

The St. John's Journal Community Connect



A Monthly publication of St. John's Lutheran Church, Depew, New York

December 2025

As we come to the close of this remarkable year, we pause with grateful hearts to thank the Lord for His abundant blessings upon our St. John's family. In October, we celebrated 130 years of God's faithfulness—a testimony to Christ's unchanging love and the generations who have worshiped, served, and shared the Gospel in this place. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8), and this year has reminded us just how true those words remain.

We also rejoice in the 60-year milestone of our radio ministry, a mission that has carried Christ's Word far beyond the walls of our sanctuary. Through decades of changing technology and changing times, the proclamation of Law and Gospel has continued uninterrupted—an incredible blessing to countless listeners near and far.

Our congregation has shown extraordinary support for the future generation of our church. Through a successful youth fundraiser, we are able to send our youth group and their dedicated advisors to the national convention in New Orleans—a trip that will strengthen their faith, deepen their friendships, and root them more firmly in Christ and His Church.

And we give thanks for the opportunity to support one of our own, Tony Martino, as he prepares for education in the pastoral ministry program. It is a joy to watch God continue to raise up servants from within our congregation to share His Word and care for His people.

To all who gave their time, prayers, gifts, and God-given talents throughout this year—thank you. May the Lord continue to bless our congregation as we finish 2025 and step into a new year with hope, gratitude, and unwavering trust in His promises.

-Jamie Bluhm
Council President



The Mission of St. John's is grounded in the presence of Christ in God's Word and in the Sacraments. We are called by the Holy Spirit to spread the Kingdom of God through ministering to all of our members and sharing the love of Christ with all people by preaching the true Word of God, providing ongoing Biblical education for spiritual growth and reaching others with God's love in all we say or do.

Weekly Worship

Sunday Traditional Worship
8:30am

Sunday Contemporary Worship 11:15am

Sunday Evening Blended
Worship 4:30pm

Sunday Morning BLAST!
September—June 10:00am
Worship Broadcast
WXRL— AM 1300 / FM 95.5
at 11:00am

December Mission and Ministry Prayers

Summit Life—O God, Creator of Life, You knit us together in the wombs of our mothers, and You desire us to have life. Look in mercy and love upon all the precious lives of children yet unborn. Influence all mothers, our society, and the church that together we might be about the business of life preservation from natural birth to natural death. Help all of us to be a voice box and advocate for the unborn. We pray a special prayer this day on behalf of THE SUMMIT LIFE OUTREACH CENTER. Bless all involved as they minister to families with compassion and care.

Café and Arise & Shine

Fulfilling God, you give us your Word for our spiritual nourishment. Bless the ST. JOHN'S C.A.F.E./ARISE & SHINE GROUPS as they fellowship with each other and gather around your Word. Open the hearts and minds of all gathered so that bonds might be cultivated and faith strengthened.

Lectionary & Communion Schedule

Dec. 7, 2025
Advent 2—Is. 53:15; Rom 8:35-39; Lk 1:5-25

Dec 14 2025
Advent 3—Is. 7:10-17; Acts 4:5-12; Lk 1:26-38

Dec 21, 2025
Advent 4—Gen 18:1-14; 1 Pet 4:8-10; Lk 1:39-45

Dec 28, 2025
Christmas 1—Is 63:7-9; Ps 148; Heb2:10-18; Matt 2:13-23



November Council Highlights

As reported on 11/10/25

- New Business— Donation allocation made to Tri-Community Pantry and Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Lowering cost of radio broadcast sponsorship from \$180 to \$150 per service with balance being covered by Grace Blackwell Media Fund. Cost covered \$1,590/year.
- Elders— Rod Lorenz— Oversee elections and voting. Longest Night and Holiday Schedule.
- Stewardship— Ed Lorenz— Routine giving, nothing changed with compared to expenses. Still working on Time and Talents. How much time is given back to religion or religious studies. Possible challenge to spend time each day in the Word.
- Family Ministry— Jen Anthony— Congregation event at Wehrle Golf Dome in Dec. Youth Christmas Outing at Cheektowaga Country Club mini golf and arcade.
- Trustees— Larry R., Joe M., Norm H.— Security cameras. Selected Fire and Safety Systems to upgrade interior and exterior cameras.
- Board of Education— Kim Lorenz— Christmas Pageant 12/21 at 11:15 service. Family Service was 11/16. Fall mission project 11/16 to 12/14. Serving in Jesus Name Compassion International.
- Shepherd's Staff— Rae Carier— Thanksgiving food collection for food pantry and also for 2 families in Depew. Christmas collection for food pantry and 2 families. Poinsettias ordered.



