

All Around Arndt's - February 16, 2026

**Arndt's Lutheran Church
1851 Arndt Road, Easton, PA 18040
610-253-3732**

Website: www.arndtslutheranchurch.org.
Email: arndts.lutheranchurch@rcn.com



Arndt's Bicentennial Year 2026

To commemorate this historic milestone of Arndt's Lutheran Church, we are hosting a year-round calendar of events. We look forward to seeing you at Arndt's each week as we celebrate the history of our beautiful church.

2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS		
January 18th 10:30 AM The Arndt's Story	February 15th 10:30 AM Leadership in Action	March 15th 10:30 AM Church Ministries
April 19th 10:30 AM Community Outreach	May 17th 10:30 AM Music Ministry	June 20th 2:00 PM Lawn Social
July 19th 9:30 AM Christian Education	August 16th 9:30 AM 68 Years of Scouting	September 20th 10:30 AM Fellowship
October 18th 10:30 AM Women's Ministry	November 15th 12 Noon Luncheon The Next 200 Years	December 20th 10:30 AM The Year in Review

A printed copy of the History of Arndt's Church, recently presented by Jean Ruschman, can be found at the end of this weeks' edition of All Around Arndt's. Printed copies are also available in the narthex.

Attendance and Offering:

February 15, 2026

Attendance - 50

Offering – \$1,443.54

Let us pray for families of Arndt's:

Gail Kleckner; Ed and Linda Kleppinger; Gary and Missy Kline; Andrew Koch; Donald and Donna Koch; Joan and Kevin Kocher; Pastor Harry and Janet Kocotos; Charles and Jane Kohler; Christine, Richard and Caitlyn Krahling; John, Kirsten, AJ and Jordan Kutza.

Winter Weather Policy: In the event of inclement weather on a Sunday, we will make a decision to cancel in-person worship and move to Zoom. Below is the Zoom invitation that you should use to participate, either by computer or phone, when in-person worship is canceled. **Reminder: Zoom will only be used when in-person worship is canceled.**

Jean Huber is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Sunday Worship – Only when in-person worship is canceled due to weather.

Time: Jan 25, 2026 10:30 a.m. and every week on Sunday when in-person worship is canceled.

Join Zoom Meeting on Computer:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81853887110?pwd=78fJZ1kdDbwzodHYzxMnsgNOzuVeuC.1>

Meeting ID: 818 5388 7110

Passcode: 202714

Join Zoom Meeting by Phone:

1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 818 5388-7110

Passcode: 202714

**Check for cancellations on WFMZ Channel 69 or on our church website,
arndtslutheranchurch.com**

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Announcements and Reminders

Ash Wednesday Service: We begin the season of Lent on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, with an Ash Wednesday Service at 7:00 p.m., with Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes.

Action Team Planning Meeting: The annual meeting to plan Thrivent Action Teams will be held after worship on Sunday, March 8th (postponed from February). Lunch will be provided. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex to help us plan for the food order.

All members are encouraged to attend, whether a present Thrivent member or someone who wants to learn more about the Action Team program. Associate memberships are available for \$19.95 and you can obtain one Action Team grant per year as an associate member to be part of the program.

Year-End Giving Statements: Arndt's Church giving statements for 2025 are available if you would like a copy for income tax purposes. Please sign the "2025 Giving Statement" list in the narthex and your statement will be printed for you.

Cold-Weather Ministry: St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 330 Ferry Street in Easton, is accepting donations of coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, hats, scarves and gloves as part of an ongoing ministry to assist those persons in the Easton area community who are homeless and/or in need of these necessities. Every day, several items are hung on the fence outside the church for people to take as needed.

Arndt's will be collecting these requested items and delivering them to St. John's for them to use in this ministry. There is a collection bin in the coat room for your donations.

Worship Minister Volunteers: Worship Minister volunteers are always needed to assist during worship on a Sunday morning. If you would like to volunteer, please sign the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in the coat room area. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

Church Calendar on Arndt's Website: For up-to-date information on dates and times of services and activities at the church, check out the 'Calendar' tab on the Arndt's website, www.arndtslutheranchurch.org.

Backpack Pals Program: Arndt's Church continues to collect applesauce packs for the Backpack Pals program—either the 4-cup or 6-cup packages, unsweetened preferred. Currently, the Backpack Pals program is distributing approximately 555 bags each month. Your willingness to donate to this program is appreciated

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ANNUAL TAKE-OUT LASAGNA DINNER



Saturday, March 21, 2026

Enjoy a homemade Italian meal while raising funds for Arndt's. Dinner includes lasagna, Italian roll, salad, and dessert. All for only \$15 per person. Pick up time is from 5:00-6:00 p.m. at Arndt's Church.

