



The Messenger

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

FROM YOUR PASTOR...

In April we change from the season of Lent. A season of deep reflection with sincere repentance to the season of Easter. A season of victory and celebration for Christ's atoning work has won for us on the cross of Calvary. As we look forward to Easter on April 1. Our society refers to this as April Fool's Day. I refer you back to the March Newsletter for the devotional on Christ Crucified from 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25 for the contrast between the foolishness of the world and the message of the cross.

As God's children we will celebrate the victory and inheritance that is ours in Christ Jesus rather than focus on the foolishness of this world. We have the power of the Light that overcomes the power of darkness that *seems to reign supreme in this world. I remind you of Christ's words that the power of darkness is allowed to rule the earth for only a season. Then Christ will come again in all his glory and restore all of creation to its glory. He will make as it was before the fall. There will be a New Heaven and a New Earth that will never be polluted or spoiled by the sins of man.*

Please take a moment to retrieve your bible and read 1 Corinthians 15:35 – 58. That section of Scripture is too long to insert here. Specifically focus on the last few verses I've pasted in here.

⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."^[a]

⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"^[b]

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ **But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

⁵⁸ **Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you.** Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the

Lord is not in vain.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, the victory has already been won for you. Your task is to stand firm and be immovable or unshakeable in your faith. Cling to Christ's victory on the cross for you. The power of death and sin no longer have a permanent grip or hold on you. You are covered by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. The victory has guaranteed you a place in Christ's heavenly realms. You are his. He has paid the price of your sin he has bought you back and redeemed you with his own precious blood. Stand firm the victory is yours and is assured by Christ's atoning work on the cross.

All of creation testifies to the new birth that is ours in Christ, with plants waking up from their slumber, trees bringing forth new buds and leaves, bears and other animals also waking up from their slumber and new babies of all kinds are seen throughout all of creation.

Please bring your bibles to worship and Adult Bible Study along with a notebook and pen so that you can take notes and make notes in your Bibles. The youth will continue their study of adult instruction using the Lutheranism 101 materials.

In Christ's service to you his beloved Children,
Pastor Joe

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Off

Tuesday-8:30-5:00

Wednesday-8:30-5:00

Thursday-8:30-5:00

Friday-By Appointment

Saturday-9:00-3:00

Sunday-8:00-12:00

Pastor will be available for emergencies
as needed.

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

As you can see the 100 boxes that were in the church fellowship hall have been delivered to the Maryland Warehouse of Orphan Grain Train. Paul Kowalczyk delivered them on Tuesday March 6th where they were put on the pallets to go onto the Puerto Rico container.

On Friday March 16th, the Maryland volunteers loaded a container with needed items for Puerto Rico. Cooperation was a big part of this container. A volunteer, Rich, from the New England branch loaded a 26 foot truck with the items they collected, then headed to Delaware to pick up the items collected by the Mid Atlantic branch. After loading all the items, Rich headed to Millersville, Maryland to load the full truck onto the container the next morning at 9 am.

Please pray for the container as it makes its way to Puerto Rico. The recipients are anxiously awaiting the container containing water, food, a generator, tools, summer clothes & shoes, wheel chairs, shower chairs, walkers as well as health kits (which were part of a St. John's Action Team), and diapers.

There are still a lot of needs that need to be met. On Tuesday, March 20th, ABC News did several pieces on the devastation that still exists in Puerto Rico. The people were really appreciative of all the aid they received from the people of the U.S. (not the government) individuals mailed them boxes of hygiene supplies, school supplies and other needed items. Please pray for these people as they continue to recover from Hurricane Marie.

With the Puerto Rico container on its way, the Maryland branch has three more containers they are staging for shipping in the near future. One of the future containers is Southern Sudan, and these people are in need of everything. One way we can help is pray for these people. Is there a Thrivent member who would like to do an Action team and purchase items for health kits with the Action Team card. OGT provides an opportunity for St. John's members to participate in mission oriented projects in the US and overseas. This is another opportunity which helps spread the Gospel message. We are, the "Hands and Feet of Jesus". Please speak to me if you are interested in helping these people.

Serving the Lord through Orphan Grain Train,
Karen Ann Kowalczyk,
Maryland Orphan Grain Train Disaster Coordinator

YOUTH NEWS

The Youth are currently working on fundraising ideas to help them raise the necessary money for the 2019 gathering. The youth participated in the Laurel Mall community fundraising event on March 10. A huge thank you to all the church members who stopped by to support the kids. We were able to raise nearly \$1,400. A huge thank you to Stephanie and Tyler Dice for organizing this event, Sylvia Wargo for making the haluski, Dave and Nancy Trovitch for making the halupki. Thank you to Ruth and Joe Beishline for all your help before and during the event. Thank you to all youth families for all your participation in this event. The date for our April youth group meeting is set for April 15. These meetings help to build the trust and friendships within the group.

The Youth will be having a breakfast for Mother's Day on May 12, and one for Father's Day on June 16.

Please continue to keep all of the children and youth of St. John's in your prayers.

—Jolene Evancho

On June 9 we will be having a tricky tray auction as part of the fundraising efforts to send the youth to Minnesota.

I am just wondering if any church members would be interested in donating a basket or gift certificate to the auction. I am also looking for anyone who may want to volunteer their time that day either in the kitchen or selling tickets. We are also looking for baked goods or food donations as well.

