

SAINT JOHN'S
EPISTLE
APRIL 2014

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

P.O. BOX 270, BERRYSBURG, PA 17005
The Rev. Thomas G. Bruner, Jr., Pastor

Dear Friends in Jesus,

I always try to make sure that my letter fits easily on the front page of the newsletter, but, this month, there is a lot to share about upcoming worship here at St. John, so please stay with me and read on to the back side of this page!

As you might have guessed, I'm speaking of the opportunity we all have to observe the Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday, as well as the "Three Days" or "Triduum" – the ancient title for the period that begins on Maundy Thursday evening and ends on Easter Sunday evening.

On the **Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday, April 13**, our worship will once again include the celebration with palms (again making use of beautiful "fair trade" palm fronds that provide just compensation for small growers), as well as a dramatic reading by Vincent Lamenza of The Passion of Jesus According to St. Matthew. *New this year, we will begin our worship either outside or downstairs in the Sunday School Room and join in a procession of palms, led by our young persons. (Folks who are physically unable to join in the procession will simply go upstairs in advance just like normal and be able to follow along through the sound system.) Then, early in our worship, the young persons will be excused to join in a special "children's church", where they will learn a song, read a story, and share in a snack – returning to the rest of us before the end of the worship time.*

The Three Days begin four days later, on April 17, as we Christians focus on the very core of our faith – the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. From ancient times, the Three Days have been understood as one continuous period of worship. This means, for one thing, that our worship on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings ends without the usual Benediction – we're really not ending our worship, after all, merely taking a pause. This also means, much more importantly, that our being in worship on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings, is just as important as our being in worship on Easter Sunday morning. Our schedule of worship and related activities for the Three Days will be as follows:

Maundy Thursday, April 17

At 7:00 P.M., we will gather for a Liturgy of Holy Communion, sharing in the mystery and the meaning of that Upper Room – the body and the blood given for us – the betrayal and desertion of our Lord. Reflecting that betrayal and desertion, our worship will end with the solemn stripping of the altar by members of altar guild as the senior choir intones the haunting words of Psalm 22.

Good Friday, April 18

At 7:00 P.M., we will gather for the Liturgy of Good Friday – a dark and solemn time featuring a dramatic reading of The Passion of Jesus According to St. John. Please note that Youth Group members will again read the principal parts of The Passion, getting together for a short "rehearsal" at 6:15 P.M. Please support them with your presence!

Holy Saturday, April 19

At 9:00 A.M., members of Youth Group will gather to set up for our annual Easter Egg Hunt, with the hunt getting underway at 10:00 A.M. for children in four age groups: preschool, grades K-1, grades 2-3, and grades 4-5.

At 7:00 P.M., we will continue our worship downstairs with a Liturgy of Readings and Prayer. This liturgy, a part of the Liturgy of Easter Vigil, features a series of lengthy readings from the Old Testament, telling of the creative and saving actions of God, beginning with Genesis 1, that point the way to the ultimate creative and saving action of Easter. There will be no music and no offering – only my reading by the light of a single candle, silence for meditation, and prayer.

The Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Day, April 20

Following Easter Sunday tradition at St. John, a very brief Sunrise Worship will take place outdoors (weather permitting) from 6:30 – 6:45 A.M. From 6:45 – 7:00, all interested men of the church will prepare and set up for Easter breakfast, which will be served from 7:00 – 8:00.

Following some clean-up time, and a Men's Choir rehearsal at 8:15, the annual Sunday School Easter Party, for all ages, will follow at 9:00. Our morning will conclude with a Liturgy of Holy Communion, featuring the great hymns of Easter, at 10:15 A.M. A special musical prelude, *including the young persons singing the song they learned the week before*, will precede this worship, so please plan to come approximately 15 minutes early.

Please don't miss your opportunity to fully take part in this holiest of Christian holy times!

Pastor Tom

MEN'S CHOIR TO SING

In preparation for Easter Sunday morning, our Men's Choir will be holding two rehearsals, which are open to male voices of all ages and levels of experience. These rehearsals will take place on Tuesday, April 1, from 6:30 to 7:30 P.M. (prior to Senior Choir rehearsal) and Wednesday, April 16, from 8:00 to 9:00 P.M. In addition, the men will hold a final, shorter rehearsal on Easter Sunday morning, April 20. To learn more, or to "sign" up, please speak with Carol Hubler or Pastor Tom.