Next Meeting: 12/8/25 7:00pm

Dates to remember: Election & Budget Vote 12/7

Financial Director's Report— as of 11/30/2025 — Budget: \$264.832

	This YTD	Last YTD	Percentage
Giving	\$274,352	\$244,307	Up 12.3%
Ministry Expense	\$255,670	\$247,557	Up 3.3%
Net Income	\$18,382	(\$3,250)	

Radio Broadcast	November 2025
Sponsored	\$8,305
Air Time (cost to WXRL)	\$8,820
	(Loss of \$515 = 3 Sponsorships)

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Thank you for the ongoing spiritual, prayerful, and financial support.
Your giving makes a difference in our lives and our community.

Our Financial Mission Plan for spreading the Gospel to carry out ministry through St. John's.

\$297,696—Budget for 2026 for Congregational Forum on 11/30/25
& Congregational Vote on 12/07/25

Besides the everyday increases we all live with, the following are changing:

1. Radio Broadcast & Sponsorship to decrease from \$180 to \$150. Balance will be deducted from the Grace Blackwell/Media Fund.
2. Christian Ed. Moved from Budget to dedicated Fund Account

St. John's Lutheran Church Proposed Budget 2026

Missions	\$24,040	Pastor	\$112,100
Worship Ministry Total	\$4,300	Staff Payroll	\$54,781
Boards	\$12,750	Bldg, Grounds Maint.	\$56,725
Church Office/Tech/Internet	\$33,000	Proposed Annual Budget	\$297,696

2026 Budget of \$ 297,696 is an increase of 3% over 2025

Suggested increase in support of our Ministry

Currently Weekly Giving	3.0% Increase	Blessed Round Up
\$10	\$0.30	\$10.00
\$20	\$0.60	\$21.00
\$25	\$0.75	\$26.00
\$30	\$0.90	\$31.00
\$50	\$1.50	\$52.00
\$75	\$2.25	\$78.00
\$100	\$3.00	\$103.00
\$150	\$4.50	\$155.00
\$200	\$6.00	\$206.00

Budget Forum: 11/30/25

Election and Budget Vote: 12/7/25

Those Serving November 2025

	8:30AM		11:15AM	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Lector</u>
12/7	Jim Kless	Karen Shafer	John Fragale	John Fragale
12/14	Jim Kless	Karen Shafer	John Fragale	John Fragale
12/21	Jim Kless	Karen Shafer	John Fragale	John Fragale
12/24	Christmas Eve 2:30PM: Elder: Betty Cavaleri—Lector:			
12/24	Christmas Eve 4:30PM: Elder: Ken Schabert—Lector:			
12/24	Christmas Eve 7:00PM: Elder: Barb Perry — Lector; Karen Shafter			
12/25	Christmas Day 10am: Elder: John Gauthier—Lector:			
12/28	Jim Kless	Ed & Deann Lorenz	John Fragale	John Fragale
<u>4:30 PM</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>December Altar Guild</u>	
12/7	John Fragale	John Fragale	Nick & Alex Krupa	
12/14	Barb Perry	Barb Perry		
12/21 7:00 PM	Longest Night: El- der: Betty Cavaleri	Longest Night Lector: Rod Lorenz		
12/28	Karen Dowdall	Karen Dowdall		



Interested in serving as a Lector?
Sign up on the bulletin board near
the office!



Radio Broadcast Sponsorship & Altar Flower Sponsorship sheets are up
for 2026!



