



ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

BERRYSBURG. PA JUNE 2021

Dear Friends in Jesus,

Well, June is almost upon us and, this year, that means it's time to welcome back our Annual Strawberry Festival after a year "away"! That's right – as a further reminder that we are steadily making our way toward that much-anticipated "new normal", and as your family calendar hopefully already indicates, **June 9** is the big day. But, as you have also hopefully already heard, this will be a year of transition for our Festival, with all serving taking place in a "Takeout/Self Seating/Enjoy the Church Property" format and with no other activities taking place here on The Hill. Especially with all of the changes and tweaking that are needed to transition to this first-ever (and hopefully/prayerfully last-ever!) format, there is a whole lot going on and lots of help needed just as in the past, well before we open at 11:00 A.M. on June 9. Here are most of the scheduling details to bear in mind:

- **Tuesday, May 25, starting at 5:30 P.M.** – combined first work night to begin getting the pavilion cleaned up and ready for the Festival and church outside spring property work accomplished (as in past years, we are again combining what were at one time two annual work nights into one slightly longer evening, but lots of help will be needed.)
- **Saturday, June 5, starting at 8:00 A.M.**
chicken corn soup preparation
- **Monday, June 7, starting at 8:00 A.M.**
beef barbecue and shortcakes preparation
- **Monday, June 7, TBA (Evening)**
cleaning/preparation of strawberries
- **Tuesday, June 8, starting at 8:00 A.M.**
strawberry pie preparation
- **Tuesday, June 8, (All Day)**
various take-out preparation/pre-packaging of foods
- **Tuesday, June 8, starting at 6:00 P.M.** – strawberry preparation and pavilion and other set up
- **Wednesday, June 9, starting at 8:00 A.M.** – preparation for opening at the pavilion
- **Wednesday, June 9, starting at 10:00 A.M.** – orientation and safety gathering for participants
- **Wednesday, June 9, starting at 11:00 A.M.** – ***WE OPEN OUR TAKEOUT TO THE PUBLIC***



Our Strawberry Festival is an event by which our caring and hospitality are known far and wide. The Strawberry Festival is an event by which we serve as Jesus served – on June 9 by welcoming our guests by the car load and serving wonderful and wholesome food, and throughout the following year by using the proceeds to help our neighbors in need and to do many benevolent projects that would not be possible otherwise. Please remember that this annual tradition belongs to all of us and requires the support of all of us. ***If you can't be present during the day on June 9, please come after work or your other day's responsibilities – there will still be plenty of need for your help. If for some reason you cannot help at all on June 9, please consider helping on some of the other important dates. If physical limitations prevent you from providing that kind of support, please provide your financial support, especially with your gift in support of the many donations needed which will be listed on the foyer bulletin board.*** Just as there are many parts of the one Body – all of them needed – so too there are many kinds of help and support that make up the Strawberry Festival – all of them needed as well. Thank you for your help in bringing back this beloved and challenging event – yet another reminder to our area and world that God is Good and is leading us forward!

Pastor Tom

News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister

Happy June, everyone! I hope you all had an excellent end to your school year! Now grab your calendars and make note of these dates – we're going to have some "hot fun in the summertime"!!

First a reminder – we kicked off the Summer Schedule for SONday Celebration! From now through September 12th, we meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30 – 10:30! Throughout the summer, SONday Celebration runs concurrently with the worship service, so there is no Celebration Time. Join us for the fun either in person or on Zoom by clicking on <https://zoom.us/j/94870256130?pwd=cC9YR1drQXFrcWlvd2RUZTRIY2VnZz09!>

Now, here are those dates to remember:

- **Friday, June 25th** – our first "Drive-In Movie Night"
- **July 19th – 23rd** – "Knights of North Castle" VBS
Pre-registration will be required as we will have to limit the number of attendees based on the CDC recommendations at that time. Masks will also be required. I'll keep you posted on the details as we firm up our plans! Join us as we "armor up" and remain strong with God by sharing God's love in the world! (In the event that we are not able to have an in person VBS, I have another Zoom program lined up as a backup! So, **SAVE THAT DATE!!**)
- **Friday, July 23rd** – VBS wrap up and "Drive-In Movie Night"
- **Sunday, July 25th** – VBS Sunday
- **Friday, August 6th** – Water Fun Night
If things proceed as expected with COVID, we're reinstating this summertime favorite!!



We hope you can work ALL these fun activities into your busy summer plans!!

Have a GREAT summer and be safe!! Let's pray we're getting back to a new normal!!

Miss Laurie



Join us for VBS!

July 19th – 23rd

6:30 – 8:45 pm

on the grounds of St. John's

This page was intentionally left blank.

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, 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.

Pavilion Curtains

Immediately following worship on May 2, a combined Property Committee/Congregational Council meeting gave the go-ahead to a proposal from Shady Lane Curtains, LLC of Bird-In-Hand to replace our pavilion's three curtains (north, east, and south sides) with new, motorized curtains, each of which contains a "window" strip of clear siding which will allow for a much brighter experience for anyone gathered in the pavilion with the curtains lowered. This will also allow us to combine what have been two smaller curtains on the east side (since our expansion of the pavilion years ago) into a single and more solid curtain. The total cost of \$9,011 will be financed through the Strawberry Festival/Bicentennial Fund, as have many such improvements in the pavilion which directly benefit our Annual Strawberry Festival, but special donations toward the cost are very welcome and have already come in sufficient to cover more than half of this cost. If you would like to make a gift, please place your check (payable to **St. John Bicentennial Fund** and indicating "Curtain Project" on the memo line) in a plain envelope marked with the notation "Curtain Project" and your offering envelope number and drop it in the offering plate at the top of the stairs on Sunday morning or route it to church by any of the alternate means listed below. By moving quickly, we were able to take advantage of almost \$900 in discounts for ordering during what is traditionally Shady Lane's less busy season and we will be able to have the work done prior to our June 9 Drive-Through Strawberry Festival.

Congratulations!

Our prayers and congratulations go to **Joey Lehman & Allyson Woodward**, and to **Heidi & Jeff** and the rest of the Lehman family, following the birth of **Ollivander Louis Lehman** on April 12. "Ollie" weighed 7 pounds 13 ounces and was 21 inches long and ended up spending his very first night in the NICU due to some amniotic fluid on his lungs.

And to **Taylor & Eileen Denlinger**, who were blessed with the safe and healthy birth of **Everett Charles** on April 15 weighing in at 8 pounds 9 ounces and measuring 20¼ inches long. Congratulations also to proud big sister **Julia** and the proud grandparents and aunt **Janet & Darrell** and **Rachel**!

Pastoral Acts

At the Graveside

Pastor Tom presided at graveside funeral worship for **Pearl Buffington**, following her death at Harrisburg Hospital on May 9. Worship was held in our cemetery on May 14.

We pray that God will grant rest and peace to our Sister in Christ and the hope and joy of the Resurrection to **Jeff**, her primary caregiver for many years, and all of her other family members and loved ones!

Our Faith Active in Our Financial Giving – as of April 30

After concluding the year 2020 with very strong giving of tithes and offerings, despite all of the COVID-related impacts to our congregational family life together, the first third of 2021 has likewise seen us all pulling together in solid fashion in giving to God's work in this place as a congregational family. Here are summaries of our three largest funds for the first four months of 2021 – the **Current Fund** (much like your main checking account at home, from which most of the day-to-day bills of ministry get paid), the **Children & Youth (C&Y) Fund** (through which Miss Laurie's ministry is funded), and our **Larger Church Benevolence** (through which our congregational family supports the work of our Lower Susquehanna Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on all of our behalf):

	Current	Children and Youth	Larger Church Benevolence
April 30 Budget Goal	\$49,774	\$7,955	\$3,923
April 30 Total Giving*	\$60,384	\$11,368	\$5,220
April 30 Giving Adjusted for Lump Sum Gifts*	\$47,999	\$8,272	\$3,874
April 30 Total Expenses	\$43,871	\$9,104	\$5,220 [^]

* Our April 30 Total Giving reflects the kindness of several folks who shared all of their 2021 offerings right at the beginning of the year. The "Adjusted" line subtracts out the 2/3 of these advance gifts which applies to the months May through December still to come.

[^]With our Larger Church Benevolence, we simply send on exactly what we receive each month, and so the Total "Expenses" equal the Total Giving.

The above information is based on a summary which Pastor Tom (putting on his "CPA Hat") shares each month with Congregational Council. Please don't hesitate to ask him any questions you might have about these numbers. For questions about the details of our giving or our expenses, please speak with **Treasurer Jamie Doyle**. Thank you for your partnership in this wonderful ministry which is St. John, and especially for your kindness in "going the extra mile" to mail or drop off your offerings in these challenging times! Please watch for future updates every few months. (And please remember that, if you are not yet ready to take part in in-person worship, there are three very simple options for giving your tithes and offerings. You are welcome to **1.** mail your offering to the church (PO Box 270, Berrysburg, 17005-0270) or **2.** drop it by the church and place it in the red plastic tub that is prominently visible in the Sunday School Room, on the table just outside Pastor Tom's office door. In addition, **3.** if neither of those is easily done, you may wish to contact your bank about setting up an automatic payment, as some of our congregational family members also have done, whereby the offering you direct is sent by your bank as a check mailed directly to the church. In all cases, Pastor Tom will then see that all offerings received get securely passed along to our counters.)

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



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

Happy Summer, everyone!!! The following are some youth group items to consider and mark on your calendar:

The Gathering: Planning is underway here on The Hill for the 2022 ELCA National Youth Gathering. *Any youth group member just finishing 8th through 12th grade in the spring of 2022 are eligible to attend the Gathering in 2022.* If you haven't already completed the informational letter, please do so ASAP and return it to a youth group advisor. If you didn't receive the emailed letter, please contact Olivia. **Even if you don't plan to attend, please respond ASAP.** This helps us with our planning. Thanks!!

The Gathering will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota from Sunday, July 24, 2022 to Thursday, July 28, 2022. This 5-day adventure is filled with many faith formation opportunities. We will engage in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service, and fellowship time. Every evening we gather in our small group for the Final 15. This is a time to talk about our day, our experiences, and just enjoy each other's company. It promises to be a life-changing, faith-strengthening, fun time. We suggest visiting the ELCA Youth Gathering website for more information, signing up for their newsletter, and liking their Facebook page.

Strawberry Festival: The Strawberry Festival is coming up on Wednesday, June 9th starting at 12:00 p.m. This year it is takeout only. Even though it's a little different than years past, they still need our help! Please contact Jeff Lehman if you are available to help that day.

Knoebels Tickets: We still have Knoebels ride ticket books available if you know of anyone interested in purchasing some. They are \$18.00 each for a \$20.00 book. Your summer isn't complete without a trip to Knoebels! Don't forget!! The tickets never expire!! Please contact Olivia Williard for tickets.

Youth Group Meetings: The summer youth group meetings are set for Tuesday, June 22nd and Tuesday, July 13th. There will not be a meeting in August. The meetings will run from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Watch your email for more details about the meetings.

Fundraising: With the Gathering just over a year away and many other fun outings planned as things open back up again, we will be doing a lot of fundraising. What are your ideas?! Send any fundraising ideas to one of the youth advisors.

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."



2022 ELCA
YOUTH GATHERING

boundless

GOD BEYOND MEASURE

Ephesians 3:14-21 CEV ¹⁴I kneel in prayer to the Father. ¹⁵All beings in heaven and on earth receive their life from [God]. ¹⁶God is wonderful and glorious. I pray that [God's] Spirit will make you become strong followers ¹⁷and that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith. Stand firm and be deeply rooted in [God's] love. ¹⁸I pray that you and all of God's people will understand what is called wide or long or high or deep. ¹⁹**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.**

²⁰⁻²¹ I pray that Christ Jesus and the church will forever bring praise to God. [God's] power at work in us can do far more than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.