REGISTER FOR SPRING MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY

Due to the late date of Easter this year, a shortened Midweek Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, April 30, and run through Wednesday, May 21, when we will take a break for the summer. Class will be held each week from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. We will continue our multi-year journey of studying individual books of the Bible, using resources from our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Book of Faith emphasis on Bible study. After spending the fall and winter looking at the Book of Acts, with its emphasis on the life and career of the Apostle Paul, we will now turn to one of Paul's most important letters for this spring study – The Book of Galatians. No previous Bible study experience is required – only an interest and enthusiasm to study, reflect on, and discuss God's Word together! So that the correct number of study books can be ordered for our study, please register in advance (by speaking with Pastor Tom) **no later than Easter Sunday morning, April 20.**

PLAY BALL!

Sign up on the foyer bulletin board for Lutheran Night with the Senators, which is coming up on Friday, May 16, as the Harrisburg Senators host the Binghamton Mets. \$4 of every \$11 box seat ticket we purchase as a church group will be donated to the camping ministry of our Lower Susquehanna Synod, and Bishop James Dunlop will throw out the first pitch. Fireworks will close out the evening. Deadline to sign up and pay for tickets (check payable to "St. John Lutheran" and given to Pastor Tom) is Sunday, April 27.

LOOKING AHEAD TO STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL TIME...

This year's Strawberry Festival will take place on Wednesday, June 11, in our grove and pavilion. Although serious planning is just getting underway for the Festival, Brad Crum has again been booked as entertainment for the early/mid afternoon timeslot, singing as Elvis. Please save the date of June 11 in your family's calendar, and please spread the news to your friends and neighbors.

He who angers you, controls you!

...AND TO OUTDOOR WORSHIP...

Our schedule of summer outdoor worship has also been finalized by Worship & Music Committee and Congregational Council. These Sundays will be: May 25 (Memorial Day Weekend), June 15 (when we will be celebrating the Festival of the Holy Trinity with Holy Communion), July 6 (Independence Day Weekend – “Colonial” Order for Holy Communion), July 27 (Vacation Bible School Closing Program, followed by Annual Picnic), August 3 (Annual Old Fashioned Hymn Sing), and August 31 (Labor Day Weekend). We will again have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoor beauty of “the Hill” in worship for a total of six times this summer!

INTERESTING OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE!

Two voting members (confirmed, communing and contributing members of the congregation - one male and one female who do not need to be married) are needed for this year's Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, which will be held June 6-7 at Messiah College. Voting members will travel from home with Pastor Tom both days, and all meals will be provided. Please see Pastor with any questions or to volunteer.

CHURCH CAMPING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGES

Our Camperson, Angie Maurer, has information on summer church camping opportunities of all kinds for people of all ages. Schedules and registration information are available for the camps of our Lower Susquehanna Synod, Kirchenwald and Nawakwa, as well as for Camp Mt. Luther in the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Please bear in mind that, for members of St. John, camping scholarships are provided from the Sunday School treasury, making any week-long experience a great value as well as a life-changing experience. **Special discounts are available for those who register soon. Please see Angie for further information!**

NEWS FROM ST. JOHN WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Our next meeting will be on April 13, 2014 at 6:00 PM.
All ladies are invited to attend.

Our leaders for the month are Pat Herb and Elsie Krout.

Our meeting in May will be our Annual Mother/Child Banquet. The leaders for this even will be the Executive Committee. Our business meeting will be after our program.

Remember there are no meetings in June, July, and August.



