education Committee

Mission: To provide a lifelong program of Christian education that will enable members of all ages to learn the Scriptures and Lutheran teaching and apply them in their daily lives.

Members: Mary Bealer, Karen Brokate, Faith Drescher, Rebecca Crilley, Michelle Killino, and Elise Spayd

Here are some of the highlights of the past year.

- Sunday School students, ages 4 to fifth grade, met weekly to learn and grow in their faith. They raised money to buy animals for families in need through the ELCA program God's Global Barnyard. One third graders received their bibles in October.
- Confirmation class, a 3-year commitment for students in Grades 6-8, continued to meet weekly. This is a time for building relationships and continuing their faith journey, culminating with Confirmation at or around Pentecost at the end of the 3rd year. One student was confirmed this year. We are fortunate that Pastor Woody has provided guidance since September has continued to help with confirmation.
- Vacation Bible School, "Surf Shack - Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love", was a big success. There were about 30 students and over 30 volunteers who were invited to remember to "Shine Bright, be God's light, and shine God's love all over". We were grateful to partner with Holy Spirit again to design, prepare and share decorations to transform our respective church spaces. Students and Staff brought in donations for Lehigh Conference of Churches. Thank you to the congregation for your donations and support in making this another successful year.
- Confirmands, Sunday School students, and members of the congregation participated in CropWalk on October 13th. The group walked through Emmaus during the Sunday School hour and raised over \$1,000 with support from the congregation.

Thank you to all the volunteers, teachers, helpers, committee members, and thrivent representatives, who gave their time and talents to keeping the Christian Education ministries going at St. John's.

We are always looking to grow with new ideas and volunteers. Please reach out if you are interested in being a committee member or volunteer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Brokate

Bear Creek Camp

Bear Creek Camp is an outdoor ministry of the Northeastern and Southeastern PA Synod of the ELCA, located on nearly 3,000 acres in the Pocono Mountains. The camp provides year-round experiences: Summer Residential Camp including Try Camp, Nature day camp, Environmental education programs, July Family Camp, Labor Day Family Camp, an Artist in Resident Camp for adults and outside group rentals. There are also weekend retreats during school breaks especially at Christmas for Middlers and High School students. We at St. John's are thankful for the Foerster- Bray Endowment fund that is available to assist families by providing a stipend of \$200 per camper for a week of summer camp. There is also select weeks for kids grades 1-3 to try camp for a partial week – Sunday -Wednesday (11:00AM). Other financial aid from Bear Creek is also available.

Please check the Bear Creek website and Facebook page at www.bearcreekcamp.org to sample some of that camp spirit. REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER CAMP BEGINS JANUARY 6, 2025.

If you have any questions, need more details and/or would like to hear some camp stories, contact Bear Creek Ambassadors Dave and Marlea McAdoo.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Drescher

Property Committee

The Property Committee is responsible for the care and maintenance of the church building and grounds. Here are some highlights of the committee's work in 2024:

- We have completed repairing the Sanctuary Roof on 5th Street side, this included the Chancellery Roof as well.

The committee also deferred some maintenance projects due to budget constraints. These projects included electrical repairs, repairs to shades in the Parish Hall, and others.

The committee also expresses thanks and gratitude to our custodian, Brian Dunton, for his tireless devotion to caring for our beautiful church building.

Matthew Berner
Acting Committee Chair

GIFT Committee / Parish Life

We had another great year of fun filled with activities. With our most frequent being our 2nd Sunday fellowship after mass. Social time is good for the soul for all with the helping of delicious foods, by our marvelous bakers.

We had our Potluck/Bingo event on February 24, 2024. A good time was had by all who attended as it is during a Saturday late afternoon. Who doesn't love Bingo with candy prizes. We have another Potluck/Bingo on the calendar for 2025, see you there. Thank you, Kathy Mintzer, for organizing this event.

Our fun afternoon at the Phantoms game on March 3rd had about 25 members attending and some even got to ride the Zamboni, plus on the hockey rink ice skating afterwards too. Thank you, Faith Dresher, for organizing this event.

