



ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF THE ERIE LUTHERAN PARISH

"You belong here."

The Parish Post

Monthly Newsletter

"We need Generosity of Spirit in the present state of the church."

This was spoken by a wise retired pastor when two dozen members from Erie Conference Lutheran churches gathered in mid-October. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together representatives from all corners of the Conference to consider how we can support each other's ministries in an environment of declining attendance and resources.

For some congregations in our Erie Conference, and also in our NWPA Synod, difficult times have led them to close their doors and to encourage their remaining members to find new church homes. For some congregations, the answer has been to merge intentionally with another congregation. For still others, partnerships have developed to allow each church to receive pastoral care while maintaining their original congregational identities.

Rev. Jean Kuebler, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Harborcreek, and new Dean of the Erie Conference, led the recent meeting at Mount Calvary Church. It was good to meet face to face, not just on computer screens! The people in the circle of chairs come from various situations, some in churches with pastors, some in churches without. Some of us wondered how two churches could enter into a pastor-sharing arrangement. What would happen with Sunday worship times, meetings, and budgets? A few churches have been in the research and planning stages, working on the details to encourage acceptance by members in both congregations.

Several pastors and lay attendees have worshiped in the one-pastor-two-churches environment. Paired congregations can enjoy both individual and joint activities, and both have the security of pastoral care when ordained ministers and funding are less available. Pastors have the challenge of meeting the competing expectations of both groups, and often delivering two sermons in quick succession on a Sunday morning, with a commute between locations. St. John's Girard and St. James Fairview have an elegant solution—they share both a pastor and a deacon, with the two trading pulpits on alternate Sundays. These two West County congregations have much to offer other groups in the Erie Conference about the ways that they developed their successful partnership.

Will St. John's Erie ever be in a shared pastoral situation? It's hard to say. In the meantime, it is helpful to know that our sisters and brothers in other churches are exploring and finding ways to continue fellowship. As we respond to changing times, we pray to embody a Generosity of Spirit, and to follow the Lord's good guidance.

Carolyn Sturtevant
St. John's Lutheran Church, Erie

#youbelonghere@StJohnsErie

† ST JOHN'S VISION STATEMENT †
Loved by God, alive in Christ Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit, St. John's unconditionally serves God's people and shares Christian love.

Gem City Concerts—October and December

A happy crowd hummed along to popular songs from films and television on October 4th, thanks to the talents of the Gem City Concert Band, including our own Mark Eller and Bill Kay. Lively marches set feet to tapping. The audience and band members appreciated the cookies baked by the congregation's kitchen goddesses. Mark your calendars for the annual Christmas Extravaganza Concert on Wednesday, December 13th at 7:00 pm. Both the Concert Band and Jazz Band will ring in the season!

Women of the ELCA—WELCA

WELCA meets at 11:30 am on the second Thursday of each month, with some gaps during the wintry weather. The friendly group invites visitors and new members. In recent months, the group has welcomed new faces, Patricia Wisinski and Sharyn Roberts. WELCA members were saddened by the passing of Carol Snippert's daughter Kim Snippert. Kim has been a long-time WELCA member, active in our meetings and projects in service to the church and to the community. In November and December, WELCA once again will coordinate St. John's gift-giving for Bethesda individuals and additional items that serve the broader Bethesda programs.

Sunday Supper Success!

St. John's had the privilege of serving 114 guests at the October 15th meal at First Church of the Covenant (FCC). This location, maintained by a staff of dedicated Sunday Supper volunteers, serves the only free hot meal to Erie's hungry on a Sunday. We brought the food, and we worked with the FCC staff. We count success by filling the needs of the guests with dignity, offering hot food on a china plate with metal utensils. Thanks are due to the coordinators, cooks, shoppers, cupcake donors, servers, and cleaners: Janet Huebel, Diane and Bob Bestvina, Pat Melzer, Sharyn Roberts, Leslye, Nolan, and Brennan Durst, Mark and Sue Eller, Margie Gehrlein, Sue Carlson, Audrey Boam, and Carolyn Sturtevant. Please stay tuned for future opportunities to join the Sunday Supper ministry!

Congregational Notes

St. John's welcomed two new members to our fellowship on Sunday, October 29. Connie Smith is renewing her historic connections to St. John's. Janel Anderson first came to St. John's through appearances of the Presque Isle Flute Choir, and she stayed to ring with the Bell Choir. Both Connie and Janel have answered Kathy's invitation to share their talents with the reorganized Chancel Choir. Music to our ears!

The congregation extends its condolences to Carol Snippert on the passing of her daughter, Kim Snippert. Carol and Kim have been regulars at the Saturday night worship service.

Congratulations to Michelle Flaherty for being honored as Pennsylvania Elementary Teacher of the Year! We know her for her musical talents, but through her career as Elementary Gifted and STEM teacher in Union City Schools, she sparks a love of learning in the next generation!

All Saints Day, Saturday and Sunday, November 4 and 5

Each year, we note the passing of loved ones from the previous twelve months on All Saints Day by reading their names in the worship service. If you would like to add or confirm the presence of a loved one's name on our list, please notify Rachel in the office before 2 pm on Thursday, November 2nd. The office is closed on Fridays.

Season of Thanks and Season of Giving

Even before Halloween and Thanksgiving, the grocery aisles, the store shelves, and the Hall-mark movies signal the approaching holidays. Any day now, I expect to encounter clouds of sweet and spicy aromas at my market's entrance, one more stealth signal to fill my cart with goodies. As we begin our holiday shopping, we can extend the giving beyond our own households, as we are able, in multiple ways:

- Donating to Inter-Church Ministries Coats for Kids (deadline November 12)
- Purchasing Christmas gifts for a student at Bethesda (late November/early December)
- Purchasing items on the Bethesda Wish List (any time!)
- Donating to ELCA World Hunger with an ornament on the designated tree (December)

Turkey Time!

Benjamin Franklin wanted the Wild Turkey to be our national bird. Popular images of early Thanksgivings include turkey among other festive foods. Whatever the historical record, we equate a turkey on the table with celebrations of thanks in a circle of loved ones. Through generous donations to the Second Harvest Food Bank, we have been able to sign up regular food clients of our Project Dignity location to receive a frozen turkey and a box of other trimmings in November. We're grateful that we can share the blessings of food with our neighbors.

Winter is Coming! Coats for Kids Campaign

Inter-Church Ministries (ICM) runs several programs that enable congregations to pool resources to meet the needs of our community. In Erie County, Pennsylvania, an estimated 16.5% of 256,922 people live in poverty. Coats for Kids is a drive to collect new or clean, gently-used coats and all types of winter gear for children and teens from October 27th through November 12th. Children of all ages need protection from the cold, so think toddlers to adult-size teens! Please bring items in plastic bags to the church office by November 12th.

Climate Control in the Chapel!

Worship in the chapel has new levels of comfort with the installation of a system to warm the room in the winter and cool it in the summer! Please express your warm thanks to the cool members of the Property Committee, headed by Roger Olsen.

Liturgical Colors and "Hanging the Greens"

God directs the changing colors of leaves, but faithful volunteers change the cloth paraments on the altar and lecterns to reflect the liturgical seasons. The pattern is Red on Reformation, a return to Green, then Blue for Advent, and White for Christmas. Thanks to Janet Huebel, Sue Carlson, Sue Eller, and all other volunteers for tending the altar. After the Sunday, November 26th church service, volunteers can begin "Hanging the Greens," decorating our church with garlands, wreaths, and trees to mark the Advent and Christmas seasons. With your help, we'll add a festive atmosphere to our house of worship.

November Pulpit Supply Schedule

11/5/2023	Rev. Ralph Mineo
11/12/2023	Rev. Owen Rhodes
11/19/2023	Rev. Jerry Gray
11/26/2023	Rev. Ralph Mineo

Thank you 

Dear People of St. John's,

Thank you so much for hosting "Butterflies and Penguins: the Ralph and Jo Show." It was an honor to share our story and music with you. We appreciate your warm reception. Thanks for the delicious food following the program. It was truly a joyful and meaningful time for us.

God's blessings,
~Pastor Ralph & Jo

P.S. We're aware that, due to scheduling conflicts, some who wanted to were unable to attend. After the first of the year, we'll hopefully be presenting the program in nearby congregations. We'll let you know when we do.

It makes me very happy to give a final thank you to my 17 CROP Walk supporters again this year. I (yep, just me), walked at the peninsula on a beautiful Sunday, September 17th. (Bob will join me again next year. ☐) Each year my goal is to collect at least \$1 more than the year before. I'm excited to say that was accomplished, but by \$32 for a grand total of \$395!! So, again, truly from my heart, thank you so much as we all help to help those in need.



Grateful,

Diane

Reminders:

Odd/Even parking will resume November 1, 2023 on City of Erie streets to allow for safe and efficient snow removal. For 23rd Street, this means no parking on the north (church) side on odd numbered days, and no parking on the south side on even numbered days.



Daylight Savings Time Ends—remember to set your clocks back 1 hour on Saturday, November 4, 2023.