WORSHIP SERVICES FOR APRIL 2014

Altar Guild for Month of April Pat and Harold Herb

Lector for Month of April Robert Weaver

Ushers for April (L) Jeff Lehman (E) Betty Leitzel, Carl and Louise Baumgardner

APRIL 6, 2014

The 5th Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion

Sunday School Superintendent- Fay Nichols
Sunday School Pianist- Carol Hubler
Greeters- The Brian Thompson Family
Acolytes- Tyler D' Alesandro & Owen Mattern

APRIL 13, 2014

The Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday
Holy Communion

Sunday School Superintendent- Larry Gessner
Sunday School Pianist- Lois Watson
Greeters- Jim & Barb Bullock
Acolytes- Reyann Cheatham & Gracie Gehring

April 17, 2014

Maundy Thursday 7:00 P. M.
Holy Communion

Greeters- The Enders Family
Acolytes- Ryan & Kelsey Henninger

April 18, 2014

Good Friday

Greeters- Larry & Karen Gehring

April 20, 2014

Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day
Holy Communion

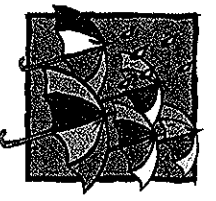
Sunday School Superintendent- Lynn Henninger
Sunday School Pianist- Judy Ferree
Greeters- Ann Bruner & Fay Nichols
Acolytes- R J Henry & Cameron Thompson

APRIL 27, 2014




The 2nd Sunday of Easter

Sunday School Superintendent- Jeff Lehman
Sunday School Pianist- Jean Weaver
Greeters- The Tim Motter Family
Acolytes- Aidan Roadcap & Katherine Gessner

April 2014



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>6 The 5th Sunday in Lent 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Confirmation Class 10:15 Liturgy of Holy Communion</p>						
<p>13 The Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Confirmation Class 10:15 Liturgy of Holy Communion, with Palm Procession, Children's Church, and Featuring Dramatic Passion Story Reading by Vincent Lamenza 11:30 Mutual Ministry Comm. Mtg. 6:00 Women's Group Meeting 7:30 Congregational Council Meeting</p> 						
	<p>7 9:00 Blanket Making for LWR 7:00 Church Darts/League Annual Banquet</p>	<p>1 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Mtg. 6:30 Men's Choir Rehearsal 7:30 Senior Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>2 6:15 Lenten Supper & Worship at Salem Lutheran Church, Elizabethville</p>	<p>3 10:00 Pastor Tom Leads Worship at Park Assisted Living 7:00 Liturgy of Holy Communion - Solemn Stripping of the Altar 8:00 Senior Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 Pastor Tom's Day Off</p>
	<p>14 9:00 Blanket Making for LWR</p>	<p>8 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Mtg. 6:15 Sunday School Teachers & Officers Mtg. 7:30 Senior Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9 6:15 Lenten Supper and Worship at Salem United Church of Christ, Elizabethville <i>Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the</i></p>	<p>17 Maundy Thursday 1:00 Pastor Tom Leads Worship at Park Assisted Living 7:00 Liturgy of Holy Communion - Solemn Stripping of the Altar 8:00 Senior Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 7:00 A.M. Men's Prayer Group at the Church Pastor Tom's Day Off</p>
	<p>15 Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off</p>	<p>16 6:00 Youth Group Meet to Prepare for Easter Egg Hunt 7:00 Maundy Thursday Liturgy Practice 8:00 Men's Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>18 Good Friday 6:15 Practice for Passion Gospel Reading 7:00 Good Friday Liturgy, including Youth Led Dramatic Reading of the Passion Story</p>	<p>19 Holy Saturday 9:00 Youth Group Meets to Set Up for Easter Egg Hunt 10:00 Annual Easter Egg Hunt 7:00 Easter Eve Liturgy of Readings and Prayer</p> 		
<p>20 The Resurrection of Our Lord Easter Day 6:30 Brief Outdoor Easter Sunrise Worship 7:00-8:00 Easter Breakfast served by the Men of St. John 8:15-9:00 Men's Choir Rehearsal 9:00 Sunday School Easter Party, 10:00 Festival Prelude 10:15 Liturgy of Holy Communion <i>Deadline to Submit Items for May "St. John's Epistle"</i></p>	<p>21 Pastor Tom's Day Off (Instead of Saturday, April 19) 9:00 Blanket Making for LWR</p>	<p>22 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Meeting 1:00 Gathering with Our residents at the Manor at Susq. Village 6:15 Property Comm. Mtg. 7:30 St. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 5:30-7:00 Free Community Dinner Trinity United Methodist Church Elizabethville</p>	<p>25 Mark, Evangelist</p>	<p>26 Pastor Tom's Day Off</p>
<p>27 The 2nd Sunday of Easter 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Confirmation Class 10:15 Liturgy of the Word</p>	<p>28 9:00 Blanket Making for LWR 7:00 Upper Dauphin Conf. Annual Spring Assembly at St. Paul Lutheran, Enterline</p>	<p>29 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Meeting 6:15 Evangelism Comm. Mtg. 7:30 St. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>30 6:30 Midweek Bible Study</p>			

*St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2014*

The Council Meeting was called to order by President Jim Watson.

