



# The Messenger

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

## FROM YOUR PASTOR

March brings us a new month and a new season in the church year; we begin Lent on March sixth with Ash Wednesday in which we as children of God reflect heavily upon our sinful state before God, our Creator, and Redeemer. To that end, for the next several weeks in our Lenten services, we will be reflecting on the various voices in the trials of Jesus. The series will begin with the first voice of accusation and temptation from Matthew Chapter 6. We will eventually hear from a voice of grace in April as Lent draws to a close.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:14 - 21

<sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup>and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

<sup>16</sup>From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. <sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup>that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

We also usher in the season of Spring on March 20<sup>th</sup>. A season of new creation and new life.

It is very fitting that Spring comes each year near our Easter season. Easter, as you know, is a season of new life and reconciliation. Its also a season of hope and love. It a season in which we can give thanks that our sins and our wrongs are not counted against us. All because of Christ's work on the cross. Have you ever noticed that the pine trees form crosses on the end of their branches every year near the time of Ash Wednesday? So even creation testifies to the work of Christ at Calvary for the benefit of a sinful world.

So as you reflect on these thoughts I ask you to think about ways in which you can bring new life and reconciliation into the family of St. John's. What are some things that each of you can do to encourage new life and new growth here in the life of St. John's? Your sin has passed away, you are made new in Christ. You and I are reconciled to him. Christ also makes you His ambassadors, His messengers of this great news of life eternal. How can you as a family think past the few of you who attend weekly? How can you begin to bring new life into this place called St. John's with the help of the Holy Spirit? There have been several generations of families here. How do you begin to ensure that those same families will have a place to worship for the next several generations? Let's enter into a season of Easter here at St. John's and be intentional about bringing new life to the life of your church. Celebrate the life of Christ that is yours in the resurrection of Christ that comes to you in your baptisms.

In Christ's service to you his beloved Children,

Pastor Joe

## LWML MITE CHALLENGE



### \$5.00 Mite Challenge

If every LWML Member donates just \$5.00 between now and March 31, 2019 we can reach the Mission Goal.

**\$5.00 Membership**  
**MITE CHALLENGE**  
 To Bring us to the Mission Goal!

*One Body with Many Members  
 For the body does not consist of one member but many.  
 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it  
 (1 Corinthians 12: 14, 27).*

Your gift of \$5.00 will help feed, clothe, and give spiritual support to those in need and hurting.

Donate online at [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) or send to:  
 LWML Office  
 801 Seminary Place, Suite L010  
 St. Louis, MO 63105

*Miles*  
 Lutheran Women in Mission

Fill those mite boxes or make checks out to LWML SELC District.

## YOUTH FUNDRAISERS

February brought us two great fundraisers with Frankie's Pizzeria. I do not have totals yet, but will keep you updated. Thank you to all who bought coupons, ate out, and baked. We greatly appreciate it.

March brings us one of our always successful fundraisers, Community Days at the Laurel Mall. This year it will be held on March 23; as in years past, we will be selling homemade haluski and halupki, as well as tricky trays. We will be rolling out the halupki on the 17th, if you would like to help just stay after church and roll up your sleeves. Sylvia will be preparing her famous haluski during that week.



If anyone would like to donate a tricky tray, let us know or you can bring it to church by the 17th. We appreciate all your help and donations.

We are a small congregation, but through everyone's help and support we are headed to Minnesota and looking toward the future of our youth, so we are in the planning stages of many new things to come. Stay tuned!

Thanks again and God's Blessing.

- Carrie Drasher



## DISASTER UPDATE—Karen Ann Kowalczyk

Paul & I just got back from spending 6 days helping with the hurricane Michael recovery in Panama City, FL at Trinity Lutheran Church. Pictures can't show how the people of Panama City have been effected. One women in her 80's still didn't have water because downed trees were blocking restoring her water. In addition she has health issues. The LERT (Lutheran Early Response Team) cleared the trees so the water could be restored. Another women who will turn 88 in a few days also didn't have water and was staying with relatives. Paul and his team did trash to treasure recovery saving anything that wasn't wet. Everything else went to the curb for garbage pickup. It was so sad. This is the type of stories we were hearing while we were there. I worked with one of the damage assessment coordinators trying to figure how some of these people could get some help. FEMA is long gone and many of the not for profits are pulling out and there is still a lot of work to do. Trees are down all over Panama City. The LERT group has cleared trees from over 110 properties for free thereby saving the homeowners over \$1 million dollars.

Trinity Lutheran Church which has been the hub of helping their members as well as the members of the community who were also hit. Part of the roof has blue tarp on it and they are waiting for insurance to see how much insurance will pay towards the roof damage as well as other damage around the property estimated to be \$100,000. They will assess what

the next step for the congregation is to help with the rebuild. Many of the churches in the city were damaged to the point that services can not be held and alternate locations were needed. Redemption Lutheran Church has an Orphan Grain Train chapel trailer on their property for services.

In all these situations, they need are PRAYERS so that the situation can be restored to normal as much as possible. Pray also that their faith in Christ will be restored and the churches will see a growth in membership.

Watch the future newsletters as to how the saints of St. John's congregation can reach out and help our brothers and sisters of Panama City.

### Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Florence Updates

While Paul was working one of the couples from Ohio stated that they were leaving Panama City for Texas where they will be helping with recovery that is still on going from 2017 Hurricane Harvey. I am working to see how Orphan Grain Train can help with some of the senior citizens hit by Hurricane Florence last year. They also have lost everything and are having trouble with insurance replacing their items that were lost.

Please pray for all those who have been effected by these natural disasters.

## 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

621 N Vine St  
Hazleton PA 18201  
Rev Joseph L Leech, pastor  
Phone: 570-459-6423  
Email: stjohshazleton@gmail.com  
Website: stjohshazleton.org



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  
LUNCHEONS

A Community Luncheon will be held on **Saturday, March 30**. Make a note of the date change. 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

As we near the final weeks of winter, we persevere through the cold and gloom in anticipation of spring with its warmth and new growth. In a similar fashion, we anxiously await the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Easter morning. Leading up to our Easter celebration we enter the season of Lent, where we are reminded of Jesus' journey to the cross. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which falls on March 6th this year. As we prepare for Christ's death and resurrection, it is also a fitting opportunity for us to remember our Baptism and God's promise of new life in Him.

The arrival of spring also means that the Trustees will no doubt be busy maintaining and improving our buildings and grounds to keep them looking and functioning their best. If you would like to help with any of their upcoming projects, please see Kevin. In addition, John Chladon is looking for someone to take over as Parish House Trustee. Even if you are unable to take on the role in its full capacity, I'm sure John would work with you. Please see him with any questions.

Our community luncheons are continuing to be held every 4th Saturday of the month at 11 am. Prior to the luncheons, Pastor has been providing a short service beginning around 10:30 for those in attendance. A big thank you to the volunteers that continue to make these luncheons possible each month. This is a much needed service to our community and just one example of the many great things God is accomplishing through St. John's.

LENTEN SERVICES

Lenten services will begin on Ash Wednesday, March 6, at 7pm. Pastor will preach on the various voices in the trials of Jesus. Join us on the next five Wednesdays leading up to Holy Week for a soup supper at 6pm followed by the worship service at 7pm. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board for anyone who would like to prepare soup.