To reserve meals, please use the order form at the end of this newsletter. Order forms are also on the counter in the narthex and on the church website www.arndtslutheranchurch.org

Order forms with payment may be placed in the red & white box in the Narthex or mailed to the church.

All meals must be pre-ordered and paid for no later than Sunday, March 8.

Please make checks payable to *Arndt's Lutheran Church*.

Questions? Contact Gerry Burns at 610-349-8746 or gerib1968@gmail.com

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Lasagna Dinner Committees

PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX



Lasagna Dinner Sous Chefs Needed!

If you enjoy cooking and can help prep for our lasagna dinner, please sign up in the Narthex. We will prep on Friday, March 20 beginning at 9:30 in Fellowship Hall. All instructions and supplies will be provided. We will prep together as a team.

Lasagna Pans needed

If you have a 9"x12" glass lasagna pan that we could borrow for the lasagna dinner, please sign up in the Narthex. Pans can be put in the kitchen beginning Sunday, March 8 and will be returned the week following the dinner. Thank you!

Desserts Needed

We are looking for donations of Brownies or Cookies for the dinner. If you can help with this, please sign up in the Narthex. Dessert items may be delivered to Fellowship Hall on Friday, March 20 at 10 a.m. or Saturday, March 21 at 11 a.m.

Meal packers and servers

If you can help pack meals and/or distribute them on Saturday, March 21, please sign up in the Narthex. Packers are needed at 3:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall and distribution will be from 5:00-6:00 p.m. in the lounge.

Any questions, please contact Gerry Burns at 610-349-8746.

Arndt's Weekly Calendar

Tuesday, February 17, 2026: Open Arms Senior Connection. 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 17, 2026: Boy Scout Meeting, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 17, 2026: Bible Study on Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

Jean Huber is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Bible study

Time: Beginning January 20, 2026 and every week thereafter on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting by Computer:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81797765558?pwd=q4Yi9crl6iYT0AcCgW9bf9VbAtp7O4.1>

Meeting ID: 817 9776 5558. Passcode: 672799

Join Zoom Meeting by Telephone:

1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 817 9776 5558. Passcode: 672799

Wednesday, February 18, 2026: Country Line Dance Class – 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., (this week only).

Friday, February 20, 2026: Covered Dish Supper and Game Night, 6:00p.m. – Bring a covered dish to share and your favorite board games.

Saturday, February 21, 2026: Private Party in Fellowship Hall, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 22, 2026: Confirmation Class, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, February 22, 2026: Children's Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, February 22, 2026: First Sunday in Lent – Service of Holy Communion, 10:30 a.m., followed by the Annual Congregational Meeting with review of reports of committees and groups.

Monday, February 23, 2026: Lawn Social Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Looking Ahead

Sunday, March 8, 2026: Action Team Planning Meeting following worship. Lunch will be provided.

Sunday, March 15, 2026: Potato Bar following worship sponsored by Open Arms. Baked potatoes with toppings. Donations gratefully accepted to benefit the Open Arms Senior Connection program.

NEW FACEBOOK PAGE

Arndt's Lutheran Church has so much to offer our community. In an effort to spread the word about our church, worship and activities, we have created a new Facebook page:

Arndt's Lutheran Church of Forks Township, PA.

If you use social media, please go into our page and click on "follow." The more people that "follow" the page, the more likely it will appear on Facebook feeds and hopefully generate interest in Arndt's church. Our goal is to provide church information, special announcements, important dates, photos and more.

The first post that now appears on our Facebook page reads:

Arndt's Lutheran Church history dates back to 1731, when the Hans Arndt family emigrated from Germany to America. His second son, Major Jacob Arndt acquired land along Bushkill Creek in 1760 where he and his wife would raise their family. J. Henry Messinger one the largest landowners in Forks Township, would deed land adjacent to the Arndt property that would be the beginning of a Christian community in Forks Township. In August 1826, Arndt's Church, named after Jacob's oldest son, John, became a reality. In 2026, we will celebrate our Bicentennial with special monthly events and services. All are welcome at Arndt's church and we hope you visit this new page often.

If you would like to post an announcement or photos, please contact Gerry Burns at gerib1968@gmail.com

Let's show the Lehigh Valley that the small church on the hill in Forks Township is a great place to be!

