

**SAINT JOHN'S
EPISTLE**

SEPTEMBER 2013

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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

Why didn't I attend? What I didn't know.

Hello, my name is Roy Henry and I am a member of the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Being new to the congregation, I wanted to help where I could, so I decided to join the Prayerful Planning Committee. Among the different topics discussed at our first couple of meetings was Sunday school attendance. What can we do to get more people involved at Sunday school? Now this was difficult for me to talk about at the meetings because, I haven't attended Sunday school before at the Hill Church. This was a very awkward situation for me. I wanted to be a part of the committee, but how can I discuss how to get people to come to Sunday school when I don't even go to Sunday school!

So I started to ask myself – why don't you go to Sunday school? The answers came very rapidly to me. I didn't know. I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know how "things were done". I didn't know if they collected an offering. I didn't know if I would be called upon to answer a question from the Bible. I didn't know what the expectations were of me. Bottom line is - I didn't want to be embarrassed of what I didn't know.

So after one of our meetings I asked Pastor Tom if I could bend his ear for a few moments and he said sure. I explained to him my predicament of this topic and I kind of took him by surprise because he didn't realize that this could be an issue for the lack of attendance. So I asked him – "What can I expect when I come to the Sunday school class here at St. John's Lutheran Church?" Tell me what you do. Give me details so I won't be embarrassed. I am new and I don't know. Pastor Tom was more than happy to "fill me in" on what goes on here at the Hill church for Sunday school. After answering all of my concerns it was like a weight being lifted off of my shoulders. I was now relieved and anxious to attend my first Sunday school class.

When I have gone, I attend Jim Watson's class and it is a very open and warm atmosphere. People are welcomed to share what is on your heart, but there's no pressure to do so if you don't want to share. So if anyone else has the same concerns as I did, please do not hesitate to stop someone and ask – "What is Sunday school like here at the Hill Church?" I can say for sure that it is spiritually invigorating and I am no longer concerned of "what I didn't know!"

Roy Henry

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



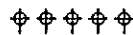
Your prayers and presence are requested
for the installation of

The Reverend James S. Dunlop
Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA

September 28, 2013
Saturday, the week of Pentecost XVIII

1:30 o'clock in the afternoon
St. Matthew Lutheran Church
839 W. Market Street
York, Pennsylvania

The Reverend Mark S. Hanson,
Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
will preach and preside at the installation.



*Bishops, pastors, and other rostered persons are invited to vest and process.
The color is red.*

WANTED – SENIOR CHOIR MEMBERS!

On Tuesday, September 3, Senior Choir will begin rehearsals for another year of music leadership in worship. Rehearsals take place each Tuesday at 7:30 P.M. at the church. We are in need of men and women of all voice parts and no previous experience is required – just a desire to serve God in the beauty of music. It is not even necessary to sit in the balcony in order to sing – many choir members, including Pastor Tom, make the “commute” from downstairs at anthem time. Please see Lorraine Henninger or Pastor Tom with any questions and please join us!

AND MALE VOICES FOR OUR TEMPORARY MEN’S CHOIR!

The Men’s Choir will sing during Promotion Sunday ceremonies and during worship on Sunday, September 8. Prior to that time, two rehearsals will be held – on Tuesday, September 3, from 6:15 to 7:30 P.M. and on Sunday, the 8th, at 8:00 A.M. Males of any age and of any level of singing experience, or none, are invited to take part in this temporary choir. Since the choir starts up each time literally “from scratch”, new persons can join knowing that they truly haven’t missed anything! For more information, please see Pastor Tom or Carol Hubler.

PROMOTION SUNDAY IS SEPTEMBER 8

Annual Promotion Sunday ceremonies will be held during the Sunday School hour on Sunday, September 8. This is the day when young students are promoted to their next Sunday School class and when we hear a presentation on the experiences of those who have been involved in church camping during the past summer. Our Men’s Choir will also provide special music. Please plan to join in the honoring and the fun at 9:00 A.M. on September 8.



