



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

*"You belong here."*

# The Parish Post

Monthly Newsletter

## NWPA Synod Assembly Theme—I Love Telling the Story

In the middle of June, Butch Karnes and I represented St. John's as voting members at the Synod Assembly held on Thiel College campus. I arrived on Thursday afternoon before the meeting began, because I knew that I wanted ample time to set up my spartan college kid townhouse bunk for maximum comfort. I slept well in the two nights there. Butch says his one night was not very restful.

We ate meals in the dining hall, supplementing our appetites with coffee and WELCA-provided cookies during business sessions.

About 100 people gathered, including 66 lay delegates, 22 rostered leaders (pastors), 10 retired pastors, and one youth. You can find the agenda for Synod Assembly 2024 on the NWPA Synod website. In general, we heard reports from Bishop Lozano and his staff, and we learned about the good work of the many organizations affiliated with the ELCA on national and local levels. We celebrated the anniversaries of congregations and rostered leaders. When voting by electronic devices for synodical officers and positions was delayed by technical difficulties, the Bishop shared Dad jokes. Others took the challenge and brought their own jokes to the microphone!

What about the stories? As Christians and as congregations, we have a story to tell of our God at work in our lives. Our Synod leaders serve as resources to help congregations connect with our communities to fill needs. A new "Go Tell it IN the Mountains" program has three goals, to equip ordained and lay preachers to use traditional and non-traditional techniques to communicate the gospel, to recruit and educate aspiring preachers, and to help congregations integrate the gospel message into their attitudes, actions, and ministries in daily life. This new program is a partnership with Allegheny Synod, Upper Susquehanna Synod, and NWPA Synod, funded by a grant of \$1,250,000 through the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Using an excellent booklet "Worship at the Assembly," we opened each day and closed our Synod, accompanied by organ, piano, and the combo of Michele Flaherty on guitar, Pastor Young on box drum, and Erika Harper, voice. Our closing prayer:

"Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and extend to us your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.

## **Academic Milestones**

Best wishes to all students and teachers at the completion of the school year! Enjoy your well-earned summer break! Please let the office know of any graduates that we should celebrate.

## **“Lunch and Listen” on Hiatus**

Abiding Hope’s monthly speaker series is on summer vacation, resuming in September.

## **Beach Vespers and Picnic, July 17**

The Erie Lutheran Conference invites everyone to Worship at the Lakeshore, Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at the Pine Tree Pavilion on Presque Isle (near Beach 9) for a potluck meal at 6:30 pm and worship at 7:30 pm. Please bring a dish to share, your own place settings, and a lawn chair. Beverages will be provided. After worship, stroll over to the beach to enjoy the summer sunset! The pavilion is handicapped-accessible. Hope to see you there! We'll gather rain or shine, but we hope for good weather. This invitation comes from the Dean of the Erie Lutheran Conference, Pastor Jean Kuebler of Faith Lutheran Church in Harborcreek. (The July 17<sup>th</sup> date replaces an earlier announced date of July 28.)

## **Welcoming Guests to the Waldameer Picnic, July 18**

The basic details for the annual picnic at Waldameer appear on another page in the Parish Post. This year, Council decided to extend an invitation to a few neighboring churches, Abiding Hope, Mount Calvary, and Lamb of God. As the Erie Lutheran Conference churches meet regularly to discuss our current situations and look to the future, we recognize the benefits of getting to know each other better. We trust that St. John’s members will welcome our fellow Lutherans to the picnic.

## **Fresh Water vs. Salt Seas**

Good news first—We have a new water-cooling fountain and bottle filler in the Parish Center gym! Bad news—one part was defective, and the replacement part is sailing our way across the Pacific Ocean from Korea! Many thanks are due to Max Matthew Alwens for the replacement of the older, non-functioning equipment. We trust that he’ll get our new device in working order as soon as the new part arrives. Waiting for our ship to come in...

Two other improvements for the gym tell a shorter and happier story. Bob Bestvina recently updated Wi-Fi connectivity in the gym for more dependable service. He also installed two new Wi-Fi thermostats with protective covers. Remote regulation of the thermostats may offer cost savings on utilities for periods when the gym is not in use.

## **Gem City Band Concerts at St. John's**

The Gem City Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble list three more 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. We look forward to hosting concerts in the coming months, with refreshments (cookies) donated by our members!