The Chosen Watch Party

Join us on December 13th for the
The Chosen Watch Party
Sign up sheet on the bulletin board
in the Narthex

Questions? Call Barb Perry : 716-983-7064

Holy Grounds

**Volunteer to bring in
baked goods!**



Sign up sheet in Narthex

November Radio and Flower Sponsorships

11/2	Tom & Sue Bluhm <i>In celebration of our granddaughter, Allyson's birthday. Also, in celebration of sister, Kathy's life.</i>	Sue & Gary Hillman <i>In honor of our 51st Wedding Anniversary and all blessings we've received.</i>
11/9	From Friends of St. John's <i>To the Glory of God!</i>	Jacquelyn Kraebel <i>In loving memory of my husband, Larry on what would have been our 41st Anniversary on November 10th and for his birthday on November 13th.</i>
11/16	Ed & Deann Lorenz <i>In thanksgiving to our gracious and loving God, for Pastor, our church, and our German grandparents, Augusta & Herman Deutschlander, who kept the faith and began St. John's 130 years ago. We remember them.</i>	Dawn & Mark Smith <i>In loving memory of our parents and for all of God's blessings.</i>
11/23	Edward & Dolores Mau <i>In celebration of our 54th Wedding Anniversary on November 20th, with God's love and many blessings.</i>	The AfterBuffalo Family <i>To the Glory of God for all the blessings He has given to our family. In thankfulness for everything in our lives.</i>
11/30	The Sabadasz Family <i>In remembrance of Marc Garrison on the 15th Anniversary of going home to be with the Lord. We miss you, Marc. You left us with wonderful memories.</i>	Richard & Suzanne Sabadasz <i>In gratitude and thankfulness to Pastor Galen and our church family for the love and support during the past 15 years. We are blessed.</i>

Interested in sponsoring a broadcast or flowers?

Openings are still available!

Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board near the church office.

Full broadcast is \$180.00 (or \$45.00 per line)



THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to share prayers, kind words, cards, and kindness with my husband, Jason, and our family over the past few weeks. Your love and support have been a true blessing and a deep comfort to us as we walk through this season of life. Many blessing to all - Jason, Jamie, Matthew and Nathan Bluhm



WINTER MISSION PROJECT

Our Winter mission project supports Compassion International. Compassion International works to end child poverty by partnering with local churches in impoverished communities throughout Africa, Asia, Central America, the Caribbean and South America. We will be collecting donations through December 21st. Donations collected will go towards needs such as a gift of live chickens for families in poverty or children's bibles written in their own language. Checks can be made out St. John's Lutheran Church in Depew. Additional information will be provided in the Narthex.



Arise and Shine
1st & 3rd Thursdays
of the month at 10am



3rd Thursday
of the month
at 6:00pm

FAMILY

COLF NIGHT

at the Wehrle Golf Dome

TUESDAY DECEMBER 30TH, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

**COST: \$5/PERSON
FOR 8 YRS & UP**



**TRADITIONAL COLF STALLS
TOP TRACER SIMULATOR BAYS**

SIGN-UP SHEET ON NARTHEX BULLETIN BOARD



ST. JOHN'S WILL BE COLLECTING GIFTS
AND GIFT CARDS (TARGET AND
WALMART) TO BENEFIT CHILDREN AND
SENIORS IN THE DEPEW COMMUNITY TO
BE DISTRIBUTED THRU THE DEPEW
COMMUNITY CENTER.

TAGS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE TREE
STARTING SUNDAY 12/7 FOR ANYONE TO
TAKE. GIFTS AND GIFT CARDS ARE DUE
NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, DEC 21ST AND
SHOULD BE WRAPPED WITH THE TAG
ATTACHED. ANY QUESTIONS CAN BE
DIRECTED TO JEN ANTHONY
AT 716- 812-3744.

Christmas Meals for Depew Families

WE WILL AGAIN COLLECT FOOD FOR CHRISTMAS MEALS TO BENEFIT
TWO FAMILIES IN OUR DEPEW COMMUNITY.

SIGN-UP SHEET POSTED IN
THE NARTHEX.