Pastor Tom offered devotions.

Present – James Bullock, Jamie Doyle, Lorraine Henninger, Roy Henry, Ken Koller, Sandra Lamenza, Jeff Lehman, Eric Mattern, Sandra Shade, Jim Watson and Pastor Tom

Excused Absences — Carol Hassinger and Cheryl Shadle

Motion by Sandra Shade, 2nd by Eric Mattern to accept the January Council minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Reception of Petitions and Communications: Annual Synod Assembly is June 6-7 at Messiah. We need 1 male and 1 female representative. April 28th is the Conference Spring Assembly.

Pastor's Report: Motion by Jamie Doyle, 2nd by Sandra Lamenza to accept Pastor's report. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Reports: Motion by Ken Koller, 2nd by Roy Henry to accept the treasurer's reports. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports of Standing Committees:

Church Property: Ceiling fan installation should occur shortly. Routine maintenance was done on fire extinguishers and emergency lights. Inspection passed.

Finance Committee: No report

Worship & Music: Next meeting March 18

Christian Education: Advent Program was reviewed. Sunday School Teacher and Officers Meeting Tuesday, 2/11/14 @ 6:15pm.

Stewardship: No report

Evangelism: Next meeting 2/18/14.

Youth Ministry: Youth did a great job in leading worship this morning. Little Caesars Fundraiser is underway.

Mutual Ministry: No report

Executive: No report

Nominating: No report

History Committee: The history booklet continues in process.

Green Team: Next meeting is March 16 following church to briefly brainstorm for our next field trip.

Other Reports: Prayerful Planning Group- Four sub-committees working on their topics. Next meeting is March 4. A comprehensive plan will be presented to Council by the end of March.

Unfinished Business: Strawberry Festival meeting will be 3/4/14.

Discussion will be held from month to month on Shaking Hands due to flu season. People are doing great job of exercising common sense.

New hymnals have arrived and are being stored for use after Easter.

New Business: Sweetheart Banquet Saturday, 2/15 at 6:00pm. \$15 per person.

Next Council Meeting: March 9, 2014 at 7:30pm.

Adjournment: Motion by Ken Koller, 2nd by Roy Henry to adjourn at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Doyle, Secretary

Treasurers Report for

	<u>Prior Balance</u>	January 2014 <u>Receipts</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>EOM</u>
Current	2,879.74	13,135.33*	11,704.07	4,311.00
Benevolence	53.86	975.03	975.00	53.89
Memorial	14,107.32	42,859.64	16,100.00	40,866.96
Improvement	4,912.89	541.00	-0-	5,453.89
Bicent CkAcct	23,820.43	230.83	1,100.00	22,951.26
Bicent Svngs	5,300.91	-	-	5,300.91
Flower	72.51	140.00	125.00	87.51

*Current Fund Receipts includes \$5,000 transfer from the Memorial Account.

Prayers

Morning

Gracious, merciful God, as you hold open the door of the day, let us enter joyously with lives dedicated to you and the work of your kingdom. Heighten our awareness of your constant presence as we live and move in your Son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen

Evening

Holy God, cradle us in your arms and let us rest in the heavenly peace of redemption through your Son, Jesus Christ. Hold our spirits securely in your love through the dark of this night, and let us wake to your dawning smile in a new day on earth or in heaven. Amen

Running away?

Dear God, when I turn to run from the storms of life, lead me straight into the arms of Jesus, my source of courage and power and love and forgiveness. Only beneath this umbrella of your unfathomable love am I able to continue my earthly journey in peace. Amen

Betrayed?