- Wednesday, July 31, 7:00 pm, Gem City Jazz Ensemble
- Wednesday, September 11, 7:00 pm, Gem City Concert Band
- Wednesday, December 11, 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 Concert, July 31

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 6<sup>th</sup> Lutheran House tea at Chautauqua

## **August 11 Service and Potluck with Bishop Lozano**

On Sunday, August 11, Bishop Lozano will be our guest preacher at the 10:00 am service. By recommendation of the Worship and Music Committee, Council has decided to invite the Saturday night members to join us on the Sunday morning service. There will be no Saturday night worship service. Following the Sunday service, we invite all to a potluck meal in the air-conditioned gym! We are aware of a beach service that same morning for the Erie Lutheran Conference, but we hope that St. John's members will attend our Sunday morning service in a spirit of unity.

## **NWPA Synod at the ELCA Youth Gathering**

New Orleans is the site of the ELCA events for young people from July 13 to July 20. The early days will be devoted to the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE), and to table, for teens who live with a wide range of physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities. The 16<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> is for the ELCA Youth Gathering (Teens) and for the Young Adult Gathering (ages 18 to 35). Seven churches from our NWPA Synod will participate, sending 26 youth, 7 adults in the 18-35 range, and 20 adult chaperones. Their theme is "Created to Be" from Psalm 139:14. St. John's has offered some financial support for a number of participants from the Erie Lutheran Conference. We pray for their safe travels, their health, and their growth in faith. Events of the ELCA Youth Gathering will appear on Facebook.



## *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.

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### **Worship At The Lakeshore Evening Beach Worship Service**

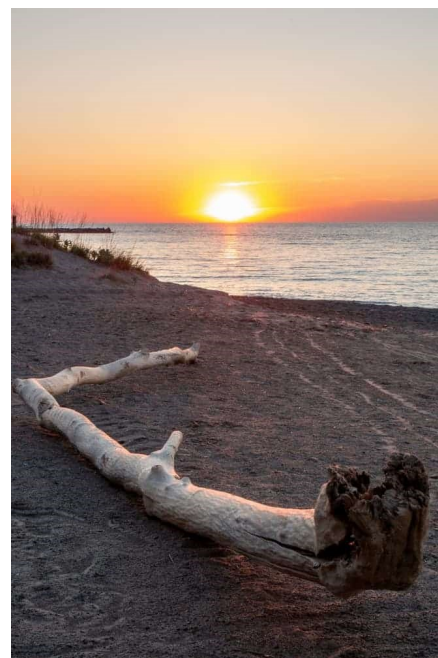
**Wednesday, July 17th**

**Potluck Dinner at 6:30 PM**

**Worship Service at 7:30 PM**

**Bring your own place setting, lawn chair, and  
a dish to share**

**Location: Pine Tree Pavilion near Beach 9 at  
Presque Isle**





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

**When:** Sunday, July 7

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

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

**Who:** PreK – 8<sup>th</sup> grade (invite a friend!)

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## **“What It Means To Be A Lutheran”**

**Pastor Ralph will lead the session:**

**Sunday, September 15, 2024**

**2:00 to 7:00 p.m.**

**Congregational Potluck 5:00 p.m.**

**We invite anyone interested  
in membership at St. John's.**

***Current members are  
invited as a refresher.***

***FOR THOSE ATTENDING THE SESSION, PLEASE SIGN UP!***



**New members will be  
received during worship:  
Sunday, September 22**

## Green Corner NWPAsynod Green Team

### Lutherlyn Environmental Education Program (LEEP)

The Lutherlyn Environmental Education Program (LEEP) offers learning adventures for all ages, based on an understanding of God's creation and our responsibility as its stewards. It is renowned throughout western Pennsylvania for its high quality, science-oriented programs and takes full advantage of Camp Lutherlyn's 660 acres of deciduous forests, coniferous plantations, streams, lakes, wetlands, meadows, and fields. Whether you are looking for a school field trip, an educator workshop, a church youth group activity, a scout program, a service project, or a family outing, LEEP has opportunities for you.

When youth attend summer camp at Lutherlyn, they participate in at least one LEEP nature activity during the week. One option is to visit the sustainable homestead at Terra Dei, the first straw bale house built in Pennsylvania. Here campers learn about ways people can use less resources, with a focus on renewable energy and everyday solutions to ecological problems. Campers might also visit the organic garden on-site to learn about the importance of using fewer chemicals, habitat creation, and growing things in a way that works alongside natural systems instead of against them.

