



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

"You belong here."

The Parish Post

Monthly Newsletter

Thirsty?

In one of his Lenten worship services, Pastor Mineo talked about the phrase "When it rains, it pours." Morton Salt built a marketing campaign around this saying, boasting about their table salt that would not clump in humid weather. Metaphorically, it also bemoans situations where one bad thing leads to another.

As we enter a new month, we may hear "April showers bring May flowers," something true in the United Kingdom, where the internet says this phrase came into use in the 1500s. There's more to the quote, but let's stick with this short form. Yes, in the Erie area, we'll see April rain, and enjoy May flowers. Metaphorically, this saying comforts us by saying that an unwelcome situation may have desirable outcomes.

We had a little water issue on a Friday in May 2021 with the drinking fountain in the Parish Center. It sent water to the floor, bringing sexton Joe to look at it. His investigation of this faulty unit led to the discovery of the much greater failure of pipes on the other side of the building that bring water service in from the city lines. That FLOOD of 2021 covered almost every corner of the basement under sanctuary, offices, and gym! If the drinking fountain was the "When it rains..." part, the failed pipes and resultant damage were the "...it pours" part!

Here's where we get to the gloomy April showers bringing the more desirable May flowers. Since the flood, we've made some upgrades to the Project Dignity gathering area and the rooms we use as headquarters. The parlor's original carpet has been replaced with new flooring. We've been forced to weed out some items no longer used by our ministries. There's still no renovation of the former Youth Room, so we still have work to do.

Back to the story of the drinking fountain issue that brought attention to the larger flood. In recent years, the water fountain has been shrouded in plastic, out of service. Time for another upgrade! Council has approved money from the Gym Activities and Equipment Fund to replace the old unit with a newer model that will have dual functions as water fountain and bottle filler. It's too early to predict the installation date, but we can look forward to a refreshing oasis as warmer weather approaches.

A drinking fountain is only one humble feature of a building where people gather for worship fellowship, and recreation. Water is an important element of hospitality, vital to life, and mentioned countless times in the Bible. Matthew 10:42 quotes Jesus "And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

#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.

Scripture Lessons in Print

The words of scripture are a vital part of the worship experience. For those who wish to follow along with spoken scripture readings during church services, there is a plan to provide printed copies of the Bible passages as you enter the sanctuary.

Council Meetings Begin at 6 PM

In the March 13th meeting of Church Council, members voted to move meeting times to one hour earlier, to begin at 6:00 pm. Congregation members are welcome to attend Council meetings on the second Wednesday of each month. If you wish to bring a topic or question to a meeting, please contact Roger Olsen, Council President, in advance so that the item can appear on the early part of the agenda.

Congregational Notes

We wish to express condolences to the families and friends of two members who recently entered the Church Triumphant. Marilyn Wolf Sommers taught Sunday School, and served in the WELCA group, among other contributions to our church life. Sylvia Rekitt and her late husband Alfred Rekitt both cared for the building and grounds of St. John's. We are grateful for their service and for their fellowship.

Spring Cleaning, April 28th

The Scouts of Troop 9 and Pack 9 have volunteered to join St. John's members as we clean up the lawns and shrubs around the church building. The projected date for this event is Sunday, April 28th, after worship. Bring the outdoor clothes and garden gloves!

Thank You Notes on the Bulletin Board

The Scouts of Pack 9 and Troop 9 sent a card to thank St. John's for sponsoring them and giving them a home for their activities.

Camp Lutherlyn wrote a letter of thanks for our contribution to their *Building for the Future* campaign. Having celebrated 75 years of camping, they look forward to many more years in this ministry of faith and fun.

Camp Lutherlyn Registration for 2024 and 2025

Camp Lutherlyn schedules seven weeks of summer camping. Registration for this summer opened on February 1, 2024, and very few spots remain, according to the camp website. Prospective campers may wish to be alert for opportunities in 2025.

Our Prayer Lists

Each week's bulletin carries the names of our members and friends in need of prayer. The Worship and Music Committee encourages members to contact the office to add names to the prayer list. Names will appear on the prayer list for one month, and can be continued for additional time as requested.

New Schedule for Project Dignity

St. John's has been sharing food and personal care items with neighbors in our surrounding community for over 40 years. Generations of St. John's members have served as leaders and staff, with fewer volunteers maintaining the service since the pandemic. In a plan that has approval from the Second Harvest Food Bank, Project Dignity staff will perform all behind-the-scenes tasks, and will open the doors to clients on the odd-numbered months, on our usual first and third Wednesdays. We will remain closed on even-numbered months to free staff to pursue events appropriate to their status as retirees. This new schedule will begin after May 2024. In the remainder of 2024, Project Dignity doors will open in July, September, and November, with a fun holiday event in December.

