



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

"You belong here."

The Parish Post

Monthly Newsletter

Baptism—Connections—Pruning

On the final Sunday of April, our Epistle lesson from Acts 8 told of an Egyptian man learning of Jesus from the deacon, Philip, and asking to be baptized. In his sermon, Pastor Rhodes recounted his own baptism in a "branch," his community's word for the pool in the water that fed into a creek, then a stream, then a river, and finally to the ocean. Although the pool was small, it was connected to the vastness of the ocean. "We are connected by baptism," and by so many other aspects of our lives, preached Pastor Rhodes. "Amen?" and we responded "Amen!"

The gospel reading from John 10 spoke of the vine and the branches, a connection to nourish the production of fruit, and pruning where no fruit appeared.

Baptism—Connections—Pruning. All three themes featured immediately after worship in our annual cleanup of the grounds around the church. The drizzle became a shower, subsided, and began again a few times, baptizing everyone with warm spring rain, but stopping nobody. As promised weeks ago, the scouts and cubs and parents of Troop #9 arrived with gloves, enthusiasm, and youthful energy. It was a great connection between St. John's members and the scouts who have assisted in many of our past outreach events. We didn't prune any vines, but we pulled weeds, picked up garbage and sticks, and spread mulch all around the building. We followed the outside work with pizza, beverages, and gym time for the youngsters, who also helped with table setup and takedown. Thanks to all who planned and participated!

The fresh beds await the geraniums that decorate our altar steps on Pentecost Sunday, May 19th. You'll find the form to remember and honor loved ones with geraniums later in the Parish Post. We can hope for sunshine when volunteers plant the geraniums to beautify our grounds.

Will you be planting flowers at home? The NWPA Synod's Green Team recommends planting native species: <https://www.northwesternpasynodelca.org/the-green-corner.html> Native plants support native pollinators, other wildlife, and the crops that feed us. We are all connected! "Amen?" "Amen!"

#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.

Congregational Notes

Carol Meyer Schroeck passed from the rolls of St. John's to the Church Triumphant. Carol was active in music at St. John's, among other activities.

April 6th was the happy occasion of baptism for Yosiah John Knight, son of John Knight and Ashja Raucci.

On Sunday, August 11, Bishop Lozano, head of our NWPAsynod, will preach as Supply Pastor at St. John's.

House Full of Stuff?

Abiding Hope's Lunch and Listen speaker at 12:00 noon Wednesday, May 8, is Doug Luthringer, owner of "Thefastmall Online Selling Services LLC," helps people deal with overabundance. He will talk about how to sell items on Ebay, or how to enlist someone who can sell items for you. Bring a sandwich at noon, and Abiding Hope will furnish the coffee and sweets. 2402 West Grandview, Erie, 814-868-8685,

www.abidinghopeerie.org

Gem City Band Concerts at St. John's

The Gem City Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble list four musical events at St. John's in 2024. Mark Eller and Bill Kay bring their talents to the group, who rehearse in the Parlor on Tuesday nights. Two musicians from the Gem City Band brightened our Easter Sunday worship with their trumpets, Bruce Schaaf and Corey Spangenberg. We look forward to hosting concerts in the coming months.

Wednesday, June 26, 7:00 pm, Gem City Concert Band

Wednesday, July 31, 7:00 pm, Gem City Jazz Ensemble

Wednesday, September 11, 7:00 pm, Gem City Concert Band

Wednesday, December 15, 7:00 pm, Gem City Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble

Social Ministry Summer Opportunities

The Social Ministry Committee guides activities that reach out to the community beyond St. John's doors. Meetings are infrequent, but activities are ongoing. In a way, every member of St. John's is part of the Social Ministry Committee, whether helping in every scheduled event, assisting in one or two events each year, or donating food or funds to our shared ministries.

Please watch for signup sheets and personal invitations to help with upcoming summer events.

- Baking cookies/serving refreshments for Gem City Band Concerts, June and July
- Cooking/serving a Sunday Supper on Sunday, July 21st at Church of the Covenant
- Cooking/serving a Sloppy Joe night dinner, Thursday, July 25th at Holy Trinity Church
- Baking cookies for Tuesday, August 6th Lutheran House tea at Chautauqua

Exterior Lighting Prospects

In recent weeks, lighting contractors have visited St. John's to bring ideas to illuminate the exterior of the church building. The congregation has been contributing to a fund for this goal for several years, providing enough to explore the project more actively. An earlier plan was very comprehensive, including both lights and extensive landscaping. Current thoughts are to focus first on lighting the Peach Street side of the building, and on the main steeple. The photo that has been showing on screens during announcements came from a designer who brought his portable lights one mild evening. The fixtures, arranged in several places along the walls, drew attention to the attractive architectural features of stone, brick, windows, and corbels. When all quotes have been received and reviewed, decisions will be guided by our desire to find an appropriate lighting scheme at a reasonable and responsible cost.