ANNUAL BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS ALSO SET FOR SEPTEMBER 8

What has come to be our annual **Blessing of the Backpacks** will again be led by Pastor Tom during 10:15 A.M. worship on **Sunday, September 8**. All persons from Pre-School through Grade 12 (members of the congregation as well as friends they will hopefully invite!) are asked to bring their school backpacks along to worship that morning, during which they will be called forward for a time of recognition, prayer, and blessing, as a new school year gets underway. Each participant will also receive a small “keepsake” to put in their backpacks as a reminder of the fact that God goes with each of them through the joys and challenges of the school year to come!

CONFIRMATION CLASS RESUMES

On Sunday morning, September 15, those baptized members of St. John who are in at least 7th Grade and who have not yet been confirmed will begin a new year of study with Pastor Tom. The focus this year will be an in-depth study of Martin Luther's "Small Catechism", once again using materials produced by Augsburg Fortress entitled *Here We Stand*. Three of our young members are in their second of two years of study, leading toward their Confirmation next year on the Day of Pentecost. Two other young persons will begin a first year of study.



HARVEST HOME TO BE OBSERVED

On the fourth Sunday of September, September 22, we will observe our annual Festival of Harvest Home. On that day, everyone attending worship is encouraged to bring non-perishable food items (canned goods must still be purchased—home canned foods are still not able to be accepted) or (*new this year*) fresh produce for the decorating of the chancel and then delivery to the food pantry at the Upper Dauphin Human Services Center in Elizabethtown.

Y'ALL COME!

Our Annual Congregational Square Dance is coming right up, on its traditional last Sunday in September and same time – **Sunday, September 29, beginning at 6:00 P.M. in the barn of Lynn & Helen Henninger**. This evening is designed for square dancers of all ages and abilities, including those who, like Pastor Tom, have only rarely, or never, attended a square dance. (Our caller gives us plenty of instruction in the basics.) There is also lots of room for those who only want (or are only physically able) to come and watch the mayhem. There will, of course, also be lots of fellowship, snacks, and fun. The only "price" of admission – besides your enthusiasm – is a snack and a container of drink to share. The evening will wrap up by around 8:00/8:30. Fall is always a busy time, but please try to make this evening a priority in your schedule. It is a great opportunity to spend time together as a congregational family, relaxing and having fun. This year, y'all come!

IT'S SOON TIME AGAIN FOR A WALK IN THE WOODS!

Our annual "Walk in the Woods" is being planned for Sunday, October 6. *This year, our "Walk" will actually be more of a "Float"!* *We have rented time for a cruise on the Millersburg Ferry from 2:00 to 3:30 P.M., including time at anchor out in the river for devotions and singing.* When we return to shore, we will continue with our traditional hot dog roast and food shared together, probably at Wiconisco Park, south of Rt. 209 near the Ned Smith Center. Exact details are still being worked out, so please "stay tuned". Please plan to bring along a snack to go with hot dogs and a container of drink to share, and sign up on the sheet on the foyer bulletin board, when it is posted.

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group Kickoff Event will be held September 8th from 3-6 at Dennis and Mary Ann Smeltz' house in Dalmatia. It will be a pool party, so don't forget your swim suit! Each member should please bring a dessert, snack or drink. We will all be meeting at the church at 2:40 to carpool! The permission slip is due September 8th to pastors office or an advisor; hope to see everyone there for a fun time!

News from the Women of the ELCA at St John's

Our first meeting this fall will be on September 8, 2013 at 6:00 PM. This will be the meeting for nominations for the position of Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Consider doing your part and making it easy on our election committee by volunteering to take a position.

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry is doing wonderful and we say thank you to all the ladies that have helped. Please remember if you have extra yarn make a donation of it to these ladies.

Our Quilting ladies will be back at work on September 9, 2013 at 9:00 AM. If you're interested in helping please speak to one of the ladies for more information.

The leaders for the meeting in September are Lorraine Henninger, Donna Rabenold. and Karen Gehring. Hostesses for the evening are Rachel Henry and Gail Billow.

