



ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
BERRYSBURG, PA | APRIL 2024

Letter from the Pastor

Dear Friends in Jesus,

If you are reading this letter after Easter Day, March 31, and you happen to take a look around you, you will pretty quickly be tempted to conclude that Easter has come and gone – the bunnies and eggs and all the rest will have been quickly put away in favor of the next big thing on the calendar – perhaps the patriotic display leading into Memorial Day and the beginning of the summer travel season. It's how our secular, consumer-driven, calendar works, after all.

But it is definitely not how our liturgical, Jesus-centered, calendar works. And it is to that calendar that I want to encourage you to pay attention...

You see, for Christians, Easter – the cosmos-changing news that Jesus has overcome sin and death and the grave – is simply way too big to be covered in one quick day. And so, for many centuries now, Christians have very wisely set aside not just one day... not just several days... not just a week... but actually a “week of weeks” - 7 weeks plus one day, or 50 days in total – to be reminded again and again and again and, just maybe, have it sink in at least a little bit. You see, we need that time – we need that reminding – because the news of Easter is so unlike anything else we have ever heard or will ever hear in the rest of our lives – Good News that radically and completely overpowers all of the bad news of which we tend to hear so much. So, please make it your plan this year to make use of all 7 of the Sundays of Easter to be in worship with your congregational family. And during those 50 days...

On the 40th Day of Easter, Thursday, May 9, we will observe the festival of Ascension of Our Lord when we will host a joint worship at 7:00pm including our United Church of Christ neighbors of their “Northern Cluster”. For that evening, we have invited Mr. Thomas Dressler to come and serve as our organist for worship. Tom is a professional organist, harpsichordist, speaker, and music director from Albrightsville, PA who first established a link with our congregational family when he came to do research in our archives concerning Pastor J. Michael Enderlein, from whom he is descended and whose possible connections with the great Johann Sebastian Bach as a young man back in Germany Tom is researching. While here, Tom thoroughly enjoyed playing our organ and expressed the hope that he might return some time and play for worship, with this being the result. Our worship order will celebrate Jesus' Triumphant Ascension in scripture and prayer, with a very generous measure of Tom's organ skills spread throughout.

And then, on the 50th Day of Easter, Sunday, May 19 – we call it the Day of Pentecost – we will celebrate with several of our young members who will be confirmed in their faith and share together in Word and Sacrament during our 10:15am worship. You won't want to miss it!

Blessings to you and yours this (50-day-long) Easter Season, now just begun. Christ Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed!! Alleluia!!!

Pastor Tom

News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister

Happy April, everyone! From the words of one of our favorite Easter songs, “Jesus died but He’s alive again – I can tell others that Jesus LIVES”!!

Now the season of Easter begins, so grab your calendars and pencil in these special activities:

- Wednesday, April 3rd – Join us from 6:30 – 8:00 for the next meeting of Celebration Club! This month’s theme is “Choo-choo-choose Jesus”! Come and be part of the fun as we follow the signals that lead to Jesus!!
- Sunday, April 7th - It’s our annual Easter “Celebration” Service during worship! Join us for this kid-friendly service with contemporary versions of traditional hymns, a Sunny Sermon, music from the “Cotton Tails”, and an Easter Object lesson.
- Sunday, April 28th – Come and join us for a “Grow in God” SONday Celebration!

Also, just an FYI – I will be in Nashville the weekend of April 21st but my daughter, Reagan, will lead SONday Celebration in my place!! There will be NO Celebration Time that Sunday.

Join us for the above special events and EVERY Sunday as we continue to celebrate the hope of Easter!! Jesus LIVES, indeed!!

Miss Laurie

Spring Is In The Air!

Are you having those feelings of TOO MUCH STUFF? Consider donating your gently used treasures to our congregational **YARD SALE** to be held August 1, 2 and 3. Watch for your June Newsletter for details.



YARD SALE



St. John's Youth Group

APRIL
2024

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT - APRIL 1ST

Monday, April 1st is Family Movie Night!! The youth group has rented the Twin Valley Players Colonnade in Millersburg. We will play the inspiring, family friendly movie, "Woodlawn". There is no cost to you; however, don't forget to visit the concession stand to help support the Colonnade. Doors open at 6:15 p.m., movie starts at 6:30 p.m. No need to RSVP! Bring your family and friends!!

EASTERN STAR LUNCHEON

On **Saturday, April 6th**, the youth group will serving the meal at the Eastern Star Luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to approximately 4:00 p.m. at the New Life Center at 348 Center Street in Millersburg. We will meet in Millersburg. We are looking for at least four (4) youth to help with this service opportunity. Please let Olivia or Amy know if you can help that day.

HENNINGER AUCTION

Saturday, April 27th - Fundraiser food stand at the Henninger Auction. We will be looking for parent and youth volunteers to man a food stand at the Henninger Auction. Please watch your emails for a link to sign up for a 2-hour time slot. We will need help from 6:30 a.m. to approximately 4:00 p.m. We will also be asking for volunteers to make baked goods and/or sides.