Pastor Ralph and Jo's Note of March 17, 2024

Dear Friends in Christ, It was just 10 days ago that we took down our Christmas tree and decorations. In the process, we came across your Christmas card and generous gift. We appreciate the gift as we continue to enjoy being part of this church family. We are truly BLESSED! In Christ, Pastor Ralph and Jo

Erie Lutheran Conference Notes

A small group representing churches in the Erie Conference of the NWPAsynod of ELCA met in mid-April to continue discussions on the future of shared ministry among churches in our conference. Voting members who will represent their churches at Synod Assembly at Thiel College on June 14-15 will meet locally on Thursday, May 23rd to renew acquaintances and to prepare for the Synod agenda. Butch Karnes and Carolyn Sturtevant will attend both meetings as voting members for St. John's.

The Erie Lutheran Conference invites St. John's and all other churches to these local events:

Saturday, May 4, 2023, 8:00 am—St. Paul's Lutheran Church, NWPAsynod's first annual Day of Learning. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Teresa Smallwood, The United Lutheran Seminary James Franklin Kelly and Hope Eyster Kelly Associate Professor of Public Theology. The theme of the day will be focused on Dr. Smallwood's deep interest in public theology. We are still developing the day's events. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending.

Sunday, May 5, 10:30 am--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 followed by a reception in their Parish Center.

Thursday, May 9, 7:00 pm, Luther Memorial church invites the ELC churches to an Ascension service

Thank You

Thank you to the members of St. John's and the scouts of Troop 9 and Pack 9 for all of their hard work in making our church grounds look beautiful during the Spring Cleanup Day. Thank you also to Dufford Terrace for providing the landscape supplies and snacks.

Green Corner NWPASynod Green Team

Why Use Native Plants?

This article has been adapted from www.psu.edu/why-use-native-plants July 5, 2023

There are several definitions of the term "native plant." The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources describes a native plant as one which occurred within this region before settlement by Europeans. Native plants include the ferns, grasses, perennial and annual wildflowers, woody trees, shrubs, and vines that covered Penn's Woods when the first settlers came.

Native plants preserve Pennsylvania's biodiversity.

Biodiversity means the number and variety of living things in a specific region. Our native wildlife, especially birds, butterflies, pollinators, and other organisms, evolved with the plants here; many can only feed on plants they co-evolved with. Unfortunately, unwise development has led to large expanses of lawn and exotic (nonnative) plants replacing natural areas. If your garden has no native plants, it becomes an ecological desert for the pollinating insects that are essential to our survival. Without insects to pollinate our crops, we would have none, or humans would need to perform the task. This is occurring in China where they use costly hand pollination for some fruit crops due to the lack of pollinating bees. Additionally, native plants are needed to support songbirds by supplying food for the insects that most baby birds require. They provide the habitat (food, cover, and places to rear their young) that wildlife needs. Without native plants, our wildlife is at risk of extinction.

Native plants are generally easier to grow and cheaper to maintain.

Native plants are well adapted to our climate and soils because they evolved here. This means they are generally easier to care for once they are established, needing little or no pruning, deadheading, watering, or fertilizing. *Large lawns and showy exotic plants demand high levels of fossil fuel use, fertilizers, pesticides, and supplemental water, making natives a less costly option.* Also native plant gardens reduces noise pollution from mowers, blowers, and trimmers.

Where to Buy Native Plants

Do not take native plants from the wild as this is a threat to their populations and a disruption of the ecosystem. Purchase from a reputable source. Your favorite nursery may stock them, or you may wish to visit one that specializes in natives.

Tips on How to Use Native Plants

Here are some suggestions on how to use native plants:

Integrate them into your perennial borders.

Naturalize a large area such as a meadow or woodland with more aggressive natives.

Create a rain garden with natives; their root systems stabilize and hold the soil.

Replace unsightly and invasive plants with natives.

Reduce the size of your lawn by adding a bed of native plants.

Create a butterfly garden.

Educate yourself about native plants that are native to your area. Obtain reliable, unbiased information from university or government publications and websites. Visit native plant nurseries and preserves to get ideas. Then use native plants in your garden, knowing that you are preserving biodiversity, enhancing the livability of your home, and ensuring a legacy for your children and grandchildren.