O Christ, it is painful to be betrayed by people we love, to be unacceptable, to be reprimanded for not meeting their expectations, to be admonished by their narrow-mindedness, shamed by their shortcomings, punished for being who we are. But then, you know all about this! Who was more betrayed than you? O Lord, have mercy on all of us. Amen

Need willpower?

O God, it is so easy to be good when it is easy, but oh, so hard to be good when it is hard. Teach us that the only real chance we have at goodness is by following your will and calling on your power. We ask you to be with us, through your Son, the resurrected Christ in whose name we pray. Amen

Possessed?

O God, how did this happen? Our time is spent maintaining, repairing, and safeguarding the countless products of our good fortune. We have become possessed by our own possessions. Bring us together with those in need of our surplus so that we might return to a healthy life in Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen

Poor in spirit?

We are blessed, Christ Jesus—we, who are poor in spirit and who know we are not self-sufficient. So very blessed are we because we know you are the only one we can count on. To us you promise the kingdom of heaven! Lord of all, we praise your holy name. Amen

Burdened?

Holy Jesus, refuge of the weary, give us courage to lay all of our troubles at the foot of your cross. Then grant us strength to resist the temptation of snatching them all back! Cause us to remember that we can come away carrying a bag of feathers instead of dragging a load of bricks. Amen

Fearful?

All too often, Lord God, we feel reprimanded by your words, "Fear not!" Tune our ears to hear your words as an invitation of refuge. Clear our vision to see your loving arms reaching out to bring us into safekeeping. Help us to remember the one you sent to save us, the one who walks beside us, the one Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. Amen

Our unworthiness

Precious Savior, how incomprehensible the love that caused you to lay down your life for the wretched, the cruel, the addicted, the perverted, the lazy, the arrogant, the self-sufficient—the sinner such as me. How immeasurable the sacrifice of your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen

God's Word

Holy Spirit, breathe into us understanding as you inspire us to read the Word. Help us to comprehend our need for the Saviour, Jesus Christ. Lift us beyond this world's short-term "feel-good" mentality into your world of long-term love, reconciliation, and life. In the name of the Triune God, we pray. Amen

Believe

What do you ask of us, Holy God, but that we believe in your promise of eternal life through the innocent death and the victorious resurrection of the Holy One you sent, our Saviour. Hold us close that we might live and move in the true identity of Jesus Christ, the heartbeat of salvation, in whose name we pray. Amen

Pray

God, in this world of broken promises and broken hearts, help us to become fervent pray-ers. Forgive our failings. Fill us with your presence, your love, your comfort, and your instruction so that even when happiness eludes us, we remain full of your joy. Let our hearts burst with praise even when our mouths cannot. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen

Discernment

Quite subtle is the evil one who works overtime amplifying voices that shift our focus from one God to any god, from worship to ritual, from conversion to self-help, from morally right to socially acceptable, and from transformation to mere conformity. O God, blast an alarm in us when we begin forfeiting treasure to fashion a new golden calf. In Jesus' name. Amen

Love

Loving God, remind us that to love does not mean to smother, control, or manipulate. Sometimes, love means we have to back off, let up, or even let go. When we try to run the life of another, remind us who should be running ours—Jesus Christ, your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PARISH STAFF

The Rev. Thomas Bruner, Jr., Pastor stjohnhillchurch@frontier.com.....362-9519 (O)
362-7895 (H)
Tammy & Bill Becker, Sextons (no email).....319-0703
Judith Ferree, Organist jjferree@epix.net.....362-4228
Sandra Paul, Secretary rbpaul@epix.net362-4117
James Watson, Council President loisbull17@gmail.com..... 362-3247
Lorraine Henninger, Prayer Chain Coordinator (no email)..... 362-8325

PARISH WEBSITE: www.stjohnhillchurch.org

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Pastor's Office Hours:
Monday 8:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.
Tuesday 8:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.
Wednesday 8:00 A.M. – 12:00 Noon
Thursday 8:00 A.M. – 12:00 Noon
Friday 8:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

(Other times by appointment)



OUR MISSION

St. John congregation, responding to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, unites together to preach and teach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission. With God's guidance and grace, we strive to boldly proclaim by word and action the reconciling Gospel of Jesus: Working together for justice and peace, and caring for those in need in our community and world. We invite everyone to join us wherever you are on your faith journey.