



# ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

BERRYSBURG, PA APRIL 2021

## Letter from the Pastor

Dear Friends in Jesus,

As I was saying in my letter on these pages last month, we are blessed and we give thanks to God that, while we are not yet at the “new normal”, we are certainly in a vastly different place from last year at this time, when our worship and other normal events in the days leading up to Easter Day ended up being cancelled entirely or, in the case of Easter Day itself, being severely curtailed. This month I would like to report on the plans for our congregational family life this year in the period from Palm/Passion Sunday (March 28) through Easter Day (April 4):

- **Palm/Passion Sunday, March 28**

At **9:00am**, we will proceed with our normal Faith Formation activities, in their usual combination of Zoom and in-person events. At **10:15am**, we will likewise join in our new normal “hybrid” worship, combining in-person and Zoom opportunities and, while we will not have a procession of palms of any sort, we will be handing out our beautiful Equal Exchange palms to those present in-person (***and have them available for a day or two beforehand for picking up here at the church for those who will be Zoom-ing that morning – stay tuned for more information about that***). Our worship will begin with the Liturgy of the Palms and we will again enjoy Vincent Lamenza’s reading of The Passion of Jesus (this year According to St. Mark) as the center point of our worship.

- **Maundy Thursday, April 1; Good Friday, April 2; Holy Saturday/Easter Eve, April 3**

On all three of those evenings (which, as you may recall my mentioning in previous years, together actually form one complete time of worship), we will gather for worship at **7:00pm on Zoom only**. During our Good Friday worship, members of Youth Group will be sharing a reading of The Passion of Jesus According to St. John as the traditional center point of our worship. On all three evenings, while we will of course worship with the reverence appropriate to these Holy Days, in these unique times we will also take advantage of the ability that being on Zoom-only permits to unmute and visit together after worship.

- **Holy Saturday/Easter Eve, April 3**

At **8:00am**, Youth Group members will gather to set up for our traditional Easter Egg Hunt for our younger members. It will get underway at **9:00am** but will take place only outdoors and with appropriate safeguards as to distancing and such.

- **Easter Day, April 4**

We will once again gather in-person for a brief time of Sunrise Worship at **6:30am** in the field across from the pavilion, next to the sexton house (or under the pavilion roof in case of inclement weather). Instead of squeezing into the foyer for warmth beforehand as we usually do, I'll simply ask everyone to remain in their cars for warmth if necessary until we are ready to begin and to please come together at 6:30 while keeping safe distancing and with their required masks covering both nose and mouth for everyone over the age of two. At **9:00am**, we will again proceed with our normal Faith Formation activities, in their usual combination of Zoom and in-person events. And at **10:15am**, we will likewise join in our new normal "hybrid" worship, combining in-person and Zoom opportunities as we celebrate the Good News that Jesus is Risen!

I will look forward to being in worship with YOU, my sisters and brothers in this wonderful congregational family that is St. John, in this most Holy of times. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or ideas!

***Pastor Tom***

## **News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister**

Happy April, everyone! Spring is officially here and hopefully the weather cooperates! We've had some lovely spring days – I hope they "keep on coming"!!

The month begins in the midst of Holy Week with Easter falling on April 4<sup>th</sup>. This year, the date is doubly special for the Little's as Easter falls on Reagan's birthday! So in addition to singing, "Jesus Lives", we'll be singing "Happy 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday" to Reagan! Two celebrations for the price of one – you've got to love that!!

Speaking of Easter, I hope you'll join us on Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup> for our "Easter EGGstravanza" in SONday Celebration! We'll be celebrating Jesus' resurrection like crazy, and I'm sure the fun will spill over into Celebration Time as well! Mark your calendars and join in the fun!

If you can't join the IN PERSON Celebration, join us on Zoom by clicking on:

<https://zoom.us/j/94870256130?pwd=cC9YR1drQXFrcWlvd2RUZTRIY2VnZz09>

(The Zoom option is available each Sunday, so there are always 2 ways to be part of the Celebration!)

This month, Celebration Club meets on Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. Join us at the church at 6:30 for our "Lamb of God" celebration!!

On Sunday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, we'll be having our Easter "Celebration" Service during worship. This more contemporary service features some jazzed up versions of traditional Easter Hymns, a Sunny Sermon, and an Object Lesson with Sunny as well.

For the last 2 Sundays of the month, we'll be talking about the 40 days of Easter (it's a SEASON, you know) in SONday Celebration. There will be LOTS of fun activities, so mark your calendars and plan to attend!

Also, Pastor Tom and I will be doing another "Drive Through" Communion on Sunday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 at the church.

April is going to be a busy month; I hope to see you LIVE or on ZOOM for ALL the Celebrations!!