PHOTOS NEEDED

In preparation for the Bicentennial Celebration of Arndt's, we are looking for photographs and other memorabilia about Arndt's Lutheran Church and our church community. If you can lend us photos from years gone by (worship services, special events, fundraisers, etc.) we would appreciate it. **All photos will be returned.** Please put your name, address, and phone number on the back of each photo. Photos may be placed in the labeled box on the counter in the Narthex. Thank you in advance for your help in making this a special year for our Arndt's community.

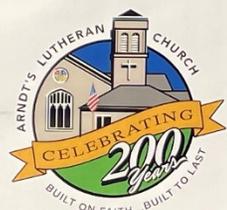


Arndt's Lutheran Church

CELEBRATING

200 YEARS

1826 - 2026



A History of Arndt's Lutheran Church - January 25, 2026

I was asked several months ago by a member of the anniversary committee if I would talk about the history of Arndt's Church. Being a life-long member of Arndt's and coming from several generations of life-long members, I agreed. I have derived my information from previous histories written over the years by various people including a former pastor, Rev. Brendle who served the Reformed congregation for 40 years, my grandfather who wrote a history for the 100th anniversary, another former pastor, Rev. Dr. Dennis Ritter who served our congregation for 13 years, and an updated history compiled by my brother, Richard Siegfried. There are also numerous books and documents from my brother's extensive collection that lent additional information.

The history of Arndt's begins with John Arndt and J. Henry Messinger and the Arndt and Messinger Graveyard Association. Let's go back in their family history a bit to see how they came to live in this area.

The Hans Arndt family emigrated from Anhalt Germany to America in 1731. They landed in Philadelphia and lived for a time in Germantown before moving to Bucks County. On January 25, 1760 Jacob Arndt (son of Hans) acquired a tract of land along the Bushkill Creek in Northampton County consisting of a house, a grist mill, a saw mill and 148 acres of land. This brought the Arndt family to this immediate vicinity. Jacob fought in the French and Indian Wars and other Indian uprisings. He was a close friend of Conrad Weiser, the Indian agent and Lutheran leader. John Arndt was the oldest son of Jacob. It is from John that our church derived its name. John fought in the American Revolution.

Similarly, the Michael Messinger family emigrated from Basil, Switzerland to America in 1732. They also acquired land in this area along the Bushkill Creek in 1763. Michael Messinger became one of the largest landowners in Forks Township at that time. The Messinger grist mill was in the area known today as Penn Pump. The Messinger Mill became known as Walter's Upper Mill and the Arndt Mill was known as Walter's Lower Mill. This set the stage for the

beginning of a Christian community in this place.

The cemetery across the street from this building was at first the Arndt family graveyard. In January 1776 John's 3 day-old daughter was the first interment followed 2 weeks later by his wife. John deeded a small tract of land in 1807 as a community cemetery. Four years later his neighbor, John Henry Messinger (grandson of Michael Messinger), deeded an adjacent piece of land to this purpose and in 1818, rules and regulations were recorded for the Arndt and Messinger Graveyard Association.

Records indicate the Arndt's congregation was organized in 1826. However, it seems very likely that there were worship services performed at an earlier date. The early records of the First Reformed Church and St. John's Lutheran Church of Easton and Old Williams Church of Williams Township contain baptismal and funeral records for both the Arndt and Messinger families as early as 1769. These records show that numerous funeral services were held at the Arndt burial grounds. There is no doubt that these early burial grounds provided some sort of shelter and from these the early congregations came into existence to provide better accommodations and more frequent worship services. Thus on April 13, 1826 at a meeting of the Arndt and Messinger Graveyard Association, it was decided to erect a building to be used as a school and to have occasional church services, in particular for funerals. The first building was erected overlooking the Bushkill at a cost of \$1,269.15.

In this first building the church and school rooms were separated by large doors. These doors were hung on hinges and during religious services were fastened by hooks to the ceiling, thus opening the entire space up to one large room. The building was occupied for this double purpose for eleven years from 1826 to 1837, when the school was discontinued. The Reformed congregation at Arndt's was regarded for a long time as a branch of the First Reformed on 3rd St. in Easton (the mother church). It was as late as 1847 that the Reformed worshippers at Arndt's became an independent congregation from the First Reformed Church in Easton.

Soon a large industry brought a great many people to reside along the Bushkill, and as the population increased year by year, the old stone building became too small to accommodate all who wished to worship there. In the spring of 1855 it was determined to take down the old building and to erect a new and larger house of worship. The cornerstone of the present building was laid in 1855 and dedicated on Christmas of the same year. The 1855 building was the size of our nave. There was no chancel or sacristy and there were no stained glass windows. The door was in the back where the large stained glass window is now and the organ was in the balcony.