If you are interested in helping or donating, please let me, Stephen, or Jolene know. I will have sign-up sheets available.

Also, if you have any company in mind that may donate to us, let me know and I will send a donation letter or provide you with one.

Thank you in advance for any help in this matter, and look out for future fundraisers.

—Carrie Drasher

MITES—Christian Hope through Mass Media in Egypt



Although Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) have been proclaiming the good news through the airways to the Middle East for many years, a new opportunity has opened up to expand their ministry because of favorable outreach. Sharing a Christ-centered voice to millions, 'Christian Hope through Mass Media in Egypt' will provide a Christian television program aired from Cairo, Egypt.

Because of the destruction of war and terrorist bombings, refugee families throughout the idle East are misplaced and searching for hope. Countless numbers, mostly women and children, are living in unsafe camps with meager living conditions. Imagine yourself without a home or basic human needs such as food and water. Day to day survival is a way of life for these 'lost souls' and it is urgent that the Gospel message be available to them so that the Holy Spirit works in hearts and many souls are added to the kingdom.

Sharing the life-giving message of God's love and forgiveness to Arabic speaking people is provided through Egyptian-dialect of the Arab speaking Middle East, broadcast from LHM based in Cairo, Egypt. Without this media expansion reaching throughout this area of the world, millions may never hear the life-saving message that we know and love. Please pray for this ministry, and that with LWML's \$100,000 Grant LHM will be able to continue to be a Christian voice of hope to over 115 countries with over 150 million lost and dying people. Please go to www.lwml.org to see more about this grant #7 and others.

Our LWML ladies at Zion Lutheran Church and the western zone are busy making plans that will help you have an uplifting and enjoyable time with fellowship with other LWML SELC District ladies and gentleman. As a reminder, the convention will be May 18-20, 2018, starting with a worship service Friday night, Saturday will bring special guests as well as our speakers. One I didn't mention is Emily Stoeller who was our Young Woman Representative at the Albuquerque Convention last summer. Emilie is on fire for the Lord and came home very enthusiastic, as was her mother who was a first-timer and Western Zone's delegate. Emilie is also in the Deaconess program at Concordia-Chicago. We are meeting under the theme 'Hope – God's Faithfulness' based on Jeremiah 29:11.

Serving the Lord with Gladness,

Sharon Roegge

Don and Sharon Roegge invite the members of the congregation to come help them to celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary. It will be held May 5th at the Golden Oaks Village Clubhouse in White Haven. Come drop in anytime between 1:00pm – 5:00pm for Appetizers, Dessert, and fellowship with our family, neighbors, and friends we've met through the years. Your presence will be a gift to us. If you would like, you could also share a few remembrances of our times together. Those can be sent to Christine Conklin, 30 Tomahawk Trail, Sandy Hook, CT 06482 or email her at christine_cnkln@yahoo.com.

PRAYERS FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



We pray Jesus' hand would rest on **Peter Panco, Anna Belko, Bob Gould, Jack Ross, MaryAnne and Frank Gilham, Alma Yale, Anne Goranitis, Gertie and Bob Mandak, Bob Onder, Pauline Onder, Sharon Roegge, Nancy Trovitch**, and all in need of His physical, emotional and spiritual care. If you have a prayer chain request, please call Gertie Ann Mandak, (570) 497-9361.

If Pastoral Care is required, please call Pastor Joe (570-459-6423) and the necessary arrangements will be made.

St. John's Evangelical
Lutheran Church

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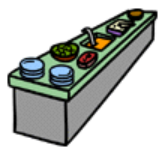


Our Mission and Vision Statement:

"We are to be growing people in our faith and helping others to come to faith and grow in it."



COMMUNITY LUNCHEON



The next luncheon will be held on Saturday, April 28, beginning at 11am. Sponsors are the

Thrivent Action Teams.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER—Paul Kowalczyk

Well we have finally moved into spring and hopefully the snowstorms will stop making a mess of our roads and no more shoveling. The best news is that spring also brings to us Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the celebration of our Lord and Savior's resurrection on Easter Sunday. We have an opportunity to look beyond the crucifixion of Jesus and see the forgiveness of our sins and our salvation. Lent has been a source of inspiration as we worship on Sunday and mid week services with a soup supper. May the Good News of Easter be a source of joy to all of us.

The youth group had a very successful fund raiser at the Laurel Mall Craft Show. A lot of tasty halupki and haluski were sold at the event. The funds raised are going to support the youth attending the LCMS Youth Gathering in 2019. It was nice to see the number of church members who helped make all of the food and sell it at the mall. The youth have 2 more fund raising events planned, one in June and another one in the fall.

Another successful Community Luncheon was held on Saturday. As we continue in outreach to our neighbors the luncheon is one of those ways we are able to show Christian love and caring for others no matter what circumstance they find themselves in. Good food has a way of warming the heart and soul of a person and we do have good food and good cooks.

At the beginning of March we had the dedication of the cross of Jesus that was presented to the church by the Paul Junas family in memory of Paul. It was fitting that the cross was presented during Lent. The cross has been hung on the north wall of the church near the pew where Paul sat on a Sunday with his brother and sister, Bob and Lillian Junas.

Enjoy the blooming of flowers during spring as they represent the renewal of life. I hope to see everyone attend Holy Week services and renew your spiritual life. Have a happy and joyous Easter.