



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

"You belong here."

The Parish Post

Monthly Newsletter

ELCA: The Big Picture 2

Here's a sequel to last month's page one essay about the ELCA Church Wide Assembly (CWA) that met in Phoenix, Arizona at the end of July. A summary of the work that they accomplished in the greater part of a week is 24 pages long, and it can be made available upon request. This essay is an attempt to summarize the highlights.

Our NWPASynod sent both Bishop Lozano and Bishop-elect Papon along with 5 other delegates to the CWA. Almost 800 delegates from 65 ELCA synods cast their votes on a variety of issues. They elected a new Presiding Bishop, Rev. Yehiel Curry, secretary, Rev. Lucille "CeCe" Williams, and members of the larger Church Council and many other committees and ELCA-affiliated organizations. They adopted budgets for 2026, 2027, and 2028, to cover the years between the CWA gatherings that happen on a three-year cycle. It is notable that the budget for each succeeding year is a bit smaller than the earlier number. The same is true for the yearly amounts dedicated to ELCA World Hunger, which make up about 37% of the total ELCA budget.

A few items of business involve tweaks to the ELCA constitution. One item raises from 10% to 20% the number of Youth (not yet 18 years of age) and Young Adult (18-30) representatives to ELCA Church Council and other administrative groups.

This year's CWA adopted the social statement, "Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All," which was presented in draft form to NWPASynod Assembly and all synods in 2024 for comment before consideration at the higher denominational level. It is one of many Social Statements available on the ELCA website. Its purpose is to encourage all to participate in community life as voters and as advocates for policies that respect the needs of all members of society.

Dozens of synods presented "memorials" to the CWA, expressing concerns over social issues from the past, such as the part that churches played in Indian residential schools, and the present, such as the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine causing a humanitarian crisis in Gaza. For these and many other topics, study groups are charged with developing materials and programs to spread understanding among leaders and congregations on healthy approaches and actions. Once again, here is the theme of CWA 2025:

We are church for the sake of the world — for the abundant life promised by God and fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for all creation.

#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.

ELC Dean's Advice on Transition Team

Pastor Jean Kuebler, of Faith Lutheran Church, and Dean of the Erie Lutheran Conference, met with St. John's Council on Wednesday, August 13th to discuss options for St. John's to consider. Pastor Jean explained various types of shared ministries, such as mergers, consolidations, cooperative arrangements for pastoral coverage with other Lutheran congregations, or with Ecumenical partners in other denominations. A Transition Team could do the leg work for the future by interviewing members, forecasting finances, and exploring possible partnerships. We are grateful for Pastor Jean's words of encouragement, and we expect to continue the conversation with Council, our Dean, and our new Bishop.

Backpack Blessings

On Sunday, August 24th, a dozen students and teachers came forward with their backpacks to receive a blessing as the school year begins. Pastor Mineo offered prayers of support for educators, students, and families as they answer their call to grow in knowledge and understanding of our world. The congregation wishes everyone the best in this new season of learning.

Chautauqua Lutheran House—A Centennial Year!

We thank Marj, Pat, Sue, and Beth for bringing a carload of homemade cookies from St. John's to the Lutheran House in Chautauqua on Tuesday, August 12th. In honor of their 100 years on the Chautauqua campus, the Lutheran House added cupcakes to the sweets on the porch. Servers and guests dodged raindrops during the afternoon, but nothing stopped the message of hospitality during this Social Hour.

Gem City Concert, Wednesday, September 17

Join us in the Parish Center on Wednesday, September 17th for an evening of toe-tapping music, and sweet treats. The Gem City Concert Band members will delight us with marches, patriotic selections, show tunes, light jazz, and maybe even a Beach Boys medley! Cool fall weather is a good time to turn on the oven to bake a batch of cookies to share with our guests. Carolyn S. and Sue E. welcome your contributions.

CROP Walk, Sunday, September 28 at PISP

CROP Walk Erie celebrates its 50th year on September 18, 2025! The annual CROP walk benefits hungry people in our own region and globally. Walkers and donors have earned our Erie CROP Walk a place in the top ten across the nation! Registration and greetings at Beach 1 begin at 1:00 pm, with the official start of the walk at 2:00 pm, although some of us start when the time is best for us. Two routes offer walkers a choice of 5.5 miles of flat, friendly, fresh air exercise, or a 1-mile stroll before turning back to the activity hub. It's fun to see the groups of churches and businesses gather, and to share the path with families, children, and pups on leashes. St. John's invites everyone to participate, either by walking, or by pledging funds to walkers. Check with Carolyn and with the church office for more information.