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on March 24th which fell on Palm Sunday. This day is usually has an higher attendance and we added in fellowship too. Many children enjoyed the plastic filled eggs our fellow members of this congregation happily filled.

We had an exciting night at the Iron Pigs baseball game on July 12th. A wonderful group enjoyed the game from the 3rd base line. The boys of summer are great memories to be had by all ages. We look forward to another game this year. As always Faith gets the Friday night game, so we get fireworks too. Thank you, Faith Dresher, for organizing this event.

We had a beautiful day for the towns Farewell to Summer event in the triangle on September 21st. We had a tent of arts and crafts for our fellow neighbors to come do at with us. We had a different spot than in past years, but the day was busy. We gave out free mini water bottles and information about our church and activities. Thank you, Audra Berner and Karen Brokate, for all your help doing the behind-the-scenes items.

We had our annual Halloween watch party on October 19th, 2024. We are lucky enough to have prime seating for this amazing parade. Bring a chair and or blanket to watch to parade in style. We had hot chocolate, hot dogs and other treats that our guest brought along. With some fun games on the church main steps too. Thank you, Audra Berner, for organizing this event.

Our annual Spaghetti dinner was postponed this year due to roof repairs at the same time. We hope to bring it back next year. Annette Roth does a great job each year organizing this event with confirmation students' helpers.

Our town's annual Old Fashion Tree Lightning will be on Saturday December 7th. We will have a tent with crafts and goodies to sell that the confirmation students made (Chocolate cover pretzel rods). We will have Philly soft pretzels too and hope for good weather.

We did make one large purchase this year to get a pop-up tent to have at the events outside of the church.

We have several events coming up for 2025

- ❖ 2nd Sunday of each month Fellowships (if your committee would like to host one, please let us know)
- ❖ German Christmas 1/5/2025 Cookie fellowship afterwards
- ❖ Potluck/ Bingo 2/22/25
- ❖ PPL Phantoms game 2/16/25
- ❖ Easter Egg Hunt 4/13/25
- ❖ Iron Pigs game 8/8/25
- ❖ Halloween Parade Watch Party 10/18/25
- ❖ Old Fashion Christmas 12/6/25
- ❖ Spaghetti Dinner TBD

I just want to say a huge thank you to this amazing committee for their time, ideas and dedication to our church community and youth.

Submitted respectfully by: Jennifer J. Anders 12/3/24

If you are interested in helping organize any event or if you have an idea for an event let us know. The more ideas for events and activities the better. All ideas are welcome please contact Jennifer Anders 610-554-2044 or email at janders@ptd.net

The mission statement that had been developed for the GIFT (Growing in Fellowship Together) committee is as follows:

GIFT's purpose is to plan and promote a variety of activities and events that build relationships among St. John's members, visitors, and guests to educate, excite, entertain and engage members in support of important causes. Events can be large or small and be held at St. John's or in our community. Gatherings can be designed to appeal to all ages or focus on one primary group. The GIFT team selects key events throughout the year but relies on St. John's members to assist in planning or volunteering at these events.

People Over Fifty (POF)

POF (People Over Fifty) met monthly in 2024 on the second Wednesday of the month at 11am in the Parish Hall for lunch and fellowship.

Anyone over 50, or anyone accompanying someone over 50 is welcome. Attendees bring a canned good or small household item for the prize table and a donation of \$4 to cover the cost of lunch. Food bank donations are always welcome.

Attendance in 2024 ranged from 9-15 people. POF members brought a total of three guests throughout the year. Highlights of the year were a demonstration/discussion of adaptable devices, a costumed Halloween party and a Christmas gift exchange.

Call Sharon at 303-956-6289 at least a day before the meeting if you plan to attend or have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Strouse
POF Coordinator

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee had another busy year this year. Our theme was “*A Century of Giving*” to reflect our church building turning 100 years old.

Our Newsletter articles and quotes this year were related to our theme “*A Century of Giving*” along with “*From the Archives*” in hopes that the congregation would enjoy reading about the history of St. John’s. A special thank you to Andre who was very helpful in providing us with archived information to include in our newsletters.