TALLYING THE BERRIES...

As we look back on our Annual Strawberry Festival on a beautiful June 12, we have much for which to be thankful -- the very nice summer weather; the eager crowds that enjoyed the food, fellowship, and entertainment; the great turnout of workers from our St. John congregational family and the financial proceeds to benefit benevolence work in our local area, which were only \$400 lower than the record amount raised last year, primarily due to a \$300 decrease in matching funds received from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Gross receipts for the day were \$16,339.78, with expenses totaling \$5,064.31, leaving a net amount of \$11,275.47 which was added to the Bicentennial Fund. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make the Strawberry Festival another wonderful success! A special thank you to Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for those matching funds received again this year.

Looking ahead to 2014: Please mark your family calendars for next year's Festival, scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, 2014. Also, the first planning meeting for next year's Festival, open to all interested persons, will be held on Tuesday, March 4, from 6:15 to 7:30 P.M. at the church.

YARD SALE REPORT

Our annual Yard Sale was held on August 8, 9, and 10 in the pavilion. A total of \$810 was raised over the three days, all of which will be sent to the Domestic Disaster Relief fund of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In addition to these financial proceeds, our sister congregation at St. Christopher in Lykens, the back-to-school ministry of the Northern Dauphin Human Services Center across from the Elizabethtown Walmart, and Goodwill in Elizabethtown all received leftover items to help in their ministries. Thank you to all who helped with publicity, set up, working the days of the sale, and clean up afterward!

PASTORAL ACTS

At the Font

On Sunday morning, August 18, we were blessed to welcome **Stephen & Cecilia Boyer** into the St. John congregational family. Cecilia and Steve came to us by transfer from Grace United Methodist in Millersburg. Please be sure to add them to the roster section of your congregational directory as follows:

Stephen & Cecilia Boyer
131 Koons Road
Millersburg, PA 17061
S – 635-5606, C – 979-3618

OUR FAITH ACTIVE IN OUR FINANCIAL GIVING – AS OF JUNE 30

In recent years, Congregational Council has asked that we all periodically receive an update in the *Epistle* about how we are doing in meeting our ministry commitments adopted in our annual budget.

Regarding our Current Fund... (The Current Fund is the fund from which most day-to-day bills get paid, much like your home's checking account.) With half of the year's Sundays behind us as of June 30, to be right on **budget**, we would have received and spent half of our total 2013 budget of \$129,586, or **\$64,793**. We have **actually received \$64,876** in offerings and other income, placing us just slightly ahead of budget – the third year in a row – and only the third time in recent history – that our offerings have exceeded our budget goal at this point in the year. Our **expenses** as of the end of June total **\$61,198** and are \$3,595 under budget. Since we have taken in more than we have spent, we are running a **surplus of \$3,678** as of June 30 – also for the third year in a row.

The three observations that Pastor Tom shared in this report in the June *Epistle* continue to be true for these financial results at this 1/2 point in the year: First, the amount by which our giving exceeds budget (\$83) is less than it was at this point last year, which in turn was less than it was at the same point in 2011. This means that, while our giving continues to exceed our budget commitments, it is increasing more slowly than our budget (which increased 2.1% in 2012 and 1.0% this year), which, in turn, means that, should this pattern continue, at some point soon our giving will not cover the ministry commitments in our budget. Second, while it is always great to have expenses running under budget, this is more a result of the timing of our expenses, with some large bills that don't hit until the end of the year. The reality is that we have a very tight budget, with very little in the way of cushion, so we will almost certainly have expenses which equal our budget by December 31. Third, and most importantly, the bottom line is that our ministry here together continues to be very blessed, especially in light of the continued struggles of our economy and this year's increase in social security tax withholding, so these are merely things of which we should be aware as we go forward together in faith!

As to our benevolence offerings which we share with our Lower Susquehanna Synod and our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to be exactly on **budget** as of June 30, we would have received and forwarded **\$6,000** or half of our total 2013 commitment of \$12,000. As of June 30, we have **actually** received and shared a total of **\$6,912**, meaning that we are **ahead** of our commitment by **\$912**.