Scout News

Pack 9 will be having a New Scout Night, September 13, from 2-4 in the Scout Room. This is open to any child, K-5, who may be interested in Cub Scouts. They will also be selling candles from Our Own Candle Company from September 13-October 30, if anyone is interested in purchasing candles.

Troop 9 would again like to thank the congregation for their support with their latest Rum-mage Sale. They are currently selling popcorn, and there will be an order form on the office window if anyone would like to order popcorn.

From the Bahm/Palmer Committee

The Bahm/Palmer committee will be meeting Sunday, September 21, after the 10:00 service. If any member of the congregation has an application for financial assistance for the youth of St. John's, please submit it prior to the meeting. If there are any questions about the assistance, please let either me or another member of the committee know.

Ride the bus to the bishop's installation in Oil City

The Erie Lutheran Conference has arranged for two school buses with professional drivers to transport folks to and from Bishop Papson's Installation Service, Oct. 19, 3:30 p.m. at Good Hope Lutheran in Oil City. Buses will leave Faith Lutheran (5414 E. Lake Rd) at 1:00 p.m. and Luther Memorial (225 W. 10th) at 1:30 p.m. Cost is \$5.00 per person, payable on departure. Space is limited to 52 people per bus. To reserve your seat, sign up on the sheet in the narthex or email faithlepastor@gmail.com.

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

On Sunday, September 7th, from noon until 2 or any part of that time that you are able, you can help at EUMA's Liberty House shelter at 550 W. 7th Street in Erie. EUMA's Liberty House is a 10-bed transitional shelter and program for homeless Veteran men. We need your assistance with deep cleaning the facility, taking apart beds, and putting together newer upgraded beds for our homeless veterans. *(Please contact Diane Bestvina to sign-up.)*

With your help, we can make a difference!

Upcoming events calendar

Sunday, Sept. 7	God's Work, Our Hands
Sunday, Sept. 14	Pulpit Exchange/What it means.../Potluck
Sunday, Sept. 21	New Member Affirmation of Faith
Wed., Sept. 17	Gem City Concert Band, 7:00-8:00 pm
Sunday, Sept. 28	CROP Walk
Wed., Dec. 10 to Tues., Dec. 16	Our Neighbors' Place hosted by St. John's
Wed., Dec. 17	Gem City Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble Concert, 7-9 pm



Green Corner NWPASynod Green Team

Conservation and Schools

As the world faces growing environmental challenges like waste disposal, air pollution, and climate change, schools can play an important role in conserving the planet. By adopting sustainable practices schools can not only contribute to conserving the environment for future generations, but set an example and teach the future generations in their care sustainable practices.

How can schools help with these challenges? How might we help? As a parent or community member work with your local school personnel and encourage them to:

- Organize classroom projects where students collect recyclable materials to create art or functional items. And practice recycling in all areas of the school: plastic, cans, paper.

- Encourage children and staff to switch off all appliances and lights when not in use. Can your local school install solar panels? Are they using efficient lighting, heating and air conditioning?

- Encourage students and staff to properly shut-off water sources and report dripping spigots.

- Institute “Share Tables” in the cafeteria, where students may return whole food or beverage items they choose not to eat. Offer these items to other students, either during the lunch period or after school.

- Develop a procedure for composting of school cafeteria food scraps, for use in neighborhood or school gardens. Encourage school gardens with food grown to be used in the cafeteria.

- Work with your school to eliminate single-use and disposable items in the cafeteria, such as Styrofoam, straws, single-use water bottles and plastic utensils. Encourage use of milk cartons and juice boxes that can be recycled.

- Offer opportunities for students to participate in community clean-up events, planting PA native activities, and other initiatives that promote environmental conservation.

- Organize outdoor learning sessions, such as science classes held in school gardens, enabling students to study plant growth, soil health, and other ecological processes in a real-world context.

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.