Thrivent Members can continue to have a say in Thrivent distributions to charitable funding by directing Choice Dollars to causes they care about. St. John’s received \$1,109 in Choice Dollars this year. Thrivent Team grants for fundraising events such as Celebration Sunday luncheon, Food Bank, and Vacation Bible School each received \$250.00 in 2024.

The initial offering envelope was changed to reflect an \$8.00 cost this year vs. \$3.00 in 2023. The number of initial offering envelopes received this year was less than last year.

A thank you note to those who give to St. John’s was prepared and mailed along with their statements. This was a nice way to say thank you to those who contribute.

Time & Talent update – A list of members was given to each chairperson asking for their help in revising the list. Changes were submitted to the church office so that we have updated information available to everyone.

The Stewardship Committee worked very closely with Jen Albright, Coordinator of the 100th Anniversary Celebration. In June we held a Fellowship to celebrate the 100th Anniversary with baked goods from that time period. A special service was held on October 6th for the 100th Anniversary followed by a Fellowship sponsored by the Stewardship Committee. This service was similar to the one held in 1924 and through newspaper advertisements and an outside banner we invited the public to join in our celebration. A special thank you to Jen Albright for her dedication and hard work to make this a special day and year.

Celebration Sunday is the Stewardship Committee’s way of thanking the congregation for a good year of time, talent and treasures. The fellowship gathering and great food makes it a festive time for everyone.

To continue with our theme in celebrating “*A Century of Giving*” our theme for 2025 will be “*A Century of Giving and Beyond*”.

Thank you all for your time, talent and treasures and support of the Stewardship Committee. The committee consists of Susan Buchman, Bob Cleaver, Joan Gooch, Jane Harps, Judie Herb and Deb Herman. Without their hard work we would not be able to accomplish all that we do.

Also a special thanks to Rebecca Williams, Brian Dunton, Anna Galante, Joe Harps, Kathy Mintzer, Annette Roth, Elise Spayd, and Pastor Woody. We are most grateful for their help and hard work.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Felegy
Stewardship Committee Chairperson

Support the Troops

The USO strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the nation. St John's members have generously donated snacks and blankets to the Philadelphia airport USO, which served approximately 60,000 guests in 2024. The generosity of our congregation is appreciated by USO volunteers and our service members.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Kraemer

Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee listens, discusses, visions, initiates, and oversees St. John's efforts to reach out to the Emmaus community to help meet the needs in whatever way we as a church are able. You, the congregation continue to support the ministries we bring to you and are a vital part of this work.

On - going social ministry programs that St. John's continues to be involved in:

- ✓ Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank packing team and food collection.
- ✓ Produce Exchange - Congregation members bring in excess produce they have grown and anyone can stop after services to select produce for a donation. The excess produce is taken to Groceries Plus, the food pantry at Bethel Bible Fellowship Church in Emmaus. The \$65 collected was given to the food pantry at Grace Lutheran Church.
- ✓ Groceries Plus at Bethel Bible Fellowship Church – Ongoing donations as requested.
- ✓ Bread for the World / Offering of Letters - BFTW is a nonpartisan Christian advocacy group that urges those who can make a difference, whether politically or personally, to maintain and hopefully increase funds to those in need here and abroad to help ensure food security. BFTW letter writing is done once or twice a year.
- ✓ Crop Walk - held October 13, 2024. Faith Drescher and the participants walked in Emmaus during the Sunday School hour. They raised a total of \$878.20 to help stop hunger.
- ✓ Angel Network - The Angel Network is a support system for families who reside in the East Penn School District. This fall we collected cans of tuna for their Thanksgiving food baskets and for their spring baskets we collected bars of soap.
- ✓ Lehigh Mission District Ingathering - scheduled for December 4, 2024 at our church. The Ingathering provides Christmas packages and gifts collected through the Lehigh Mission District Lutheran Churches to be given to institutions in the Lehigh Valley. The Outreach Committee coordinates and assists with the collection and distribution of gifts.
- ✓ Summer Ingathering - We collected items requested through May for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Catasauqua.
- ✓ Supporting the Military - The Outreach Committee has partnered with the Philadelphia Airport U.S.O. to collect items for use at their center. It is a welcome refuge from the stress of traveling, often to hostile areas. This is an ongoing project.
- ✓ St. Matthew's Clothes Closet - The Outreach Committee is asking the congregation to support this free and important service for our community. They accept gently used clothing items of any size and age on the first and third Saturday of the month from 10am to 1pm. If necessary, Outreach Committee members could assist with pick and drop off.
- ✓ The Conferences of Churches Back to School Drive – Items needed to start school were collected for children in need.

Current Outreach Committee members are Audra Berner, Debbie Yoder, Cheryl Kraemer, Faith Drescher, Pastor Timm and Martie Dech. We welcome anyone interested in helping on the Outreach Committee to join us on zoom the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm.

Respectively submitted,
Debbie Yoder
Outreach Committee

Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank (Outreach)

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 13.5 % of American households were food insecure in 2023.

In the Lehigh Valley, 1 in 4 children go to bed hungry every night.

Since 1978, The AAEFB has been fulfilling their mission of providing relief (daily) to those in Lehigh County suffering with hunger and food insecurity. They are helping to feed more than 1,800 families a month. Additional programs include:

Summer Kids Program - Meals to school -aged kids when they're not in school.

Senior Box Program - Nutritious shelf-stable food for 130 seniors monthly.

NEW Elderly Food Program - delivering healthy meals to seniors residing in senior housing units who cannot get to the food bank.

Thank you to all the St. John's volunteers who help at the food bank. Thank you also to all the church members who donate goods to the food bank. The food bank would not exist without the help of the churches in Lehigh County.

We are always looking for members who are willing to help at the food bank. We volunteer the 3rd Monday and Tuesday of each month, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 AM. If you're interested in seeing what we do, spend a morning with us! We provide transportation from the church. You can pick which day, Monday or Tuesday, that you want to volunteer. Call the church or Bob Cleaver at 610 533-8900 if interested.

Collection boxes for food donations are located in the church coat room.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Cleaver

Knitting for Charity

Knitting for Charity or KFC is a group of women from St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church as well as several friends in the community who knit, crochet, loom and sew hats, scarves, mittens and lap robes that we pass on to anyone in need of these items for the upcoming winter months. We meet for 2 hours 8 times a year at the church, but the bulk of our work is done independently at home.

We operate without a budget but applied for and received a Thrivent Action grant for \$250. This was used to purchase yarn and plastic containers to store our supplies and finished articles.

This year 147 hats, 43 hat and scarf sets and 12 lap robes were distributed to 9 different organizations in November. They include: East Penn Angel Network at Jefferson Elementary, St. Matthew's Clothes Closet, Turning Point, Lehigh Valley Health Network Premature Unit, the Children's Home in Easton, and Allentown Rescue Mission. This year we added Project Kindness, the CHEMO Bag and Christ Fellowship Church-Loads of Blessing to our list of organizations.

We are always appreciative of donated washable yarn and will teach any person interested in learning any of our homemade crafts. We hope to be able to make similar donations to these same organizations and to other groups who may be in need in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith M. Herb

Finance Committee

The primary responsibility of the Finance Committee is to oversee the financial affairs of the church, including prompt payment of all obligations, monthly reporting of financial status to Church Council, preparation & presentation to Church Council of a proposed budget, & forwarding of all applicable monies to the Synod.

During 2024, the average monthly income (based on 10 months) was \$19,850. Expenses at this time were approximately \$201,652, creating a deficit of \$3,200. Our insurance renewal will occur in December at a cost of approximately \$7,000 which will increase this deficit by the end of the year.

Furthermore, rental income decreased during 2024 due to a tenant eviction in April. Since then, progress has been slow in updating the apartment and getting it ready for a new tenant.

On a brighter note, the ending deficit would have been larger if it had not been for several members who responded to the special appeal in March. \$5,500 was received & used to pay current expenses. Major repairs to the exterior walls were also completed at a cost of \$9,290, but a member gave a donation to cover \$6,370 of this expense.