***Miss Laurie***

## Bible Study

Our spring session of Midweek Bible Study will get underway on **Wednesday, April 14** and will continue through the end of May, wrapping up just before the Memorial Day weekend. We will meet each week from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M., tentatively on the Zoom platform. After spending the year thus far in the New Testament, we will now turn to the Old Testament with a study of the **Book of Jeremiah** and the closely related **Book of Lamentations**. Speaking as he first did more than 600 years before Jesus' birth, in a time when things which had for centuries seemed so rock-solid were tottering and shaking, the Prophet Jeremiah has a lot to say to us in these times in which we are living. (And perhaps more so than with any other biblical prophet, we find a kindred spirit in Jeremiah – someone who is open about his struggle with just how difficult following the call of God can be.) No previous Bible study experience is required – only an interest and enthusiasm to study, reflect on, and (as you are comfortable doing so) discuss God's Word together! So that the correct number of study books can be ordered for our study, please register in advance (by contacting Pastor Tom in whatever way is easiest for you) **no later than Palm/Passion Sunday morning, March 28.**

## Book Club

**You are invited to our Book Discussion on Zoom!**

We continue our monthly times of reading and sharing via Zoom. Next up:

**Monday, April 19, 7:00 P.M.      Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens**

**Monday, May 10, 7:00 P.M        Small Victories by Anne Lamott**

**Monday, June 7, 7:00 P.M.        The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison**

Everyone is welcome, so if you would like to participate and haven't joined in before, you can borrow a physical or e-copy of the current book at your local library or pick up a copy at church - on the bench under the bulletin board in the foyer, just inside the main doors. Please let Ann know if we run out of books, and she will locate more.

Questions? Call or email Ann at 717-362-7895 or [rahbruner@gmail.com](mailto:rahbruner@gmail.com).

## St. John Fellowship Opportunity

Each Thursday evening from 6:00 to 7:30, beginning Thursday, April 8, everyone is welcome to drop by for a time of fellowship on Zoom. Think of it as the Zoom version of our sextons unlocking the front door of the church, turning on the lights, and turning up the heat for anyone who might wish to stop in for any or all of that time. Roy and Rachel Henry will simply create a weekly recurring Zoom event which will automatically begin at 6:00pm and end at 7:30pm, but no actual host will be needed and they themselves will likely not be able to be present due to family schedules. Likewise, Pastor Tom will typically not be present and there will be no agenda or theme – simply a “space” to come together and visit and catch up for whomever might wish to do so. It is an experiment for this time until the “new normal” when we anticipate returning to all of the various in-person things much as we knew them pre-pandemic.

## Strawberry Festival Meeting

The second planning meeting for our Annual Strawberry Festival is scheduled for **Monday, April 12, beginning at 7:00pm in-person upstairs in our main worship space**, which will allow for those present to (each wearing a mask covering both nose and mouth) gather and maintain safe spacing. At the recent first planning meeting, the decision was made by those present to proceed with planning for an adapted “drive through” Festival which will allow the entire pavilion to function as one large kitchen and serving space for those working, with traffic directors helping to keep the drive through line flowing smoothly while runners take orders and deliver food to “curbside”. There will be no on-site dining, no entertainment, and no stands of any kind. Needless to say, it will be unlike anything we have ever done and will result in some familiar committees not being necessary this year while much more help will be needed in other new and/or adapted committees. Please contact **Chairperson Jeff Lehman** with any questions or ideas and, as is always the case for these planning meetings, everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend!

## Camp!

Now is the time to be thinking about how you might take advantage of summer 2021 church camping opportunities, which will be safely adapted for these pandemic times. Please contact our **Congregational Camperson, Amy Gehring**, who can connect you with the latest and most current information about schedules and registration information for the camps of our Lower Susquehanna Synod, Kirchenwald and Nawakwa, and for Camp Mt. Luther in the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Please bear in mind that, for baptized members of St. John, camping scholarships are provided, making any camping experience a great value as well as a life-changing experience.

## Pastoral Acts

### At the Graveside

Pastor Tom presided at graveside funeral worship for **Ray Matter**, following his death at the home of Sandra & Craig Shade on March 2. Worship was held in our cemetery on March 7.

We pray that God will grant rest and peace to our Brother in Christ and the hope and joy of the Resurrection to Joyce and Rita and all of their other family members and loved ones!

# St. John's Youth Group

St. John's Facebook: [facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch](https://facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch)

St. John's Children and Youth Ministry: [facebook.com/childrenandyouthministry](https://facebook.com/childrenandyouthministry)

ELCA Gathering Website: [www.elca.org/youthgathering](http://www.elca.org/youthgathering)



## Good Friday/Easter

We are happy to announce that we are able to have the annual Easter Egg Hunt this year!!! The following is the preparation and day of hunt info:

- **Wednesday, March 31st from 6-8pm** - Youth and advisors will meet to stuff the plastic eggs. Pastor will hand out the readings for the Good Friday service at this time.
- **Friday, April 2nd at 7pm** - Youth will present the Good Friday service.
- **Saturday, April 3rd at 8am sharp** - Youth arrive to help set-up for egg hunt.
- **Saturday, April 3rd at 9am** - Egg hunt starts.

