

ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

BERRYSBURG, PA | FEBRUARY 2022



Letter from the Pastor

Dear Friends in Jesus,

First this month, just in case you didn't happen to see it previously in my 2021 Annual Report, I want to again share here a very big THANK YOU to you, my St. John Congregational Family, for your giving of your time and talents and financial resources in a very challenging year just completed. Fresh in my mind is a really meaningful Christmas Eve of worship in our "new normal" hybrid fashion, with almost 200 folks in total attendance at 4pm and 8pm – a very good attendance in any year, and most especially in these trying days – but this is just one example of many, many such times together this past year to which I could point if space allowed. And financially, we finished the year 2021 with a surplus of over \$7,300 in our Current Fund (following another nice surplus there last year in the first year of our COVID journey) and almost \$1,200 in our C&Y Fund, the two funds which provide for the vast majority of our ministry expenses. In addition, we met our benevolence commitment to our Lower Susquehanna Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, even as we also received some other very generous gifts near year-end designated for helping those who have been struck by disasters near and far. We are indeed richly blessed as we serve together here on The Hill!

Second, I want to call your attention to the fact that on **Sunday, February 13**, we will once again be led in our worship by our gifted Youth Group members. (We are blessed by their leadership in many different capacities all through the year, as most recently on January 2, but this is the annual time when they take on the entire leadership of worship, with just some guidance and input from me.) Senior Youth Group Member **Kelsey Henninger** will be sharing the Sermon of the morning and I will very soon be working with everyone else to line up the many other important parts of worship leadership. As always, we plan that worship will be available both in-person and on the Zoom platform.

And, since they come up so very quickly in the month of March, I want to close by directing your attention to two important dates in our congregational family life:

- The first planning meeting for our Annual Strawberry Festival will be held on **Tuesday, March 1, beginning at 7:00 P.M.** Since there really isn't a fixed committee and the meeting is literally made up of those interested persons who show up each time, all interested persons are (really!) invited to attend. (The Festival itself is planned for June 8.)
- Our journey through the Season of Lent begins **March 2 at 7:00 P.M.**, as always with our observance of **Ash Wednesday**, both in-person and on Zoom. The optional imposition of ashes, like Holy Communion, will be available in drive-up fashion for those joining in worship on the Zoom platform. Please contact me in advance if you will be planning to take advantage of our drive-up!

Pastor Tom

News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister

Happy New Year, everyone! I hope your 2022 has gotten off to a fabulous start!

Our Young Christians' faith formation started the year off with a bang, and we're going to keep the momentum going in February! Mark your calendars and join us for the following activities:

- Wednesday, February 2nd, is the next meeting of Celebration Club! Join us from 6:30 – 8:00 for our "Jesus Loves Me" Celebration!
- Sunday, February 13th – It's a "John 3:16" SONday Celebration! Come and see how "God so loved the world"!
- Sunday, February 27th – Jump in your "jammies" and join us for our SONday Celebration "PJ Party"! This is one you don'tn want to miss!

Be part of the fun and excitement here at St. John's as the new year keeps rolling along! I'm looking forward to another fantastic year on "the Hill"!! Thanks to everyone for making our ongoing adventure possible!

As always, I'll see you at the celebration!!

Miss Laurie

Just a reminder – with COVID still very much an issue, we will remain cautious and continue to mask for all indoor activities until further notice. Thanks for your cooperation as we continue to navigate these still challenging waters.

Book Club

Please join us for upcoming Book Group Discussions! For the next several months, all book discussions will be on Zoom at 6:30 pm. Call or email Ann 717.362.7895 rahbruner@gmail.com if you need a book or have any questions Hope to see you there!

February 7th The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michelle Richardson

March 7th Code Girls by Liza Mundy

April 4th And Then You Loved Me by Elspeth Cooper

May 2nd American Harvest by Marie Mutsuki Mocket



(Note that we will not meet in June and July but plan to gather on August 1 after some summer reads.)

St. John's Youth Group

St. John's Facebook: facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch

St. John's Children and Youth Ministry: facebook.com/childrenandyouthministry

ELCA Gathering Website: www.elca.org/youthgathering



Game Night

Sunday, February 27th - 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Bring your favorite game to play and a snack to share. Bring your own drink.

Youth Led Worship

Sunday, February 13th

Youth Led Worship is exactly what it sounds like - the youth run the service from start to finish. Pastor Tom will contact you to discuss how you can participate in this special day. This year the sermon is being given by Kelsey Henninger. I can't wait to hear what this amazing, gifted young lady has to share with us.

Community Dinner

Saturday, March 5th

The Order of the Eastern Star asked if our youth group would like to help serve a small banquet at the New Life Center in Millersburg on Saturday, March 5th. Anyone interested in helping should contact an Advisor. We will meet at the church at 11:45 a.m. We will help serve and clean up after the meal. We should be finished around 3:30 or 4:00 p.m. We are only looking for five (5) volunteers.

Coin Fundraiser

The Month of March

Thanks to a very generous donation, the youth group has several coins for sale. We will release the list of coins available with the minimum donation amounts in the March newsletter. They will be available for purchase during the month of March.

Spaghetti Dinner – Take Out Only

Sunday, March 27th - 11:30 a.m.

The annual spaghetti dinner will be held Sunday, March 27th immediately following worship service. Due to COVID concerns, the dinner will be TAKE-OUT ONLY. More details to follow closer to the 27th.

ELCA Youth Gathering

In Minneapolis, MN, July 24th to 28th

Boundless! That's what our God is: boundless in His love for us, in His creation, in His forgiveness, in His invitation, and in His promise. St. John's Youth Group is officially registered for the Gathering and our seats are saved on the Lower Susquehanna Synod bus. The youth attending are Kelsey Henninger, Gabe Gehring, Aidan Roadcap, and Madeline Williard. Youth advisors attending are Clint and Amy Gehring, and Matt and Olivia Williard. Please pray for our adventure, the many volunteers needed to make an event of this size possible, and the planning staff of the Gathering!

Annual Congregational Meeting, Part One

The first part of our Annual Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, December 12, following worship. At that meeting, action was taken to approve 2022 budgets for the Current Fund and the Children & Youth Ministry Fund (including slight increases of a bit over 2% from 2021) and, in elections for our Congregational Council, the following persons were elected to a three-year term: **Gail Billow, Courtney Foreman, Joshua Paul, and Craig Peters**, while **Carl Baumgardner** was elected to fill the remaining one year of the term resigned by Ken Koller.

Pastoral Acts

At Graveside

Pastor Tom presided at funeral worship for **Lorraine Henninger**, who died at Frey Village in Middletown on November 18. Worship took place at the church on November 24, with interment next to Henry in our church cemetery. We pray God's comfort in the promise of the Resurrection of Jesus for Michael, Ryan, Kelsey, and all the rest of Lorraine's family members and other loved ones!

Congratulations!

Jacob Paul received his Masters Degree in Business Administration from the Pennsylvania State University during the fall 2021 semester. He earned his MBA while working full time at TE Connectivity and taking night classes at Penn State Harrisburg. Jacob has held various positions at TE Connectivity since starting there in 2015. He is currently a global product manager supporting cables used in data centers. Jacob would like to thank Pastor Tom and his congregational family for all their prayers and support during his educational journey. Thank you!



St John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Congregational Council Minutes

November 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, Ira Antes, Heidi Lehman, Sheila Barder, Ron Erb, Michael Henninger, Dana Klouser, and Pastor Tom Bruner

Excused Absent: Arlene Doyle, Lori Motter, Matt Williard

Minutes: Motion by Sandra Lamenza and seconded by Ron Erb to accept the October minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

Reception of Petitions and Communications:

Gary Daniels will continue to research trauma kit options for the church.

Tammy Roadcap, Lion's Den Cub Scout leader, requested the use of the church for meetings for the five boys. Motion made by Ron Erb and seconded by Heidi Lehman to allow the supervised meetings. 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 made by Sandra Lamenza and seconded by Sheila Barder to accept Miss Laurie's report. Motion approved unanimously.

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

Reports of Standing Committees:

Church Property: All projects related to winterizing the church have been completed. Sandra Lamenza and Lynn Henninger met with Joseph Bahret regarding the painting of the church interior. Sandra Lamenza and Jeff Buffington cleaned the church basement. The stars are up for the Christmas season.

Finance: The 2022 budget was reviewed. Motion made by the finance committee and seconded by Ron Erb to accept the proposed budget. Motion passed unanimously.

Worship and Music: No report

Faith Formation Team: Working on Advent Christmas program.

Youth Ministry: Had a successful Chicken and Waffle dinner.

Mutual Ministry: No meeting

Executive: No report

Nominating: Carl Baumgardner has been nominated to fulfil Ken Koller's term. Nominations for the new three-term council members are Gail Billow, Courtney Foreman, Josh Paul and Craig Peters.

History and Archive: No report

Women of ELCA: Soup Sale was successful. Thank Offering service is November 21, Robin Williard is the speaker.

Unfinished Business: It was decided to keep the current COVID related guidelines.

New Business: The possibility of creating a Zoom sponsor category was discussed. It was decided that we would not pursue that option at this time.

Next Council Meeting: The next council meeting will be December 12, 2021, following the congregational meeting.

Adjournment: Motion by Ron Erb and seconded by Michael Henninger to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Lamenza, Secretary



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
* <u>(Both In-Person and on Zoom)</u>			Presentation of Our Lord 6:30-8pm - Monthly Celebration Club with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study (On Zoom) 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families Groundhog Day	2pm - Pastor Tom Leads Worship at Polk Assisted Living, Millersburg		Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person) 10:15am – Worship*, including Sacrament of Holy Communion and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	6pm - Book Discussion Group Monthly Gathering (Via Zoom)	9:30am - Pastor Tom at Conference Pastors Meeting	Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East 6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study (On Zoom) 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families	Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East		Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off Lincoln's Birthday
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person) 10:15am – Worship* – Annual Youth-Led Worship , with Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 4pm - Congregational Council Meeting	Valentine's Day	Deadline to Submit Items for March "St. John's Epistle"	6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study (On Zoom) 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families			Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person) 10:15am – Worship*, including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off – No Office Hours President's Day	Washington's Birthday	6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study (On Zoom) 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families			Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
27	28					
Transfiguration of Our Lord 9am - Faith Formation Time (Adult Bible Study on Zoom; Younger Groups In-Person) 10:15am – Worship*, including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person						

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	stjohnhillchurch@frontier.com	717-362-9519 (O) 717-362-7895 (H)
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Lewis Weaver, Sexton	bootsdagreat@gmail.com	570-809-1014
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Carol Hubler, Choir Director	mchubler@gmail.com	570-758-5052
Rachel Henry, Secretary	henryfamily2004@gmail.com	717-439-3897
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