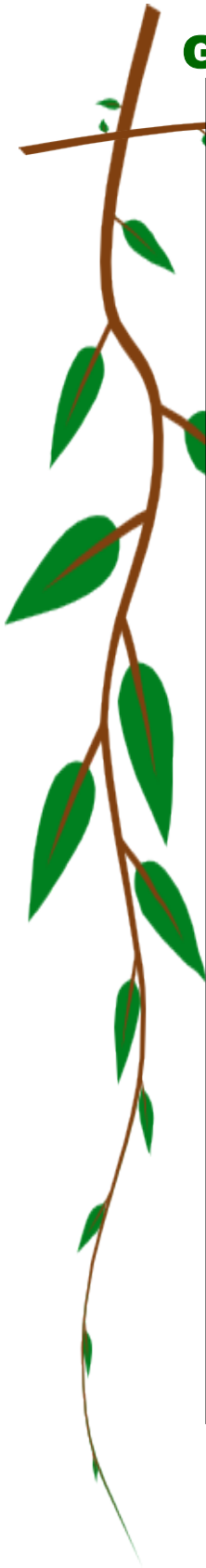
The Green Team's purpose is to "raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation." Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness, model creation care advocacy consistent with ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life.

nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com

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

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

May 2024





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.

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, May 5

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



Happy Mother's Day!

She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the
 teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

Proverbs 31:26



Music Notes

HYMN REQUESTS: If anyone would like to request a favorite hymn for the 10:00 AM Service, please contact Kathy Swanson (kswanson2@roadrunner.com) or contact Rachel in the church office (office@stjohnserie.org) with the particular hymn. We ask that the hymn be in the red ELW hymnal.

SPECIAL MUSIC: We are always looking for Special Music in the summer (or anytime really). If any individual or group would like to share their musical talents during the Sunday, 10:00 AM Service, please contact Kathy Swanson (kswanson2@roadrunner.com) or let Rachel know 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.

Pentecost Garden

As we celebrate Pentecost we remember how the Holy Spirit has moved through our loved ones and friends by decorating our Sanctuary with beautiful red geraniums. You are invited to contribute in honor, memory, or in celebration of individuals you know and love.

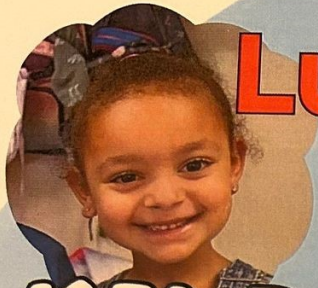
GIVEN BY _____ ENVELOPE # _____

IN HONOR / MEMORY OF _____

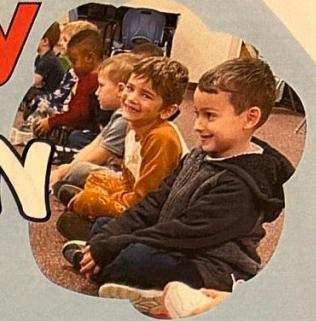
Pentecost Geraniums suggested at \$5 ea. X _____ = \$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed Cash Check # _____ \$ _____

Please place this order form in an envelope marked "**Pentecost Garden**" with your check or cash and return it to the church office by **Sunday, May 12**. Your order may also be placed in the offering plate. A maximum of 50 plants will be purchased, with any excess funds being applied to our weekly altar flower costs.

- I am willing to help with planting geraniums around the church
- More dedications on additional sheet...



Luther Memorial Academy



KINDERGARTEN BOOTCAMP

For incoming and current Kindergarten students

JUNE 10 - 14 & 17 - 21, 2024

Drop off: 8:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

Pick up: 11:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Get ready
to rock the
school
year!

\$135 per child for one week OR \$250 for both weeks

After care available until 4:30 p.m. for an additional charge

- Individualized instruction at your child's level
- Build skills for school success
- Introduce students to teachers, administrators, classrooms, and daily routines
- Ease anxieties about starting in the Fall
- Meet new friends and have lots of fun



Register by May 22

for one week or both!

**Contact Mrs. Thom,
Principal, at**

mthom@lmaerie.org

or call 814.454.0106.

Luther Memorial Academy

220 West 11th Street, Erie, PA 16501

814.454.0106

www.luthermemorialacademy.org

Attendees must reach 5 years of age by September 1, 2024, and must be completely potty-trained.

May 2024 St. John's Lutheran Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 5PM WORSHIP
5 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10AM WORSHIP 11AM YOUTH GROUP 11AM Brew Crew 11:15AM BELL CHOIR	6	7	8 CONG. COUNCIL 6PM	9 11:30AM WELCA	10	11 5PM WORSHIP
12 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10AM WORSHIP 11:15AM BELL CHOIR Happy Mother's Day!	13	14	15	16	17	18 5PM WORSHIP
19 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10 AM WORSHIP 11:15AM BELL CHOIR	20	21 7PM Dufford Terrace Board	22	23	24	25 5PM WORSHIP
26 9AM CHANCEL CHOIR 10AM WORSHIP 11:15AM BELL CHOIR	27 Memorial Day Office Closed	28	29	30	31	

St. John's Lutheran Church

2216 Peach St., Erie PA 16502
 (814) 456-7596 www.StJohnsErie.org
 "You Belong Here!"