Thank you for your partnership in the ministry of St. John, and for your financial stewardship. Please watch for future updates every few months, and please feel free at any time to ask questions of or share ideas with Pastor Tom or any member of Council!

*St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes*

May 5, 2013

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

Pastor Tom offered devotions.

Present – James Bullock, Jamie Doyle, John Ferree, Karen Gehring, Carol Hassinger, Ken Koller, Eric Mattern, Craig Peters, Sandra Shade, Cheryl Shadle, Jim Watson and Pastor Tom

Excused Absences – Kris Kell

Motion by Jim Bullock, 2nd by John Ferree to accept the April Council minutes.
Motion passed unanimously.

Reception of Petitions and Communications: Thank you from Snyder Fuels, Sunbury for opportunity to work with us and provide oil at \$2.99/gallon.

Pastor's Report: Motion by Cheryl Shadle, 2nd by Craig Peters to accept Pastor's report. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Reports: Motion by John Ferree, 2nd by Ken Koller to accept the treasurer's reports. Motion passed unanimously. Jim Bullock shared benevolence thank you received from Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg for our contribution of \$443.

Reports of Standing Committees:

Church Property: Storage cabinets have been put on hold while other options are explored. Work night is May 20, 2013.

Finance Committee: No report

Worship & Music: Summer worship will begin at 9:30am beginning July 7, 2013.

Christian Education: Square dance at Helen & Lynn Henninger's - Sept. 29, 2013.

Stewardship: No report

Evangelism: Met April 16th -reviewed list of visitors and potential Fall projects.

Youth Ministry: Confirmation Sunday, May 19th.

Mutual Ministry: No report.

Executive: No report

Nominating: No report

History Committee: Lois Leshner and Helen Henninger are coordinating the history booklet which is in final editing.

Green Team: Met April 28th and discussed potential "field trip" events for the congregation to explore solar power, organic farming and geo-thermal.

Other Reports: Prayerful Planning Group- Met May 5, 2013 and broke into committees to work on 4 areas of interest.

Unfinished Business: Thank you received from the Gettysburg Seminary Ridge Foundation for receipt of our gift in honor of Pastor Tom's 25th year of ordination.

All emergency lights are up and running for a minimal costs of \$71.

Ken Koller volunteered to explore prices of an AED unit for installation at the church as well as cost for volunteers to be trained.

New Business: Pastor Tom celebrating his 25th anniversary of Ordination. Records show that his Ordination date June 26, 1988. There will be a covered dish for Pastor Tom on June 23, 2013 immediately following worship. Jim will work on a write up for the newsletter and it will appear in the bulletin as well.

No Council meeting in June.

Next Council Meeting: July 14, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. at the Church

Adjournment: Motion by Craig Peters, 2nd by Ken Koller to adjourn at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Doyle, Secretary

Treasurers Report for

April 2013

	<u>Prior Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>EOM</u>
Current	7,851.03	9,514.81	11,220.90	6,144.94
Benevolence	53.48	1,220.50	1,220.50	53.48
Memorial	20,142.79	736.80	70.00	20,809.59
Improvement	3,580.94	404.50	32.20	3,953.24
Bicent CkAcct	14,351.24	235.51	700.00	13,886.75
Bicent Svngs	5,300.91	-	-	5,300.91
Flower	109.51	179.00	165.00	123.51



SUNDAY SERVICE FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

Altar Guild for Month of September

Jean & Fred Weaver

Lector for Month of September

Vincent Lamenza

Ushers for the Month of September, (L) Jamie Doyle, (E) Cheryl Shadle, Bonnie Boyer & Cheryl Gessner