THE ESCAPE ROOM HERSHEY

Sunday, May 5th - The Youth Group is heading to The Escape Room Hershey. The cost is \$10.00 each. The Youth Group fund will pay for lunch at Fudruckers. Watch your email for more information.

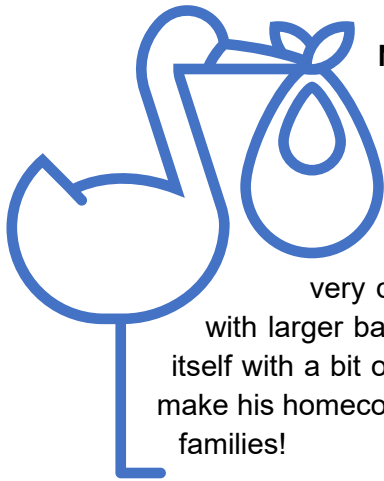
UPCOMING EVENTS

June 30th - Carlisle Sports Emporium AND July 19-20 - Camp Out

Strawberry Festival

The second planning meeting for our Annual Strawberry Festival will be held on **Monday, April 29, beginning at 6:15pm** at the church. All committee chairs are especially needed for this meeting, but all interested persons are (really!) also invited to attend as we work together to plan this event by which we are known by our neighbors, near and far. (The Festival itself is planned for **Wednesday, June 12.**)

Congratulations!



Congratulations to **Drs. Alayna (Peters) and Benton Miller** on the birth of **Weston Nathaniel** Sunday night, February 18, at WellSpan Chambersburg Hospital. Weston weighed in at 10 pounds 10 ounces and was 22 inches long. We especially give thanks that Weston is home with his parents and big sister **Elsie** after he spent most of his first two weeks of life staying in the nursery at the hospital due to some difficulty breathing and low blood oxygen levels. Weston's doctors determined that his problems were due to some prenatal openings in his heart which normally close very quickly after birth but which sometimes delay doing so, especially for some reason with larger babies (an apt description for "little" Weston!). As was hoped, the problem remedied itself with a bit of extra support, such as the supplemental oxygen he received, and he was able to make his homecoming on February 28. Congratulations and our prayers also to the Peters and Miller families!

It's Jam Making Time

Hey folks we will be starting to make the jams and jellies for the Strawberry Festival very soon. Most of the time we get the jars back, but this didn't happen this year. For those who can help it would be greatly appreciated. We are asking for the items needed below. This has always been a very good project and sell out each year! For more information contact Fay Nichols at 717-329-7447.

Items Needed:

- Jars (8 oz. jelly jars)
- Sugar
- Sure Jell
- Fruits
- Lids for jars left from last year
- Monetary donations

St John Evangelical Lutheran Church Congregational Council Minutes February 18, 2024

The council meeting was called to order by President Joshua Paul. Devotions were offered by Pastor Tom.

Present: Pastor Tom Bruner, Joshua Paul, Courtney Foreman, Ty Troutman, Matthew Riland, Justin Adams, Christie Kahler, Craig Peters, Jeff Lehman, Gail Billow, Sandra Lamenza and Sandra Paul

Excused Absent: Karen Gehring

Minutes: Motion by Joshua Paul to accept the January 2024 minutes as read. Second by Ty Troutman. Motion approved unanimously.

Pastor's Report: Motion to accept Pastor's Tom's report for January was made by Sandra Lamenza and 2nd by Christie Kahler. Motion approved unanimously.

Children and Youth Ministry Report: Motion to accept Miss Laurie's report was made by Courtney Foreman and 2nd by Joshua Paul. Motion approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Joshua Paul reviewed the Current Fund, Benevolence Fund, Memorial Fund, Lower Susquehanna Synod remittance report. Pastor Tom provided a review of the 2023 End of Year report and summary of the January report. Motion given by Courtney Foreman to Accept the treasurers reports 2nd by Justin Adams. Motion approved unanimously.

Reception of Petitions and Communications:

- Letter was received from UDA Post Prom Committee requesting donation for event held at the high school gym following the Prom. Motion was made by Craig Peters to donate \$100.00 to this event, 2nd by Christie Kahler. Motion approved unanimously.

Reports of standing Committees:

Church Property- reviewed addition to pavilion, winterizing, no other issues.

Finance Committee: No report

Worship and Music -Did not meet due to weather, meeting rescheduled for 3-19-24

Cemetery Committee – Next Meeting scheduled in March

Faith Formation: Miss Laurie Planning VBS

Mutual Ministry: No report

Executive: No report

Nominating: No report

History and Archive: No report

Bell Ringing: Going well no issues

Creation Care Team- Will be Meeting on March 17th to Focus on recycling for Strawberry Festival, and education. April 21st will be Creation Care Sunday, going over goals and projects. Discussion was made to review recycling practices after a meal which is served at the church, who is responsible to take the recycling.

Women of ELCA- Mary Ann Smeltz will be giving presentation on Thursday evening March 7 2024, regarding her travelers in 7 continents and 60 countries.

Youth Group Report- Matthew Williard reported in worship today the good response they received for Souper Bowl Sunday, the youth are preparing for the Youth Led Service in which Gabe Gehring will be giving the message next Sunday.

Other Reports

Strawberry Festival Committee Meeting on March 11, 2024

Compliance on background checks – Cecilia Boyer has agreed to make sure compliances are completed every 5 years and our in good standings.

Summer Camp – Amy Gehring had a number of young folks interested in attending camp who are not members of St Johns but do attend and our active in our Sunday worship services on a regular basis, she asked if they would also qualify for the 50% discount we provide for baptized Members of St. John. It was discussed that camp costs could be around \$530. Recommendation was given by Craig Peters that we do this on a trial bases, Amy Gehring and Pastor Tom review the young person’s attendants and with their recommendations that we help with non-member’s camping expenses as we do for Members of St. John, 2nd by Justin Adams. Motion approved unanimously.

Unfinished business:

Security Cameras- Joshua Paul reviewed camara systems at retailer (Best Buy) and was not satisfied with his findings and recommended we be in contact with an actual security expert, who can address any technical questions and proper installation of the cameras, he recommended Shearer Security in Harrisburg. Craig Peters recommended MIS Surveillance located in Millersburg. Council members agreed to get quotes from both of these companies and request someone from the property committee to be present when analyses/ quotes are being done, Sandra Lamenza will contact Carl Baumgardner of the property committee.

New Business

Pavilion Expansion- Finance and Property committee have requested a congregational meeting for Sunday February 25, 2024 to review and approve the expansion of the pavilion for a takeout area for the Strawberry Festival. Estimated cost is 15,000 to \$20,000, Donations have already been offered, recommendation was given that anyone who wants to make a contribution may do so. Ty Troutman gave a review of the project. Motion was made by Sandra Lamenza 2nd by Christie Kahler for the congregational meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Next Council Meeting: Sunday March 10, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.

Adjournment: Motion by Josh Paul to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Ty Troutman. Motion approved unanimously. Meeting was closed with the lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Paul, Secretary.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*In-Person	Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off from March 9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 6:15pm - Colonnade Theater Lobby Opens for Family Movie Night (movie begins at 6:30)	Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off from April 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	Pastor Tom Taking Vacation Day 6:30-8pm - Monthly <i>Celebration Club</i> with Miss Laurie			Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2nd Sunday of Easter 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Youth Faith Formation with Olivia & Matt (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15am - Easter Celebration Worship (In-Person and on Zoom), including Sacrament of Holy Communion and Sunny Sermon with Miss Laurie	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 6:30pm - Book Discussion Group Gathering (In-Person)	7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East				Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
3rd Sunday of Easter 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Youth Faith Formation with Olivia & Matt (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15am - Worship, Including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Younger In-Person Worshipers (In-Person and On Zoom) 6pm - Congregational Council Meeting	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief Deadline to Submit Items for May "St. John's Epistle"	7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal				Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
4th Sunday of Easter 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Youth Faith Formation with Olivia & Matt (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie will not Meet 10:15am - Worship (In-Person and On Zoom)	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief Earth Day	7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal		Mark, Evangelist		Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
28	29	30				
5th Sunday of Easter 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Youth Faith Formation with Olivia & Matt (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15am - Worship, Including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Younger In-Person Worshipers (In-Person and On Zoom) 11:15am - Mutual Ministry Committee Meeting	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 6:15pm - Planning Meeting #2 for Annual Strawberry Festival	7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal				

Pastor Tom's Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday: 8am – 9:30am
Wednesday, Thursday: 8am – 12 noon
Friday: 8am - 9:30am

(Other times by appointment)

Contact Information

The Rev. Thomas Bruner, Jr., Pastor	pt@stjohnhillchurch.org	717-362-9519 (O) 717-362-7895 (H)
Laurie Little, Young Christians Minister	misslaurie.little@gmail.com	717-571-5058
Lewis Weaver, Sexton	bootsdagreat@gmail.com	570-809-1014
Grace Weaver, Sexton	No Email	570-809-1510
Judith Ferree, Organist	jjferree@epix.net	717-362-4228
Ty Troutman, Choir Director	kimjtroutman@gmail.com	717-686-2758
Rachel Henry, Secretary	henryfamily2004@gmail.com	717-439-3897
Joshua Paul, Council President	joshpaul1995@gmail.com	717-460-0670
Fay Nichols, Prayer Chain Coordinator	fnichols46@comcast.net	717-329-7447

911 Emergency/GPS Location:

215 St. John Road, Elizabethville, 17023

For US Mail Deliveries:

PO Box 270, Berrysburg, 17005-0270

Church Website: www.stjohnhillchurch.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch