

# ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BERRYSBURG, PA | MARCH 2023



## Letter from the Pastor

Dear Friends in Jesus,

I hope you are looking forward to the return of our **Community Wednesday Evenings in Lent** as much as I am, each of them this year complete with a simple but delicious meal for the first time since we hosted the last one three years ago!

By way of review, below is the schedule (which begins with our hosting on March 1) along with some other details. The meal, consisting of simple items like soup and sandwiches, will begin at **6:15 P.M.** Following supper, at **7:00 P.M.**, we will join in worship. Worship will end before 8:00 P.M. Once again this year, the host pastor of each congregation will lead the worship, while the pastors will each take turns preaching in a congregation other than their own. Our theme for this year's Lenten series will be **The Seven Last Words of Jesus from the Cross**. The schedule for these Wednesday evenings is as follows:

Date	Host Congregation	Preacher/Word(s)
March 1	<u>St. John</u>	Deacon Ken Campbell <b>"Father, Forgive Them"</b>
March 8	Peace United Church of Christ, Berrysburg	Pastor Bill Romberger <b>"Today, You Will be With Me"</b>
March 15	Trinity United Methodist Church, Elizabethtown	Pastor Ray Holland <b>"My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"</b>
March 22	Salem Lutheran Church, Elizabethtown	<u>Pastor Tom</u> <b>"Woman, Here Is Your Son"</b> <b>"I Thirst"</b>
March 29	Salem United Church of Christ, Elizabethtown	Pastor Su Rider <b>"It Is Finished"</b> <b>"Into Your Hands I Commend My Spirit"</b>

Please don't miss these opportunities to have your faith refreshed and deepened, as we journey together through the Season of Lent. May God bless us as we once again make our way along this pathway that leads to the Cross!

**Pastor Tom**

## News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister

Happy March, everyone! This month we say, "Hello" to springtime; we also welcome in the season of Lent. As you embark on your own individual Lenten journeys, we invite the kids to join us as WE grow in faith! Mark your calendars for these upcoming activities:

- Because of the Wednesday Lenten service being held at St. John's on March 1st, we are moving Celebration Club to Thursday, March 2nd! Join us from 6:30 to 8:00 for our "Donut Forget Jesus Loves You" Celebration!!
- Sunday, March 19th – It's our "End of the Rainbow" SONday Celebration! Join us for the colorful fun!

During the Lenten season, we can take the opportunity to grow closer to God, to remember Jesus' life and death, and to focus more on Him and less on ourselves and our busy schedules. Join us for SONday Celebration, Celebration Time, Celebration Club and ALL our activities which help your children grow closer to Christ as well!

Have a wonderful March and may YOUR Lenten journey lead you to the wonders and joy of Easter!!

*Miss Laurie*

## Book Group

Please join us for Book Group gatherings! On March 6 we will meet again on Zoom at 6:30 pm.

**Our Topic: Walking the Bible by Bruce Feiler**

Questions? Need a copy of the book? Call or email Ann 717.362.7895 [rahbruner@gmail.com](mailto:rahbruner@gmail.com) Hope to see you on Zoom!

## Strawberry Festival Planning Meeting

The first planning meeting for our Annual Strawberry Festival will be held on **Tuesday, March 7, 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. (Please don't forget that the Festival itself is planned for June 7 – potentially a bit confusing, since it is the first time we have held it on the first Wednesday of June.)

## Upcoming Events

Looking ahead to the warmer days of summer, some other dates for your family calendars, in addition to the date of our Annual Strawberry Festival, mentioned earlier:

- **May 28:** the first Sunday of early summer (9:30am) worship
- **June 11:** the first Sunday of outdoor worship in our beautiful pavilion, on our newly-expanded outdoor schedule
- **Date TBD:** the *Lykens Valley Bluegrass Band* will again be joining us for worship
- Vacation Bible School - **Monday, July 17, through Friday, July 21**, with the closing program on **Sunday, July 23**, followed by "Voices and Vittles"



# St. John's Youth Group

MARCH  
2023

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

**Sunday, March 5th** is the annual spaghetti dinner. All youth group members should meet in the kitchen at 9:30 a.m.

## EASTER SEASON - MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Palm Sunday, April 2nd:** Pizza party and stuff eggs for egg hunt.

**Easter Sat., April 8th:** Youth Group breakfast then set up for Egg Hunt

## FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

**Saturday, April 10th** is Family Movie Night!! The youth group has rented the Twin Valley Players Colonnade in Millersburg. We will play a family friendly movie. 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. Bring your family and friends!!



**ALIVE** runs from Friday, September 22nd to Sunday, September 24th at Camp Nawakwa. ALIVE is hosted by the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Our group will join youth and advisors from across the Lower Susquehanna Synod. **ALIVE is open to youth who will be in 6th through 8th grade in the fall of this year. (Or youth currently in 5th through 7th grade.)** The weekend will be filled with music led by the ALIVE alumni band, large and small group gatherings, games, crafts, campfires, and more. Watch your email for more information.



# **St. John's Youth Group Spaghetti Dinner**

Sunday, March 5, 2023

**THE MEAL WILL BE SERVED IMMEDIATELY  
FOLLOWING WORSHIP SERVICE.**

**~ Free Will Donation Collected ~**

## Food Donations

As things have settled down in our foyer with the completion of our **Restoration 250** project, we have a new location for food donations for the food pantry at the Upper Dauphin Human Services Center in Lykens. Please place those non-perishable food items on any shelf inside the north (right, coming in the front doors) closet, where the door is labelled accordingly. As the contributions add up, deliveries will be made to the pantry by **Larry Gessner**. Thank you!

## Summer Camp

Now is the time to be planning how you might take advantage of summer church camping opportunities of all kinds which are available for people of all ages at Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, and Mt. Luther. Please contact our congregational Camperson, **Amy Gehring**, if you would like to learn more, and please bear in mind that, for members of St. John, camping scholarships are provided by our congregational family, making any week-long experience a great value as well as a life-changing experience. **Special discounts are also available for those who register by the beginning of April!**

## Thank you...

**THANK YOU** to the following persons who directed Thrivent Choice Dollars to St. John during 2022: Sheila Barder, Carl & Louise Baumgardner, Fay Bixler, Barb Bullock, Larry Gessner, Carol Hassinger, and Harold & Pat Herb. A total of \$1,216 was received and passed on to the support of such ministries as our Children and Youth ministry, the Women of the ELCA of St. John, Lutheran Disaster Relief, our "Restoration 250" project, and our ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Thank you! ***(All Thrivent members have until March 31 to designate 2022 Choice Dollars. A phone call to Thrivent – or logging in to the Thrivent website – is all that it takes to find out about and direct Thrivent Choice Dollars.***

## Bethesda Mobile Mission

Amy Gehring continues to collect donations to Bethesda Mobile Mission. Gently used, unstained, clean blankets and casual clothing for MEN & WOMEN are always a need since the homeless do not typically have the ability to launder items. Sleeping bags, tarps, mats, backpacks/large totes or bags are also useful. New underwear, socks, batteries (all sizes), toilet paper, candles, and matches are highly valued. Those served by the Bethesda Mobile Mission also need TRAVEL SIZE toiletries—don't leave those small bottles behind when you are traveling. Pass them along to Amy. Please contact Amy at church with any questions or call her at 1-717-503-7623. Donations can be placed in the designated hampers in the foyer.

## PASTORAL ACTS

### At the Font

During worship on Sunday, January 22, Pastor Tom presided as we welcomed **Raelynn Ney** and **Kade Miller** into the Kingdom of God and the St. John Congregational Family in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We pray that God will grant their parents and sponsors, **Whitni & Mackenzie** and **Courtney & Eric**, their other family members and congregational family members the strength and grace to be faithful to the promises they and we all have made!