SEPTEMBER 1, 2013

15th Sunday after Pentecost

Greeters-

The Craig Shade Family

8:45 Sunday School

9:30 Holy Communion

Outdoor Worship

SEPTEMBER 8, 2013

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday School Superintendent-

Henry Henninger

Sunday School Pianist-

Carol Hubler

Greeters-

The Lynn Mace Family

Acolytes-

Gracie Gehring & Reyann Cheatham

9:00 - Promotion Sunday

10:15 -Liturgy of the Word

SEPTEMBER 15, 2013

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday School Superintendent-

Larry Gessner

Sunday School Pianist-

Lois Watson

Greeters-

The Baumgardner Family

Acolytes-

Ryan Henninger & Bryce Roadcap

SEPTEMBER 22, 2013

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday School Superintendent-

Lynn Henninger

Sunday School Pianist-

Judy Ferree

Greeters-

The Maurer Family

Acolytes-

Gracie Gehring & Cameron Thompson

Harvest Home, Collection

SEPTEMBER 29, 2013

St. Michael and All angels

Sunday School Superintendent-

Jeff Lehman

Sunday School Pianist-

Jean Weaver

Greeters-

The Jim Watson Family

Acolytes-

Tyler D'Alesandro & Allison Mace

Holy Communion

SEPTEMBER 2013



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 The 15th Sunday after Pentecost 8:45 Sunday School 9:30 QUIDDOOR WORSHIP with <i>Holy Communion</i></p>	<p>2 Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off Labor Day</p>	<p>3 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Mtg. 6:15 Men's Choir Rehearsal 7:30 St. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Pastor Tom's Day Off</p>
<p>8 The 16th Sunday after Pentecost 8:00 Men's Choir Rehearsal 9:00 Promotion Sunday Ceremonies 10:15 Liturgy of the Word, with Blessing of the Backpacks & Holy Baptism 3:00-6:00 Youth Group Kickoff at Smeltz's 6:00 Women's Group Mtg. 7:30 Congregational Council Mtg. Grandparent's Day</p>	<p>9 <i>Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning In the Middle East</i> 9:00 Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 7:00 Final Summer Dartsball League Fun Match at St. John</p>	<p>10 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Meeting 7:30 St. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 Holy Cross Day Pastor Tom's Day Off 7:00-9:00 A.M. Men's Prayer Group Meets at the Church - Please contact Ray Walter for more information</p>
<p>15 The 17th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Confirmation Class 10:15 Liturgy of the Word</p>	<p>16 9:00 Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief</p>	<p>17 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Mtg. 1:00 Gathering with Residents at the Manor at Susq. Village 6:15 Worship & Music Mtg. 7:30 St. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 <i>Deadline to Submit Items for October St. John's Epistle</i></p>	<p>21 Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist Pastor Tom's Day Off</p>
<p>22 The 18th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Confirmation Class 10:15 Liturgy of the Word with Harvest Home Collection 3:00-6:00 Upper Dauphin Lutheran Youth Organization Kickoff Event at St. John Autumn Begins</p>	<p>23 9:00 Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 7:00 Upper Dauphin Conf. Cabinet at Immanuel Lutheran, Williamstown</p>	<p>24 10:00 Pastor Tom at Conf. Pastors Mtg. 6:15 Property Comm. Mtg. 7:30 St. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 Pastor Tom's Day Off 1:30 Installation of Lower Susquehanna Synod Bishop James Dunlop at St. Matthew Lutheran, York</p>
<p>29 St. Michael and All Angels 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Confirmation Class 10:15 Liturgy of Holy Communion 6:00 Congregational Square Dance at home of Lynn & Helen Henninger</p>	<p>30 9:00 Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 6:30-8:30 Prayer Planning Group Gathering</p>					

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

P.O. BOX 270
BERKYSBURG, PA 17005

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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.net.....362-4117
 James Watson, Council President loisbull17@gmail.com.....362-3247
 Lorraine Henninger, Prayer Chain Coordinator (no email)..... 362-9108

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)



book of faith
Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.

Parish Website:

www.stjohnhillchurch.org

Other Websites of Interest:

Ev. Lutheran Church in America
 Lower Susquehanna Synod

www.elca.org
www.lss-elca.org