Prayer Requests: Do you have someone or something to pray for? Use the “Prayer Request” link on our church website (<http://stjohnserie.org/prayer-request/>). Enter your request and we will publish it in the Parish Post as well as be able to petition it during the prayers in worship. Prayer Requests/Names will be removed on the 1st of each month unless otherwise requested. If you would like a name on the prayer list, please use the “Prayer Request” link on our church website, email or phone the church office.

Just a Reminder: If you would like anything put in the *Parish Post*, please have it submitted to the church office no later than the 20th of the month prior. The office email is: office@stjohnserie.org or call the office at (814) 456-7596.

Check In for Worship: As you attend worship with us virtually or in person, please remember to check in. Record your attendance through the app on our “Worship With Us” web page. Or you can check in via email, letting us know where you were, who you were with, and what worship you attended, by texting or emailing that information to attendance@stjohnserie.org.



Check in for WORSHIP >

A Walk With Jesus

A Bible Study lead by Rev. Jerry Gray
Tuesdays at 10 AM in the Assembly Room

November 7. “The Beginning”

We will look at how each Gospel offers a unique starting point for Jesus’s public ministry.

November 14. “The Disciples”

We will observe the twelve disciples and their level of understanding about Jesus.

November 21. “The Journey”

We will walk a while in the travel narrative in Luke’s gospel.

November 28. “The Advent”

We will listen to the songs in the birth narratives, and review the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.



Gridley Chapter #234, OES & St. John's Lutheran Church Presents

Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 2nd
At St. John's
9AM-Noon



Tickets: \$7 for ages 12 and older
Children under 12 free accompanied by an adult

Ticket includes: breakfast, visit with Santa, games, Christmas craft, cookie, and charity auctions for adults and children.

Contacts:

Jean Rison, (814) 838-2652—OES
Leslye Durst, (814) 323-2134—St. John's

♪ ST. JOHN'S CHOIRS NEED YOU! ♪

CHANCEL CHOIR:

The Chancel Choir will be rehearsing at 9:00 AM Sunday mornings. This time was selected because of concerns about nighttime driving (especially in the bad weather) and it saves an extra night out in everyone's busy schedule. Anthems will be accessible and you do not have to be a trained singer. Come and join the fun and fellowship! We can always use enthusiastic singers. Join now for the Advent and Christmas season.

BELL CHOIR:

Bell choir rehearsals are at 11:15 AM (after the Sunday morning service). We continue to enjoy the beautiful music of the bells. New members are welcome!

SPECIAL MUSIC:

We are always looking for Special Music. If any individual or group would like to share their musical talents during the Sunday, 10:00 AM Service, please contact Kathy Swanson (kathy@stjohnserie.org) or Rachel in the Church Office (office@stjohnserie.org). We look forward to hearing from our talented parishioners.

ORGAN SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE:

The American Guild of Organists is offering Organ Scholarships for anyone interested in learning to play the pipe organ. There is a growing need for organists in America right now. All expenses will be underwritten by the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Successful applicants will receive a method book and ten lessons with a local organ teacher. Brochures are available in the Church Narthex or contact Kathy Swanson



**ST. JOHN'S & DUFFORD TERRACE
HOLIDAY PARTY**

Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023

Time: 5:00 P.M. (cheese tray)

Location: St. John's Gymnasium

A catered buffet dinner will be served by Sabella's at 5:30 P.M. free of charge, followed by bingo.

Please fill out the reservation form on the office window, or call Rachel in the office at 814-456-7596 by November 27th to ensure we have an accurate count.

We look forward to seeing everyone!

November 2023 St. John's Lutheran Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 5PM WORSHIP
5 9 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 10AM WORSHIP 11:15AM Bell Choir Rehearsal All Saints Day	6	7 10AM BIBLE STUDY ELECTION DAY	8 7PM CONG. COUNCIL	9 11:30AM WELCA	10	11 5PM WORSHIP VETERANS DAY 
12 9 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 10AM WORSHIP 11:15AM Bell Choir Rehearsal 12PM Brew Crew	13	14 10AM BIBLE STUDY 7PM Dufford Terrace Board	15	16	17	18 5PM WORSHIP
19 9 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 10 AM WORSHIP 11:15AM Bell Choir Rehearsal Footsteps #89 Weekend	20	21 10AM BIBLE STUDY	22	23 HAPPY THANKSGIV- ING! Office Closed 	24	25 5PM WORSHIP
26 10AM WORSHIP	27	28 10AM BIBLE STUDY	29	30		

St. John's Lutheran Church

2216 Peach St., Erie PA 16502
 (814) 456-7596 www.StJohnsErie.org
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