### At Graveside

Pastor Tom presided at funeral worship for **Cindy Phillips**, who died at her home on January 26. Worship took place at the church on February 2, with interment in our church cemetery. We pray God's comfort in the promise of the Resurrection of Jesus for **Shane** and **Shawn** and Cindy's other family members and loved ones!

# FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

A Faith-Based  
Family Comedy!

FREE ADMISSION!!



FAMILY NIGHT  
SPONSORED BY THE  
YOUTH GROUP

**April 10th**

**6:15 p.m.**

**Millersburg  
Colonnade**

When their pastor encourages the congregation to sign-up for a week away at family camp, Grace believes she's found the perfect cure for her imperfect clan—even if they'd all rather be anywhere but at rustic Camp Katokwah. **FAMILY CAMP** is a laugh-out-loud comedy that will touch the hearts and tickle the funny bones of every family member from eight to eighty.

**\*\* VISIT THE CONCESSION STAND TO SUPPORT THE COLONNADE \*\***

## St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

### Congregational Council Minutes

January 8, 2023

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

**Present:** Pastor Tom Bruner, Gail Billow, Joshua Paul, Ira Antes, Jeff Lehman, Dana Klouser, Sheila Barder, Craig Peters, Christie Kahler, Ty Troutman, Sandra Lamenza, and Courtney Foreman. Excused: Michael Henninger.

**Minutes:** Motion by Jeff Lehman to accept the December 2022 minutes as read. Second by Dana Klouser. Motion approved unanimously.

**Election of Officers:** Nominations as follows:

- President: Joshua Paul by Sandra Lamenza, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Courtney Foreman
- Vice President: Craig Peters by Sandra Lamenza, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Josh Paul
- Secretary: Courtney Foreman by Craig Peters, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sandra Lamenza
- Assistant Secretary: Christie Kahler by Sandra Lamenza, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Josh Paul
- Treasurer: Jamie Doyle by Sandra Lamenza, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Josh Paul
- Cemetery Board Representatives: Gail Billow and Mike Henninger by Josh Paul, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Courtney Foreman
- Financial Secretary: Pat Herb by Josh Paul, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ty Troutman

Motion to close nominations and approve elected officers made by Sandra Lamenza. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gail Billow. Motion approved unanimously.

**Reception of Petitions and Communications:**

Wednesdays in Lent: Planning meeting with the local pastors is coming up. Everyone is hoping to get back to the meal and service.

Pastor was contacted by Lynn Henninger regarding one of the larger pledges for the Reno 250 project. The pledge is being donated from appreciated stock. If the church opens an account with Morgan Stanley to accept the stock, it will fall under the church's tax exemption.

Sandra Lamenza made a motion to open an account with Morgan Stanley to be used to receive gifts of stock. Council authorizes the officers to sign necessary documents. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Christie Kahler. Motion approved unanimously.

The committee for the Romberger Family Reunion that has been held at St. John's in the past contacted Pastor Tom about hosting the reunion again in 2023. After some discussion it was decided that we aren't able to accommodate a group that large. Motion by Craig Peters to say no the committee 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ty Troutman. Motion approved unanimously.

**Pastor's Report:** Motion to accept Pastor Tom's report from December 2022 was made by Sandra Lamenza. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ty Troutman. Motion approved unanimously.

**Children and Youth Ministry Report:** Motion to accept Miss Laurie's report for December by Christie Kahler. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sheila Barder. Motion approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Pastor provided a year end summary. Motion to accept the treasurer's report for December by Craig Peters. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ty Troutman. Motion approved unanimously.

**Reports of Standing Committees:**

**Church Property:** Plan to repair steps to basement and pavilion roof. Carpet has been put down in balconies. Outlet in conference room was replaced. LED bulbs were put in the Sunday School room. Sandra plans to paint the bathroom near the church entrance.