Like and follow us on Facebook: [Northwestern PA Synod Green Team – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#).

Contact us at: nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com

September 2025

Sunday, September 14



MEMBERSHIP CLASS

"What It Means to Be a Lutheran"

*For new members and for current members
as a refresher and support!*

2:00 to 7:00 pm

**Potluck meal for the
whole congregation!**

5:00 pm in the Parlor



PLEASE SIGN UP!



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.

God's work. Our hands.



September 7, 2025

See page 3 for more details.

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, September 7th & October 5th

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



Conference Pulpit Exchange

On Sunday, September 14th, the Erie Lutheran Conference (ELC) will have a “Pulpit Exchange.” This is an opportunity for pastors and congregations of the ELC to connect with each other, experience different perspectives, to learn from one another, and grow in a deeper understanding of our connections as faith communities.

Here is a list of the congregations who will receive worship leaders and preachers from other congregations:

Abiding Hope	Pastor Ralph Mineo (<i>St. John's, Erie</i>)
Faith	Michael Snider (<i>St. John's, Girard</i>)
Holy Trinity	Pastor Karen Lundwall (<i>Luther Memorial</i>)
Immanuel	Pastor Erik Young (<i>St. Paul's, Erie</i>)
Luther Memorial	Pastor Karen Kostur (<i>Immanuel</i>)
Mt. Calvary and Lamb of God	Pastor Jean Kuebler (<i>Faith</i>)
Prince of Peace	Pastor Karen Parsh (<i>Abiding Hope</i>)
St. James, Fairview	Pastor Ron King (<i>Holy Trinity</i>)
St. John's, Erie	Pastor Matt Dennison (<i>St. Peter's, North East</i>)
St. John's, Girard	Pastor Beth Siefert (<i>St. Paul's, Erie</i>)
St. Mark's, Waterford	Pastor Bill Cox (<i>Prince of Peace</i>)
St. Paul's, Erie	Pastor Karen Thompson (<i>St. James, Fairview</i>)
St. Peter's, North East	Pastor Jay Mitchell (<i>Luther Memorial</i>)

Music Notes

“We Sing, We Serve. We Ring, We Serve.”

NEW CHOIR SEASON: First Rehearsal on Sunday, September 7

9:00 AM – Chancel Choir rehearsal

11:15 AM – Bell Choir rehearsal

CHANCEL CHOIR: The time has returned for St. John’s parishioners to make a joyful noise to the Lord in the choir loft. The Chancel Choir will be rehearsing at 9:00 AM Sunday mornings. Rehearsals will only be on 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!

BELL CHOIR: Bell choir rehearsals will be after the 10:00 AM Church Service at 11:15 AM. We continue to look forward to the beautiful music of the bells. New members are welcome!

ORGAN SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE: The American Guild of Organists is offering Organ Scholarships for anyone interested in learning to play the pipe organ. You can study to play for a church or just for your own enjoyment. All expenses will be underwritten by the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. 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 (I will be glad to instruct anyone who is interested).

10 REASONS SINGING IS GOOD FOR YOU

1. Singing makes you feel better.
2. Singing enhances lung function
3. Singing helps you beat stress and relax
4. Singing helps improve memory
5. Singing builds a sense of community
6. Singing lets you express yourself
7. Singing can help with pain relief
8. Singing boosts your confidence
9. Singing features in wellbeing studies
10. Singing is for everyone.

*Published February 1, 2023 by Opera North, Howard Opera Centre, Leeds, England
(The original article gives detailed explanations of each point. Please see Kathy Swanson if you are interested in the complete article.)*

September 2025 St. John's Lutheran Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Saturday
	1 Labor Day Office Closed	2	3	4	5	6 5PM WORSHIP
7 10AM WORSHIP God's Work, Our Hands	8	9	10 6PM CONG. COUNCIL	11 11:30AM WELCA	12	13 5PM WORSHIP
14 10AM WORSHIP Pulpit Exchange	15	16 7PM Dufford Terrace Board	17 7PM Gem City Band Concert	18	19	20 5PM WORSHIP
21 10 AM WORSHIP New Member Af- firmation of Faith	22	23	24	25	26	27 5PM WORSHIP
28 10 AM WORSHIP CROP Walk	29	30				

St. John's Lutheran Church

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