Throughout the week campers are also encouraged to reduce food waste (including helping with composting in the dining hall), conserve electricity and water, and to act in ways that don't damage the natural surroundings. Ultimately, this results in young people who are more mindful of the environmental implications of their lifestyles. LEEP hopes that all these experiences will make taking care of creation second nature to campers – something ingrained in their daily lives as well as something they can actively participate in and be passionate about.

There are several opportunities to visit Lutherlyn throughout the year, including LEEP's "Saturday Safaris" - nature events that are open to the public and held four times a year. One winter safari annually is maple sugaring, where attendees are exposed to the science and history of making maple syrup through an interdisciplinary study of tree identification, tree biology, and the cultural importance of maple syrup for the Native Americans and early American pioneers. Additionally, this safari looks at care for creation by talking about the impact of acid rain and climate change on the health of maple trees. The other three safaris, each with a component theme of care for creation, rotate through different topics such as Native American history, archaeology, owl ecology, and birdwatching.

#### Upcoming LEEP Saturday Safaris:

**9/7/2024: Gardening, Habitats, and Energy Efficient Living** - Discover green living possibilities at Lutherlyn's Terra Dei Homestead. Explore organic gardening, natural pest control, and enriching your environment by creating habitats for wildlife. (Registration deadline: September 2)

**11/2/2024: Survival Skills** - Learn some of the essentials to surviving in the forest alone, such as being prepared, building a shelter, and building a fire. (Registration deadline: October 28)

Register online at: [www.lutherlyn.campbrainregistration.com](http://www.lutherlyn.campbrainregistration.com) or call the main office at 724-865-2161.

For more information about the Lutherlyn Environmental Education Program, including other upcoming events, please visit the LEEP website at: [www.lutherlyn.com/programs/environmental\\_education](http://www.lutherlyn.com/programs/environmental_education)

To subscribe to the annual LEEPfrog newsletter, email [leep@lutherlyn.com](mailto:leep@lutherlyn.com)

Please contact the Lutherlyn Environmental Education Office at [leep@lutherlyn.com](mailto:leep@lutherlyn.com) or 724-865-9079 for more information, to talk to Todd Garcia-Bish, or to make a reservation.

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](mailto: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

June 2024



# St. John's Lutheran Church FAMILY PICNIC!

**THURSDAY, JULY 18TH, 2024**

PICNIC GROVE HEADQUARTERS:  
**WEST LAKEVIEW SHELTER**

**REGISTRATION-12:00 PM**  
**DINNER-Starting at 6:00 PM**

-Hot dogs, Chips, Table Setting, & Soda/Water will be provided-  
*~Please bring a dish to share~*

**Discount Combo Pass: Only \$25.00 each!**

(Church subsidizes \$6.00 of discount rate—combo pass regularly priced at \$52.00 ea.)

**\*\*These \$25 combo passes are good ONLY July 18th, additional discounted combo passes to be used at any time during the season may be purchased at \$38 each.\*\***

Combo Passes will be sold at the picnic and in advance after the 10AM service on Sunday, June 30th, July 7th, and July 14th or anytime in the office

**WALDAMEER RIDES: 12:00 TO 9:00 PM**  
**WATER WORLD: 11:00 AM TO 7:00 PM** (*Swimwear Required*)  
*YOU MUST HAVE A COMBO PASS TO ENTER THE GATE AT WATER WORLD!*

**RIDES~FOOD~GAMES~REFRESHMENTS**  
**RAIN OR SHINE**  
**PLENTY OF FUN FOR EVERYONE!**

## July 2024 St. John's Lutheran Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Saturday
	1	2	3	4  Office Closed	5	6 5PM WORSHIP
7 10AM WORSHIP 11AM Youth Group	8	9	10 11AM Project Dignity Picnic CONG. COUNCIL 6PM	11 11:30AM WELCA	Footsteps Weekend	
14 10AM WORSHIP <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Footsteps Weekend</div>	15	16	17	18 12:00PM Waldameer Picnic 	19	20 5PM WORSHIP
21 10 AM WORSHIP	22	23 7PM Dufford Terrace Board	24	25	26	27 5PM WORSHIP
28 10AM WORSHIP	29	30	31 7:00 PM Gem City Jazz Ensemble Concert			

**St. John's Lutheran Church**  
 2216 Peach St., Erie PA 16502  
 (814) 456-7596 [www.StJohnsErie.org](http://www.StJohnsErie.org)  
 "You Belong Here!"