We hope that our Project Dignity neighbors will feel little impact, because many of the personal care items are distributed currently on alternate months. Glenwood Methodist Church, a neighboring Second Harvest Food Bank center, has offered to distribute food to our food-eligible neighbors along with their own clients on their designated Monday evenings during even-numbered months.

Erie Lutheran Conference—Selected Notes

The Erie Lutheran Conference (ELC) is a gathering representing members of the 18 Lutheran churches in Erie County. The ELC is one of five conferences in the NWPAsynod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). ELC has begun meeting regularly in person and in zoom settings to discuss shared interests. A few happenings of interest:

- Luther Memorial church will host a concert by Presque Isle Pro Musica at 4 pm on Sunday, April 7.
- Faith Lutheran Church will hold a Solar Eclipse party on April 8, with music, refreshments, crafts, prayer, and eclipse-safe glasses.
- Abiding Hope's noon-time Lunch and Listen speaker on Wednesday, April 10 is Dr. Beher Ghoshen, giving a talk about the world-wide phenomenon of immigration.
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church is the site of a ceremony of Pastor Erik Young as he is promoted to the rank of Captain in the Chaplain Corps of the US Navy Reserve. The event is Sunday, May 5, at 10:30 am, and is followed by a reception in their Parish Center.
- At 7:00 pm, Thursday, May 9, Luther Memorial church invites the ELC churches to an Ascension service.

Friends in Christ,

Thanks SO MUCH to everyone who provided the Wednesday Lenten Soup suppers, the delicious soups (what a variety!), breads, desserts, setting up, and taking down. The conversation and time together was wonderful! I especially appreciate the strong attendance at worship. Thanks to Kathy for her gift of music. What I loved the most was that the theme "Walking With the Lord" happened every Wednesday evening, reminding me in a big way that we're walking **TOGETHER!** Thanks for being there!

~Pastor Ralph

Coming September 2024!

Pastor Ralph will lead us in an opportunity to explore what it means to be a Lutheran at St. John's. We hope that anyone interested in membership at St. John's will join us. Current members are invited to the session as a "refresher."

This event will take place on a Sunday afternoon from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. with a congregational potluck at 5:00. Pastor Ralph has held sessions like this many times when he was a full-time pastor, and can attest that they're fun, fast-moving, and meaningful. (Participants will even get to witness some amazing magic card tricks during a break!) Topics will include Martin Luther, the Reformation, overview of the Bible, the Call Process, what it means to be a church member, and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Following the session, those who aren't members of the congregation will be invited to become members the following Sunday at worship. Consider this an INVITATION to join us. The dates will be published in the May Parish Post! Don't hesitate to ask about this if you have questions.



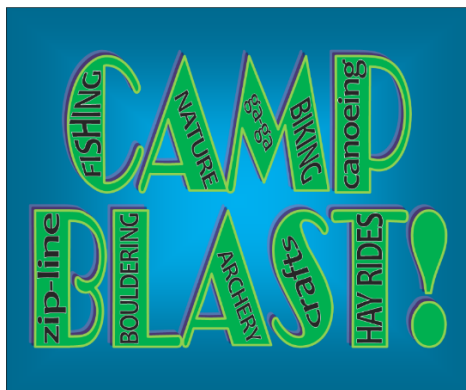
Saturday, May 11, 2024

11:00 am - 4:30 pm

FREE!

RAIN OR SHINE!

There are many awesome indoor and outdoor activities to enjoy at Camp-Blast!



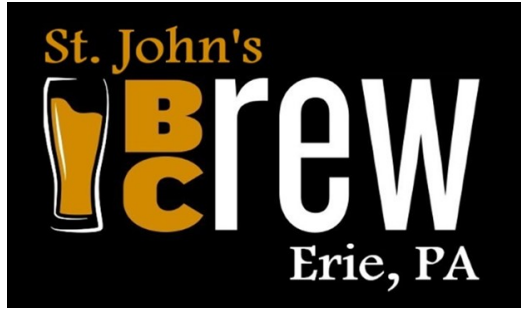
Join us for a day of FUN that highlights all that Lutherlyn has to offer.

Campfire, crafts, gaga ball, archery, pony rides, zipline, bouldering room, hikes, nature activities, hay rides, games, sports, archaeology, disc golf, jump pillow, tours, great food, worship, and MORE!

The best part.... EVERYTHING IS FREE!

There will be special summer camp discounts for NEW campers & for registered campers who bring friends who are NEW to Lutherlyn! Join us for a GREAT day at camp!

No registration is needed. Just show up with all your friends, family, neighbors, and anyone else looking for a fun, free day.



1st Sunday of the month following the 10AM service.
 Brew a Beer, Bottle a Beer, Drink a Beer.
 No experience necessary!
 Contact Tim Durst with questions.



Odd/Even Parking Ends

Just a reminder that odd/even parking ended on March 31st and normal parking regulations have resumed. Please follow posted signs along the street if you choose to park there.