**Finance Committee:** No report.

**Worship and Music:** No report.

**Faith Formation:** No report.

**Youth Ministry:** Group attended Winterfest in Lancaster this weekend.

**Mutual Ministry:** Met today.

**Executive:** No report.

**Nominating:** No report.

**History and Archive:** Sandra is working on archives.

**Women of the ELCA:** Met today. Contributed \$1,000.00 total to Central PA Food Bank.

**Cemetery Association:** No report.

**Unfinished Business:**

The usher duty list was reviewed. Courtney will make the changes as discussed and distribute revised list with meeting minutes. Please remember, the Lead Usher is to find a replacement if they will not be at church during their assigned month.

Sheila suggested having the offering plate at the back of the church (with bulletins) for collection as we did during COVID. Pastor will take the suggestion to the Worship and Music Committee.

The active shooter training discussion was revisited. Josh will talk with local PSP barracks and ask about having someone meet with council for security suggestions.

Sandra will draft a list of expectations/duties for hall rental as proposed by Lori during previous meetings.

Discussion of utilizing the screen during worship was revisited to get new council members up to speed.

**New Business:**

April Council meeting moved to the 16<sup>th</sup> due to Easter being the second Sunday in April. To be held at 4 pm.

Congregational meetings will be held January 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> as planned.

**Next Council Meeting:** February 19, 2023 at 4 PM.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Craig Peters, 2nd by Ty Troutman to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved unanimously. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Courtney Foreman, Secretary



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			6:15pm - Lenten Supper & Worship (7:00) <b>at St. John</b> (Both In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom)	6:30-8pm - Monthly Celebration Club with Miss Laurie ( <b>note change of day</b> )		Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Second Sunday in Lent</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 9am - Senior High Youth Prepare for Congr. Spaghetti Meal 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom), including Sacrament of Holy Communion and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 11:30am – Congr. Spaghetti Meal Served by Youth Group	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 6:30pm - Book Group Monthly Gathering (Via Zoom)	9:30am - Pastor Tom at Conference Pastors Meeting 7pm – First Planning Meeting for Annual Strawberry Festival 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:15pm - Lenten Supper & Worship (7:00) at Peace United Church of Christ, Berrysburg	<b>Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East</b>		Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>Third Sunday in Lent</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom), including Observance of Girl Scout Sunday and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 2pm – Women's Meeting of the ELCA <b>Daylight Saving Time Begins 2:00am</b>	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief	7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:15pm - Lenten Supper & Worship (7:00) at Trinity United Methodist Church, Elizabethtown  <b>Deadline to Submit Items for April "St. John's Epistle"</b>		<b>St. Patrick's Day</b>	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>Fourth Sunday in Lent/Joseph, Guardian of Jesus</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am - Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia (In-Person) 9am - Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom), including Sunny Sermon and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 7pm - Upper Dauphin Conference Spring Assembly at St. Peter Lutheran, Halifax  <b>Spring Begins</b>	6:15pm - Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:15pm - Lenten Supper & Worship (7:00) at Salem Lutheran Church, Elizabethtown – <b>Pastor Tom Speaking</b>		Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
26	27	28	29	30	31	
<b>Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9am- Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia (In-Person) 9am- Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15am - Worship (Both In-Person <u>and</u> on Zoom), including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief	6:15pm - Property Committee Monthly Meeting 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:15pm - Lenten Supper & Worship (7:00) at Salem United Church of Christ, Elizabethtown	5pm - Rehearsal for Henry/Eyler Wedding (offsite)		

## 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:pt@stjohnhillchurch.org">pt@stjohnhillchurch.org</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>	717-571-5058
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
Ty Troutman, Choir Director	<a href="mailto:kimjtroutman@gmail.com">kimjtroutman@gmail.com</a>	717-686-2758
Rachel Henry, Secretary	<a href="mailto:henryfamily2004@gmail.com">henryfamily2004@gmail.com</a>	717-439-3897
Joshua Paul, Council President	<a href="mailto:joshpaul1995@gmail.com">joshpaul1995@gmail.com</a>	717-460-0670
Fay Nichols, Prayer Chain Coordinator	<a href="mailto:fnichols46@comcast.net">fnichols46@comcast.net</a>	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](http://www.stjohnhillchurch.org)

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