We are bound. Bound by our sin, by the expectations of others, by poverty, by -isms that try to divide us, and by so much more. In a life that often feels as if it has young people in a suffocating grip, we want them to imagine the boundlessness of God: boundless love, boundless mercy, boundless freedom, boundless creation, boundless strength. All offered from a gracious and loving God who knows and adores them. All so abundant and endless it cannot be measured.

What are the stories of God's people, both in Scripture and modern-day, that share the awe and wonder of just how vast our God is? What does it mean, what does it look and feel like to live a life "filled with all that God is"? How can young people find themselves within the boundlessness of Christ's love?

MYLE, the tAble and the Gathering are unique opportunities to invite young people into a deeper relationship with a God whose possibilities are boundless. Through one-of-a-kind experiences, this ministry stretches and affirms young people's gifts and calls. They experience the power of the Spirit within them, that frees them to live in the grace of God's boundless love in Jesus Christ.

Finally, we are excited by the connections this theme offers to our host city of Minneapolis and the surrounding area. Known as the "City by Nature," Minneapolis is an earth-minded city in many ways. The Minneapolis Area Synod also names advocacy around care for creation as a top priority, which would allow us to learn from and support the local expression of the church.

St John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Congregational Council Minutes

April 18, 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, Matt Williard, Sandra Lamenza, Ron Erb, Heidi Lehman, Michael Henninger, Dana Klouser, Sheila Barder, and Pastor Tom Bruner

Excused Absences: Ken Koller, Lori Motter, Ira Antes

Absent: Arlene Doyle

Minutes: Motion by Ron Erb and seconded by Sheila Barder to accept the March minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

Reception of Petitions and Communications:

Water testing inspection was passed for March.

A motion was made by Dana Klouser and seconded by Ron Erb to contribute \$100 to the Upper Dauphin Parent Advisory Council for the post prom party, and a \$300 to the YMCA. Motion approved unanimously.

Nicole Radel let us know that the Girl Scouts would start meeting in-person this summer. As a precautionary measure they will begin to meet under the pavilion.

Confirmation has been moved to All Saints Day on November 7, 2021.

The trash pick-up company has been sold to Heim's Disposal Service. They will honor the previous arrangement of free pick-up for the church. Sandra Lamenza will send that a thank you note to acknowledge their generosity.

At the Upper Dauphin Conference, Jonathan Jenkins was elected to a second term as Dean, and Pastor Dell will be attending the 2022 ELCA conference in Columbus, Ohio.

Pastor's Report: Motion made by Sandra Lamenza and seconded by Dana Klouser to accept the pastor's report. Motion approved unanimously.

Children and Youth Ministry Report: Motion was 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:

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 committee met to discuss the ongoing issue of the pavilion curtains. The damage is bad enough that some will have to be replaced. A group is visiting a location to see the newer electric curtains. The work has begun at the sexton house, and the stars have been taken down and repaired.

Finance: No report

Worship and Music: The committee met via Zoom. They discussed drive-thru communion and the change of confirmation to All Saints Day in November. The Alter Guild will start meeting in the fall, and the flower committee will re-start the alter flowers the beginning of November.

Faith Formation Team: The committee met via Zoom. They discussed Vacation Bible School. They expect it will be a regular in-person event Monday July 19 through Friday July 23 with a closing program on Sunday, July 25. They have a back-up virtual plan if necessary.

Youth Ministry: The youth group had a successful egg hunt and the first post-COVID in-person game night. They have a current fundraiser selling Knobles Grove Tickets.

Mutual Ministry: Met on April 11. Three graduating seniors, all from UDAHS, are eligible to receive the St John Congregational Scholarship. They are Gracie Gehring, Kinsley Schreffler, and Owen Mattern. The presentation at Class Night will be virtual on June 2, 2021. A motion was made by the Mutual Ministry committee to accept Pastor Tom's recommendation that he create a June – September self-study confirmation class program which will allow the opportunity for Avery Mace, who ended up missing most of the Sunday morning classes this past year, to catch up, so she can be confirmed with her classmates on November 7. After discussion, the motion was passed unanimously. Pastor Tom will oversee her progress.