Youth Group will be held on the **FIRST SUNDAY** of each month. All children from PreK – 8th grade are welcome to attend. Lunch will be provided. Bring a friend and come enjoy some fun, games and fellowship with us!

When: Sunday, April 7

Time: 11:00 am (after the 10:00 church service)

Where: We will meet in the St. John's gym

Who: PreK – 8th grade (invite a friend!)

Questions? Contact Leslye Durst 814-323-2134





Thank You: The St. John's Music Program would like to thank all the dedicated musicians who helped make our Lenten season and Easter so special. The Chancel Choir and Bell Choir worked very hard at rehearsals and their music added to all the services. We appreciated the trumpeters from the Gem City Band on Easter and the participation of Mark Eller on Palm Sunday and Good Friday with the liturgical bell ringing. All the instruments and voices made an impact on our worship. A special thank you to Carolyn Sturtevant for her work as Cantor. Her dedication and expertise is a real blessing. We would especially like to thank Pastor Mineo for his support of the music program and his effort in making every service a meaningful worship experience.

New Members Welcome: The Chancel Choir and Bell Choir will continue to rehearse and play through the end of May. If you would like to try one of the choirs for the two month period, please consider joining us. The Chancel Choir will be rehearsing at 9:00 AM Sunday mornings. Anthems will be accessible and you do not have to be a trained singer. Come and join the fun and fellowship! The Bell Choir rehearses at 11:15 AM after the 10:00 AM worship.

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 especially are looking for people to share their talents for a Sunday over the summer. We look forward to hearing from our talented parishioners.

Lutheran Summer Music Academy: The Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival is being conducted June 30- July 28 (Full Session) or June 30- July 14 (Half Session) for any student in grades 8- 12 during the 2023- 24 school year. Programs are being offered in Choir, Orchestra, Band, Musical Theatre, Jazz, and Handbells. It's an exciting comprehensive program offered at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, IN. Students will be instructed by a nationally renowned faculty and have an amazing pre-college experience. Financial help is available. Brochures are available in the Church Narthex or contact Kathy Swanson.

Green Corner NWPA Synod Green Team

MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

With its iconic orange and black markings, the monarch butterfly is one of the most recognizable species in North America. They are remarkable because they migrate each year, flying from as far as Canada and across the U.S. to congregate and spend their winters in the mountains of central Mexico and coastal California. Over the past two decades, monarch numbers in North America have declined dramatically. As a result, research is being conducted to identify threats to the monarchs and take steps to conserve them throughout their range.

Due to droughts in areas such as Texas and illegal logging and subsistence farming in the Mexican Mountains, these areas are no longer providing the natural nectar sources desperately needed by the monarchs.

What can we do, in our area, to help the monarch population survive and flourish?

* Plant milkweed! It is the only plant that monarchs lay their eggs on and the only food the caterpillar will eat. Butterfly gardeners call this a host plant. As vacant lots and fields are lost, the amount of milkweed has decreased. [Milkweed for Monarchs \(nwf.org\)](http://www.nwf.org)

* Plant nectar plants! Adult monarchs feed on a wide variety of nectar bearing flowers and will visit many kinds in their search for food. When selecting flowers for your yard and gardens, consider planting flowers such as coneflowers, goldenrod, asters, butterfly weed. Your nursery can recommend butterfly-friendly plants. Fall blooming flowers are also important, as monarchs migrating to overwintering grounds require lots of nectar to build fat reserves to support their long-distance flight and sustain them throughout the winter.

* If you are able, plant milkweed and nectar bearing flowers in fields, vacant lots and highway strips.

*Reduce/eliminate use of pesticides in your garden.

The Green Team's purpose is to "raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation."

Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness, model creation care advocacy consistent with ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life.

nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com

<https://www.northwesternpasynodelca.org/nwpa-green-team.html>

Follow "Northwestern PA Synod Green Team - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" on Facebook

April 2024 St. John's Lutheran Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 5PM WORSHIP
7 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10AM WORSHIP 11AM YOUTH GROUP 11AM Brew Crew 11:15AM BELL CHOIR	8	9	10 CONG. COUNCIL 6PM	11 11:30AM WELCA	12	13 5PM WORSHIP
14 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10AM WORSHIP 11:15AM BELL CHOIR	15	16 7PM Dufford Terrace Board	17	18	19	20 5PM WORSHIP
21 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10 AM WORSHIP 11:15AM BELL CHOIR	22	23	24	25	26	27 5PM WORSHIP
28 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10AM WORSHIP 11:15AM BELL CHOIR SPRING CLEAN- UP DAY	29	30				

St. John's Lutheran Church

2216 Peach St., Erie PA 16502

(814) 456-7596 www.StJohnsErie.org

"You Belong Here!"