Another major expense was a new roof on the East & North Sides of the church. Total cost of this project is expected to be \$56,605. We are thankful we have the Rohrbach Fund which has enabled us to pay for the roof without obtaining a bank loan. We were fortunate to be able to pay for some of this cost with the monthly giving income, but the majority of the expense has been paid with the Rohrbach Fund monies. Since the Finance Committee is not starting a campaign to collect funds to help defray the cost of this project, we are asking members to make any contributions to the Roof Dedicated Fund whenever possible. In the meantime, each month, starting January 2025, \$1,000 of the current monthly giving will go towards repaying the loan from the Rohrbach Fund.

The Finance Committee has also approved Worship & Music's proposal of establishing a dedicated fund for special music. Members can make donations throughout the year to help sponsor "special instrumentalists & singers" for special occasions. Normally, special music is budgeted for only Easter & Christmas.

In preparing the 2025 budget, the approach was taken that income would remain the same as 2024. Since major expenses are now completed & the outlook for finding a full-time pastor is dim, we expect expenses to equal or slightly surpass the monthly budgeted income.

Special thanks to Anna Galante, Rebecca Williams, Brad Albright (church treasurer), & Peggy Duelfer for their dedication in maintaining the financial records.

Respectfully Submitted,
Annette Roth, Finance Chairperson

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee examined the records of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Emmaus and St. John's WELCA for the period ending December 31, 2023. All reports and statements were found to be accurate and properly recorded.

Thanks to the Audit Committee members: Robert Cleaver and Barbara LaMotte. Your service is much appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,
Annette Roth
Finance Chairman

Lutheran & Reformed Cemetery Association

St. John's Lutheran and St. John's UCC churches together in 1953 established St. John's Lutheran and Reformed Cemetery Association of Emmaus, Pennsylvania, as a not-for-profit corporation.

The Association Board includes one appointed non-voting member council member from each Cemetery congregation. The current voting Board members are:

President	Glenn Deischer	St. John's UCC
Vice President	John Ashcraft	St. John's Lutheran
Secretary/Treasurer	Annette Roth	St. John's Lutheran
Board Member	Thomas Gable	St. John's UCC

In 2022 the following transactions were completed: 1/01/23 to 11/30/2024:

Regular Burials	15
Cremations	16
Graves sold	6

As of October 31, the cemetery had a checking account balance of \$7,235.41

Our sincere thanks to our superintendent, Robert & Deborah Kline, and also the volunteers for all their help in maintaining and improving our cemeteries. Please direct your questions for all your questions regarding the cemetery, such as removal of seasonal plants, policies, cost of lots, etc., to a Board Member or contact Deborah Kline at 610-657-6473. In lieu of flower memorials, please remember your cemetery.

Respectfully submitted,

L & R Cemetery Board

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA)

Last year was the first year of WELCA at St. John's since Covid ended our meetings. We had a very successful year with an average of 22 people in attendance. Our September meeting was a birthday celebration for all. We enjoyed balloons, cake, ice cream, and a trip down memory lane. The following are the programs planned for 2024-2025:

- October 15, 2024: Bob Boehmer, local author, will bring his books and share experiences with us.
- November 19, 2024: Joy Paulson will present a program about Groceries Plus Food Bank at Bethel Bible Fellowship Church.
- December 17, 2024: 6pm Annual Christmas Party in the Parish Hall
- January 21, 2025: (Remember When) – St. John's 100th Anniversary. Bring a picture or share a memory. Learn about the stained-glass windows in the Parish Hall.
- February 18, 2025: Easter craft and making prayer beads.
- March 18, 2025: Glass Garden Art by Martha Reitz.
- April 15, 2025: Mike Garrison, German teacher, will discuss his month-long trip to Germany.
- May 20, 2025: Presentation by St. Lukes Rehab.
- June 18, 2025: Picnic in the Parish Hall with boom box bingo.

An invitation is extended to all women, members, and friends of St. John's, to attend any or all of the programs we have planned. Our mission is to provide Growth, Community and Action for the women of our congregation. We meet the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The programs and activities provide information and support to strengthen our daily ministries. Each meeting includes fellowship which fosters our community and friendships. If transportation is needed, please call the church office.

Thank you to our Officers:

Vice President - Sandy Farkas

Secretary - Sandy Eckroth

Treasurer - Barbara Lamotte

Respectively submitted,
President Debbie Yoder