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

New Business: Beginning May 2, Pastor Tom proposed several steps to begin May 2 that will start the process of returning to a post-COVID normal for worship. While at the pulpit, Pastor Tom will remove his mask. He is vaccinated, and the distance from the congregation poses no threat to the attendees. We will also begin soft singing in place of humming, and pastor Tom will begin at-home visits to shut-ins who are vaccinated. Sandra Lamenza made a motion, seconded by Heidi Lehman, to approve pastor's recommendations. Motion approved unanimously.

No one has volunteered to attend Synod Assembly. Pastor Tom will represent St John at the virtual meeting.

A decision was made to stop the COVID ministry calls.

Motion made by Sheila Barder and seconded by Michael Henninger to hold the yard sale event on July 28 through 31. Motion approved unanimously.

Next Council Meeting: The next council meeting will be May 16 at 4pm.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Lamenza, Secretary

JUNE 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
			7pm - St. John Congregational Scholarships Presented at (Virtual) UDAHS Class Night 7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families		Afternoon/Evening – Pastor Tom Attending (Virtual) Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly	8am - Chicken Corn Soup Preparation for Strawberry Festival All Day – Pastor Tom Attending (Virtual) Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2nd Sunday after Pentecost 8:45am - Adult Bible Study on Zoom 9:30am - Worship (<u>Both</u> In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom) 9:30am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person at the Church with Zoom Option)	8am - Bar-B-Que and Shortcakes Preparation for Strawberry Festival TBA (Evening) – Cleaning of Strawberries for Strawberry Festival 7pm - Monthly Gathering of Book Discussion Group (On Zoom)	8am - Strawberry Pie Preparation for Strawberry Festival All Day – Various Take-Out Pre-Packaging of Foods for Strawberry Festival 6pm - Strawberry Preparation and Pavilion and Other Set-Up for Strawberry Festival	Annual Strawberry Festival 8am - Preparation for Opening Begins at the Pavilion 10am - Orientation and Safety Gathering for Participants 11am - Opening Takeout 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 (instead of Saturday, June 5)	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
3rd Sunday after Pentecost 8:45am - Adult Bible Study on Zoom 9:30am - Worship (<u>Both</u> In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom) 9:30 - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person at the Church with Zoom Option)	Flag Day	Deadline to Submit Items for July/August "St. John's Epistle" 6:30pm - Faith Formation Team Gathering In Person at Church	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
4th Sunday after Pentecost 8:45am - Adult Bible Study on Zoom 9:30am – Outdoor Worship with Sunny Sermon (<u>Both</u> In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom) 9:30am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person at the Church with Zoom Option) 10:30am - Pavilion/Drive Through Holy Communion with Pastor Tom & Miss Laurie Father's Day Summer Begins	Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off	6-8pm - Youth Group Outing	7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families	John the Baptist	Drive-In Movie Night with Miss Laurie	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
27	28	29	30			
5th Sunday after Pentecost 8:45am - Adult Bible Study on Zoom 9:30am - Worship (<u>Both</u> In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom) 9:30am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person at the Church with Zoom Option)		Peter & Paul, Apostles	7pm - Weekly Congregational Family Time of Prayer for Medical Professionals, Educators, Students & Their Families			

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)
Laurie Little, Young Christians Minister	misslaurie.little@gmail.com	717-365-5099 (H) 717-571-5058 (C)
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
Carol Hubler, Choir Director	mchubler@gmail.com	570-758-5052
Rachel Henry, Secretary	henryfamily2004@gmail.com	717-439-3897
Roy Henry, Council President	henryfamily2004@gmail.com	717-215-9837
Fay Nichols, Prayer Chain Coordinator	fnichols46@comcast.net	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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch