



# The Messenger

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

## FROM YOUR PASTOR

February though the shortest month of the year it's also a very busy month this year in the life of the Church. St. Valentine is honored on Valentine's Day. We have one of the longest seasons of Epiphany possible in our church calendar before moving into Lent on March 6<sup>th</sup> with Ash Wednesday. This year the baton has been passed from Paul to Dan as our congregational President. We begin anew. In Second Corinthians Chapter 5: 16-20 St. Paul, The Apostle penned these words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

*"<sup>16</sup> So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!** <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ. Each one of

you is a new creation in Christ. The old sin nature is gone. You are set free from the death of sin. You are set free from the sin that separates you from God forever. You have been reconciled to God through the all atoning work of Christ. Therefore, your sins are no longer counted against you. "Fear not for Christ has redeemed you. He has called you by name. You are mine." Since he has reconciled you to Himself, he has also made you ambassadors to the world. God has given you the gift of the ministry of reconciliation. He is using you to appeal to the rest of your fellow man. So that they may also to be reconciled to God through His message of love, repentance, and forgiveness. Thus, fulfilling the righteousness of God that dwells within you. For the next several weeks in Adult Bible study we will be learning about sharing Christ with our neighbor. We are indeed Ambassadors of Christ, on a mission to share the light and the love of Christ with all those around us.

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.

## NEW YOUTH MEMBER

The youth are excited to announce the addition of a new member! **Paige Panco** has joined our group, and will be joining us to the National Youth Gathering this summer! Our monthly meetings have started back up and we are excited to see what God has in store for our group this year. As always, we ask that you keep our children and youth of St. John's on your prayer list.



## THRIVENT INFO

Thrivent members who have 2018 CHOICE DOLLARS: Remember that those dollars will expire March 31, 2019. If you call the home office before the end of the March rush, you might not have a long wait for the customer service rep. Remember our congregation is listed as St. John, Hazleton, PA.

### ACTION TEAMS

Calling any Thrivent member who would like to do an Action team for health kits for Orphan Grain Train. Please contact Karen Ann at 570-459-0501 or [karenannkow@hotmail.com](mailto:karenannkow@hotmail.com)

to get the details of the project. I will help/work with you with the project.

## YOUTH FUNDRAISERS

February brings us two fundraisers with Frankie's Pizzeria (37 N Wyoming St Hazleton). The first will run from February 3—23 and will be a food coupon sale. We will be selling food coupons for a variety of their food items. The coupons will be good for one year and there is even Lenten approved food. Please see any youth member or Jolene, if you are interested in purchasing or if you would like to help us sell coupons. We will have extra order forms available.



The second fundraiser is a Dine to Donate on February 21 from 5-8pm. We will receive 20% of all the sales Frankie's does during those hours; all we need is people to come into the restaurant and eat, call in an order for pick up, or get food delivered locally. They have also given us permission to have a bake sale that night so we will be looking for donations of baked goods. If you are interested in helping, see Carrie, Jolene, or there will be a sign-up sheet at the bottom of the stairs.

Thank you for your continued support of our youth; we couldn't do this without our church family!

- Carrie Drasher

## DISASTER UPDATE—Karen Ann Kowalczyk



Paul & I have been working with the Maryland branch over the last few weeks. On our way to BWI airport, we stopped at the warehouse and dropped off winter coats, gloves and hats that were collected for the residents that Pastor Elliott Robertson's congregation, Martini Lutheran Church, serves in Baltimore.

If there is anyone who needs medical equipment that insurance will not pay for, please contact me I have access to plenty of walkers, and other items.

Please pray for all those effected by the recent

disasters around our country. Paul & I will be helping out in Panama City, Florida. We will have a report of the needs in the March newsletter.

Serving the Lord with Gladness,  
Karen Ann Kowalczyk,  
Maryland Branch  
Disaster Relief Coordinator

## LWML NEWS

In addition to the LCMS Synodical convention in Milwaukee, and the Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, there is also the LWML convention in Mobile, Alabama in June.

If there is anyone who would like to attend, I will be happy to give you the information when it becomes available in February.

## 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, Meralea Oberto, Bill and Lorraine (Onder) Ray, Megan Crume's mother, Patty** 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."

ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual reports for 2018 are due. Please leave on the secretary's desk. Thank you.

Ambassadors  
of Christ

COMMUNITY  
LUNCHEONS

A Community Luncheon will be held on Saturday, February 23. It will begin with worship at 10:30 followed by the meal at 11am. We are looking for Thrivent members to apply for an Action Grant to sponsor the luncheons. See Nancy if you want to help out.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER—Daniel Starry

It is hard to believe that January is already over, and February is here. As we progress into 2019, it is important to reflect on the accomplishments of St. John's over the past year in order to continue to make meaningful improvements to the Church. The 2018 Annual Reports will soon be released which will provide detail about these accomplishments and activities from 2018. I encourage everyone to take some time to read the reports and to voice any questions, comments, or ideas going forward.

One idea that was brought up at our Council meeting in January was the idea of a directory for members to turn to if they needed services performed or to find members with similar interests. For instance, if someone needed electrical work they could look and see if there was a member of the congregation that does electrical work before turning to the internet or the phone book to find an electrician. Or it could even be a list of hobbies in case you're looking for someone to play a round of golf with or any other activity that may interest you. It would be especially helpful as a way to familiarize new members with the congregation. This idea is still in the early stages of discussion, but if you have a business, trade/talent, or hobby you would like to showcase, please see myself or anyone on Council so that we can gauge feedback.

In closing, I'd like to give a shout out to the Youth Group here at St. John's. They have been busy with numerous fundraisers over the past year in order to support their trip to the LCMS Youth Gathering this summer in Minneapolis, as well as other events. Our congregation has always been very supportive of the youth group, so please keep them in mind as they continue their fundraising and other activities in 2019, as they are the future of our Church.

May God continue to bless you and watch over you in 2019.