PLEASE CONTACT RAE CARRIER
AT 716-949-5323



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT ST. JOHN'S

Weekly Sunday Advent Worship

8:30am (Traditional)

11:15am (Contemporary)

4:30pm (Traditional)

Children's Christmas Worship and Pageant

December 21st at 11:15am

(Dress Rehearsal December 20th at 10:00am)

Longest Night-Blue Christmas

December 21st at 7:00pm

Christmas Eve

December 24th

-2:30pm- Traditional w/ Holy Communion

-4:30pm- Traditional Family Service

7:00pm- Traditional with Choir

(all three services with candlelight-silent night)

Christmas Day

December 25th at 10:00am (Holy Communion)



BETTY	cavalieri	1
ALEX	KRUPA	1
JOHN	PRESTON	1
CHRISTINE	BLUHM	1
ELAINE	GRZANKOWSKI	3
JULIanna	BURNHAM	3
GREGORY	YASKOW	5
MATTHEW	BECK	7
SUZANNE	SABADASZ	8
RICHARD	SABADASZ	9
SANDRA	HAASE	9
AMZIE	LORENZ	13
NATHAN	BLUHM	13
TAYLOR	KEOHANE	16
SUSAN	PLEWIK	17
BARBARA	LONEY	18
KATHLEEN	EARSING	19
ROSEMARIE	CONTELLA	20
TRACY	LUMB	20
ELLA	SILAKOWSKI	21
DOUGLAS	RUTKOWSKI	24
JOSEPH	WISNIEWSKI	26
BRIAN	VANDEWARK	31
DANIEL	VANDEWARK	31

DECEMBER



4	KATHLEEN & BRUCE EARSING
12	WAYNE & KAREN SHAFER

Almighty God, as you made this night glad with the songs of angels and filled it with the brightness of the true Light, let the Light of Christ shine among us that we, too, may give you everlasting praise; through Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

67 Litchfield Ave.
Depew, New York 14043

Phone: (716) 683-3947
secretary@sjlcdepew.com
pastor@sjlcdepew.com
Web: www.sjlcdepew.com



St. John's is a
member
congregation
of the LCMS.

Pastor

Rev. Galen M. Purpura Jr.

Pastoral Assistant

Rev. Howard Warner

Organist

Mr. Camden Church

Contemporary Music Leader

Mr. RJ Nieman

**ST. JOHN'S OFFICERS:****President:**

Jamie Bluhm
(President@sjlcdepew.com)

Elders:

(Elders@sjlcdepew.com)
Rod Lorenz (Chair)
Betty Cavaleri
Karen Dowdall
John Fragale, Jr.
John Gauthier
Jim Kless
Jackie Kraebel (Alt)
Amy Krupa
Leslie Maciejewski (Alt)
Barb Perry
Bob Plewik
Steve Plewik
John Preston
Ken Schabert

Board of Trustees:

(Trustees@sjlcdepew.com)
Larry Rindfuss
Joe Momot
Norm Hirschey

Secretary of the Council:

Susan Vriesen
(CouncilSec@sjlcdepew.com)

Financial Director:

Mike Brown
(finance@sjlcdepew.com)

Board of Education Chair:

Kim Lorenz
(BoardofEd@sjlcdepew.com)

**Youth & Family Ministry
Chair:**

Jen Anthony
(FamilyMin@sjlcdepew.com)

Stewardship Chair:

Ed Lorenz
(Stewardship@sjlcdepew.com)

Shepherds Staff Chair:

Rae Carier
(shepherdsStaff@sjlcdepew.com)

Sunday School**Superintendent:**

Chandra Jagielo
(SundaySchool@sjlcdepew.com)

Prayer Chain:

Jim Kless

Radio Announcers:

Jim Kless
John Gauthier
Karen Lorenz
Darlene Schwenk
Suzanne Sabadasz

Altar Guild Chair:

Betty Cavaleri

Communion Assistants:

Tom Bluhm
Rod Lorenz
Gary Hillman
Bob Chapman
Bob Plewik

Communion Deacons:

Betty Cavaleri
Caroline Coffed
Deann Lorenz
Judy McMahon