Due to COVID-19, we are not able to have our lock-in this year. Because of this, we decided to have plastic, treat filled eggs this year. Many thanks to Thrivent Financial for approving an Action Team to help support this effort to lift the spirits of our church family and our surrounding community by providing a little bit of normalcy and tradition that was missed last year.

We will not be using the church building for the egg hunt. Everything will be outside, rain or shine. If it rains, we will hand out eggs to the kids as they come.

**Remember: Masks are required at all church / youth group in-person events!!!**

## Youth Meetings

With the warmer weather upon us, we hope our zoom youth group meeting days are behind us. Watch your email and the newsletter for information on future youth group meetings.

## Fundraiser

The youth group will be doing a Knoebels fundraiser this Spring. We will be selling \$20.00 ride ticket books for \$18.00. What a bargain! The proceeds go to future youth group outings and also the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer.

Think Spring!!! Happy Easter!!! God Bless!!

---

## 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering Theme (July 24-28, 2022)

The ELCA Youth Gathering team announces the theme of the 2022 Gathering, "boundless: God beyond measure," based on Ephesians 3:19 CEV.

"I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is."

---







# **APRIL 3, 2021**

# **ST. JOHN'S**

# **EASTER EGG**

# **HUNT**

**Join us on the beautiful grounds of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Berrysburg for the annual Easter Egg Hunt!**

**Presented by:  
St. John's Youth Group**

**Sponsored by:  
Thrivent Financial**

**HUNT  
STARTS AT  
9:00 a.m.**

---

**Prizes for  
Each Age  
Group**

---

**MASKS ARE  
REQUIRED**

**FOUR AGE GROUPS:**

**Infant to Pre-School**

---

**Kindergarten &**

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

---

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

---

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

# St John Evangelical Lutheran Church

## Congregational Council Minutes

### February 14, 2021

The council meeting was called to order by President, Roy Henry. Pastor Tom opened the meeting with devotions and a prayer.

**Present:** Roy Henry, Sandra Lamenza, Ron Erb, Heidi Lehman, Lori Motter, Ira Antes, Michael Henninger, Dana Klouser, Sheila Barder, Arlene Doyle, and Pastor Tom Bruner

**Excused Absence:** Matt Williard

**Absent:** Ken Koller

**Minutes:** Motion by Ron Erb and seconded by Ira Antes to accept the January minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

#### **Reception of Petitions and Communications:**

Water testing inspection was passed for January.

Kone Elevator Service notified us that there would be a 3 ½% increase in the service contract.

A motion was made by Ron Erb and seconded by Arlene Doyle to make contributions of \$300 to Community Life Team Ambulance and \$300 to Upper Dauphin Human Services. Motion approved unanimously.

**Pastor's Report:** Motion made by Ron Erb and seconded by Ira Antes to accept the pastor's report. Motion approved unanimously.

**Children and Youth Ministry Report:** Motion was made by Sandra Lamenza and seconded by Lori Motter to accept Miss Laurie's report. Motion approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Motion made by Ron Erb and seconded by Ira Antes to accept the treasurer's report. Motion approved unanimously.

#### **Reports of Standing Committees:**

*Many of the committees have not been meeting due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Any business that needed attention has been handled through phone calls.*

**Church Property:** The property Committee made a motion to accept two proposals from the Silk Brothers. One for \$1075 for a list of minor repairs at the sexton's house and the church. The other for \$2200 to replace the rain gutters on the pavilion. The motion was seconded by Ron Erb. Motion approved unanimously.

**Finance:** No report

**Worship and Music:** Met on January 19. Youth led worship will be on February 28. Drive through communion will be held once a month until further notice. No alter flowers will be ordered until we are back to normal church services.

**Faith Formation Team:** Met January 19. Arrangements were made for Vacation Bible School with a backup plan for a remote event if necessary.

**Youth Ministry:** They have had game time events on Zoom.

**Mutual Ministry:** No meeting

*Executive:* No report

*Nominating:* No report

*History and Archive:* Organization and inventory of archives continues with a focus on securing missing confirmation photos.

*Women of ELCA:* No report

**COVID 19:**

After a discussion it was agreed that we would resume in-person worship services on March 7. The survey regarding separate or combined Zoom and in-person services resulted in 31 preferring combined and 3 preferring separate. We will make the necessary preparations to start combined services on March 7 at 10:15. Additional assistance on the Video Ministry Team will be needed for this to work. Potential people who could assist with this ministry will be recruited.