The Sunday School was started about 1860 in the Polk School House. It was moved to the church in 1874. (This building is now a white brick residence on Tatamy Road just south of Bushkill Park).

In 1891 the graveyard was almost full so the congregation purchased 3 acres of land to add to the existing cemetery. This increased the total area of today's cemetery to 4 acres.

From 1871 to 1940 the Lutheran congregation was blessed with a very stable pastoral situation, having only two pastors serve those 69 years. The Reformed congregation also was fairly stable with one pastor serving for 53 years.

During this time a major addition to the building was begun in 1914 with the laying of the cornerstone for a Sunday School and bell tower addition. The work was completed and consecrated in 1916. This addition included the chancel and sacristy, the balcony was removed and the organ placed up front where it is today (a different organ than this one), stain glassed windows, the Sunday School room (known today as the overflow room), and a bell tower. It was during this time that the "Willing Workers" group was begun. It was a group made up of members from both congregations (Lutheran and Reformed) that worked together and raised funds to get things done around the church. Take a look at the stained glass windows in the overflow room which were funded by the Willing Workers. Take a

closer look at the other stained glass windows around the sanctuary which were sponsored by congregational families. A Ladies Bible Class was also organized in 1917 (again a union group).

Later in 1926 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the congregation, new Mueller pipe organ was dedicated and installed for \$5,000. In 1940 the Lutheran Ushers group gave the baptismal font that is still in use today. The rededication of Arndt and Messinger Union Church took place on Dec. 1, 1940. This included repainted woodwork and pews, the refrescoed walls and ceiling, and the new electric light system. New carpeting was purchased by the Willing Workers.

The post-World War II period saw more change to the building. In 1947 additions were made to the 1926 organ. The chimes were added in honor of those who served in the Armed Forces during World War I and World War II. A plaque is located at the front of our sanctuary. The Ladies Bible Class purchased new metal offering plates on July 1, 1948. On Sept. 20, 1949 the Lutheran Ushers group purchased the 4 acres to the east side of the building over to Bushkill Drive for \$3000 from Fred Lieb. The church then bought this land from the Lutheran Ushers in 1949 for \$2500. On November 14, 1949 the road on the east side of the church and down the back hill to Bushkill Drive was vacated by the Forks Township Commissioners.

An observance of the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Arndt & Messinger Union Church was held in 1951 with both a morning and evening service with sermons given by several guest preachers from the Reformed Seminary and the Lutheran Seminary. The church choir gave a special program at the morning service and the senior, junior, and young people's choir from Forks Church sang at the evening service.

In July 1957 the choir loft was enlarged to its present size. Through most of the 1950s members hand dug the area we now call Fellowship Hall, saving the congregation about \$40,00.00. Roy Fennel was contracted to finish off the addition for \$30,870 and to add

the narthex, a stairway, a kitchen, and indoor bathroom facilities. Upon completion the children's Sunday School moved to fellowship hall and the Ladies Bible Class purchased 12 tables and 100 folding chairs for use in this space. This major addition and renovations were dedicated in June of 1959.

Beginning in May 1957, several men began working to organize a Boy Scout troop at Arndt's. A special service was held on Sunday evening December 1, 1957 to mark the beginning of our Troop 29. The charter was presented at that time and a Tenderfoot Investiture held. Installation of the officers and leaders rounded out the service. The original scouts were Charles Brown, Jack Eldridge, Thomas Eldridge, Charles Hart, Daryl Heavener, Gary Kocher, Fred Lieb, Edgar Rape, Harvey Rice, Robert Pellen, Lee Shafer, and David Siegfried.

The Women's Guild of UCC bought a set of china in 1960 and a mortgage burning celebration was held in January of 1962 rejoicing that the debt was paid off in 3 short years! The parsonage was purchased in 1964 for a cost of \$20,000.

The 1950s and 1960s were less peaceful times for the church. The U.S. was changing and suburbia was transforming the farmlands that surrounded the church into yards. No longer were union churches thriving as they once had. Although Arndt's remained fairly strong, a number of short-term pastorates and efforts by both the Lutheran and the Reformed Conference to dissolve the union church arrangement, finally resulted in the UCC congregation being disbanded. The Lutheran congregation assumed full ownership of the building on December 5, 1971 buying out the interests of the UCC congregation for \$15,000 to be paid over 5 years @ \$3,000/year with no interest.

Immediately upon the dissolution of the union church in 1971, Arndt's encountered some stormy times. Membership declined and financial woes mounted. The Synod placed the congregation under Synodical administration and sought to work with the congregation to rejuvenate it.

A flagpole installation (3 flag poles) dedicatory service with Presentation of Flags ceremony was held on September 14, 1975 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Arndt's Church and the 200th anniversary of the United States. There were several local dignitaries present, U.S. Representative Fred B. Rooney, as well as several VFW posts and uniformed Continental Marine and Continental Soldier. There were 4 flags presented: "The Stars and Stripes" which flew over the U.S. Capitol, the "Betsy Ross" flag, the "Historic Easton Flag", and the "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania" flag. Mr. Max Pellen was the chairman of the Bicentennial-Sesquicentennial committee of Arndt's Church.

In April 1977 the Rev. Dennis Ritter was called and the years following the congregation grew in membership, financial support of the congregation and the wider church, and in the variety of our programming. The organ was renovated in 1978 and the sanctuary was completely renovated in 1982. This included wall and ceiling repair and painting, floors, pews and wainscoting refinished, new receptacles and extensive rewiring all at a cost of \$28,000. New carpeting was purchased by the Lutheran Women's Group. Do any of you remember when we held worship services in the basement during this time of renovation?

In 1985 plans were made to conduct a capital funds drive to build an addition to the church building. The "Stepping Out in Faith" campaign started the following year and on Sunday June 28, 1987 ground was officially broken for the new addition. The addition included classrooms, choir room, offices, lounge, and handicapped accessible bathrooms. On March 31, 1988 a contract was signed for the paving of the parking lot. A special dedication celebrating the completion of the new addition was held in May 1988.

In 1989 the congregation co-sponsored along with St. Paul's III and St. Andrew's the relocation of an Amerasian family. On September 5, 1990 the doors to Arndt's Nursery School were opened to the first group of preschoolers (14). Enrollment more than doubled for the following year. The preschool operated for thirty years, closing their doors during the

pandemic of 2020. They held their final graduation ceremony in the parking lot in June 2020.

On September 24, 1990, the Rev. David Zellmer was called as pastor and he and his wife Kristine relocated from Nebraska. They were here 4 years until he was called back to their midwest roots to Milwaukee Wisconsin.

On January 8, 1995 the Rev. Sara Bechtel preached her call sermon here at Arndt's and was unanimously elected to serve Arndt's. She and her husband Steve Bueker relocated from the Baltimore area.

In October 2002, the Rev. Donald Billeck joined Arndt's as the interim pastor. His new leadership role was to help the congregation gain a new focus and search for a new leader for our congregation. He brought many years of experience in assisting congregations find a new pastor. On November 1, 2004 the Rev Jean Huber accepted a call to Arndt's and a little over a year ago, we celebrated our 20th year together! Under her leadership we have grown closer together and began many new ministries of outreach to the community.

In January 2008, Arndt's congratulated the director of music, Jeff Kline, on the occasion of his 25th anniversary at Arndt's Church. In April of 2010 the Senior Connections Program, Open Arms, was started at Arndt's. It is a much needed social program for our senior citizens in the community. In December of 2010, the congregation unanimously agreed to designate Arndt's as a "Reconciling in Christ" congregation. Everyone is welcome to come as they are and enjoy the riches of God's blessings. In August of 2010 a pavilion was erected in memory of Charlie Kelly, a longtime member. The pavilion has been a great asset for our church and the community. It has been used for outdoor worship, church picnics, VBS, hymn sings, Boy Scouts, Live Nativity, preschool, weddings, baptisms, and private parties. On February 19, 2011 the ordination of Daniel Brettell, a son of the congregation, was held at Arndt's. The Rev. Dr. Samuel Zeiser, bishop of the Northeast Pennsylvania Synod, presided with the Rev. Jean Huber assisting.

During 2011 the sanctuary and overflow rooms were air conditioned. All the paraments

were replaced through memorial monies given in memory of Andrew Siegfried. In 2012, a meditation/serenity garden was built adjacent to the front entrance through the efforts of the Eagle Scout project of Cody Hergenrother of Troop 29. In 2015, church member Anthony Zenga also of Troop 29 built wooden benches for the pavilion for his Eagle Scout project.

You have listened to the struggles and victories of the folks who built this building and its faith community throughout the years. There were good times and not so good times but the people persevered.

I think one of our greatest strengths is our community outreach ministry. We are a giving congregation which supports many groups in the Easton community. We also have many different organizations that use our facilities.

Today we continue to worship and serve God and our community here in this place high above the picturesque waters of the Bushkill Creek. Let us remain deeply rooted in our commitment and faith to keep this community growing and thriving for another 200 years!