Adult Sunday School classes will continue at 9am via Zoom. Confirmation classes and youth classes will resume as in-person events at 9am.

**New Business:**


Ken Koller will be added as a delegate to the St John Cemetery Association.

Because of duplication of many email information between Pastor Tom and Miss Laurie, they will proceed with plans to purge Miss Laurie's email list of anyone who does not need her information on a regular basis.

**Next Council Meeting:** The next council meeting will be March 14 at 4pm via Zoom.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Ron Erb and seconded by Ira Antes to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Lamenza". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sandra Lamenza, Secretary



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <b>Maunder Thursday</b> 7pm - Maunder Thursday Liturgy (on Zoom Only)	2 <b>Good Friday</b> 7pm - Solemn Good Friday Liturgy (on Zoom Only)	3 <b>Holy Saturday/Easter Eve</b> 8am - Youth Group Members Gather Outdoors to Prepare for Annual Easter Egg Hunt 9am - Annual Easter Egg Hunt 7pm - Easter Eve Quiet Liturgy of Readings and Prayer (on Zoom only)
4 <b>Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day</b> 6:30am - Brief Outdoor Easter Sunrise In-Person Worship 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person at the Church) 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person at the Church and on Zoom), including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	5 <b>Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off (instead of 4/3)</b>	6 <b>Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off</b>	7 6:30-8pm - Monthly Celebration Club with Miss Laurie (In-Person at the Church) 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families	8 6-7:30pm - Weekly Congregational Family Drop-By Fellowship on Zoom <b>Holocaust Remembrance Day</b>	9 <b>Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East</b>	10 Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
11 <b>Second Sunday of Easter</b> 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person at the Church) 10:15am - Easter Celebration Worship (Both In-Person at the Church and on Zoom) 11:30am - Mutual Ministry Committee Meeting <b>Valentine's Day</b>	12 7pm - Second Planning Meeting for Annual Strawberry Festival (In-Person Upstairs at the Church to Allow for Safe Spacing)	13	14 6:30pm - Midweek Bible Study 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families	15 <b>Deadline to Submit Items for May "St. John's Epistle"</b> 6-7:30pm - Weekly Congregational Family Drop-By Fellowship on Zoom	16	17 Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
18 <b>Third Sunday of Easter</b> 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person at the Church) 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person at the Church and on Zoom), including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 11:30am - "Drive Through" Holy Communion with Pastor Tom & Miss Laurie at the Church 4pm - Congregational Council Meeting on Zoom	19 7pm - Monthly Gathering of Book Discussion Group (On Zoom) 7pm - Upper Dauphin Conference Cabinet Meeting at St. Michael, Kiingerstown	20	21 6:30pm - Midweek Bible Study 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families	22 5:30pm - Community Meal (Take Out Only) at Trinity United Methodist, Elizabethville 6-7:30pm - Weekly Congregational Family Drop-By Fellowship on Zoom <b>Earth Day</b>	23	24 Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
25 <b>Fourth Sunday of Easter/Mark, Evangelist</b> 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person at the Church) 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person at the Church and on Zoom), including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	26	27 6:15pm - Property Committee Meeting	28 6:30pm - Midweek Bible Study 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families	29 6-7:30pm - Weekly Congregational Family Drop-By Fellowship on Zoom	30	

## 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	<a href="mailto:stjohnhillchurch@frontier.com">stjohnhillchurch@frontier.com</a>	717-362-9519 (O) 717-362-7895 (H)
Laurie Little, Young Christians Minister	<a href="mailto:misslaurie.little@gmail.com">misslaurie.little@gmail.com</a>	717-365-5099 (H) 717-571-5058 (C)
Lewis Weaver, Sexton	<a href="mailto:bootsdagreat@gmail.com">bootsdagreat@gmail.com</a>	570-809-1014
Grace Weaver, Sexton	No Email	570-809-1510
Judith Ferree, Organist	<a href="mailto:jjferree@epix.net">jjferree@epix.net</a>	717-362-4228
Carol Hubler, Choir Director	<a href="mailto:mchubler@gmail.com">mchubler@gmail.com</a>	570-758-5052
Rachel Henry, Secretary	<a href="mailto:henryfamily2004@gmail.com">henryfamily2004@gmail.com</a>	717-439-3897
Roy Henry, Council President	<a href="mailto:henryfamily2004@gmail.com">henryfamily2004@gmail.com</a>	717-215-9837
Fay Nichols, Prayer Chain Coordinator	<a href="mailto:fnichols46@comcast.net">fnichols46@comcast.net</a>	717-329-7447

Physical Address (for deliveries): 215 St. John Road Elizabethville, PA 17023

Mailing Address: PO Box 270 | Berrysburg, PA 17005

Church Website: [www.stjohnhillchurch.org](http://www.stjohnhillchurch.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch)