

The Circle

April 2024



Dear Friends in Christ,

I hope your Lenten observances have been going well. Lent is drawing to a close as we've entered Holy Week. Thank you to everyone who helped at the Palm Sunday services, and thank you to everyone who's going to be helping with the services at the great Three Days later this week. I'm excited for our Holy Week observances this year, and I hope you'll be able to join us for them!

Our Holy Week observances started earlier this week with Palm Sunday, as we remembered Jesus' triumphant procession into Jerusalem, and as we heard the Passion story once again. The Passion reading on Palm Sunday serves as kind of an overview of the story, and as we go deeper into Holy Week, we'll focus in on specific aspects of the Passion narrative.

The first part of our Holy Week observances are on Maundy Thursday. The word "Maundy" comes from a Latin word, "Mandatum," which means "commandment." Maundy Thursday worship focuses on the commandments that Jesus established for his disciples "on the night in which he was betrayed." Our Maundy Thursday worship dwells in the Last Supper; in addition to remembering the institution of Holy Communion, it also includes a space for individual absolution and for footwashing, following Jesus' commandment to show love for one another through washing one another's feet.

I know footwashing is often one of the more uncomfortable things in the Maundy Thursday service. People's opinions tend to be pretty sharply divided: for some people, footwashing is a really deep and powerful moment, and for others, it can be really deeply uncomfortable. While Maundy Thursday footwashing, the sign of service and care that Jesus set out for his followers, can be a really powerful thing, I don't want to pressure people into doing anything they're not comfortable with in worship or any other time! We'll make space on Maundy Thursday for people to have their feet washed, but footwashing is by no means mandatory.

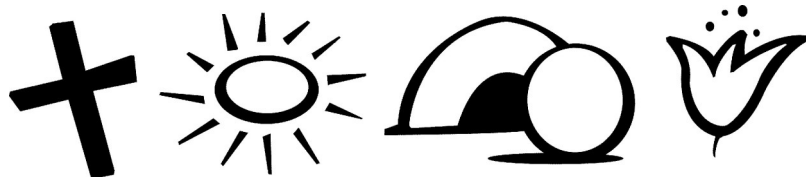
Our Maundy Thursday service ends with the stripping of the altar, as we prepare for Good Friday. The Good Friday service centers around the Passion, but from a completely different perspective than the one we heard earlier in the week. The Passion reading on Palm Sunday centers around Jesus' suffering and death. St. Mark presents him as dying alone, all his disciples having left, and only a few followers looking on from a distance. It's *bleak*. On Good Friday on the other hand, we hear the Passion according to John, where Jesus is in control of events the whole time. Good Friday shows the Passion for what it is: the central part of God's plan to bring about the salvation of the world. The Good Friday Passion reading is more solemn, more meditative than the beginning of Holy Week, as we gather in the darkened church to honor the Cross on which was hung the Savior of the whole world.

Our Holy Week observance continues on Holy Saturday with the Great Vigil of Easter. The Easter Vigil is going to be fun. It's kind of like Christmas Eve, but for Easter—both festivals are such a big, exciting deal that we get to start celebrating them as early as possible. We're going to be celebrating the vigil this year with other churches from the Phoenixville Area Clergy Association. The service starts outside around a bonfire, as the light of Christ comes into the world. We'll hear the story of God's saving acts, and celebrate in word and song, fire and water, bread and wine. It's going to be joyous and fun, and just a little bit gloriously over the top.

And of course, our celebration continues on Easter Sunday with two festival worship services and a fellowship breakfast; between all of them, it's going to be an exciting and joyful way to continue the Easter celebration. I'm looking forward to all of the ways that we'll celebrate and worship together this Holy Week, and I hope you'll be able to join us!

In Christ,

Pastor Russ



Women of the ELCA Retreat:

Renew, Restore, Refresh: Growing in Our Relationship with God through Prayer April 6th 2024, 9 a.m.



As followers of Jesus, prayer is one of the most important ways we grow in our relationship with God. The more we talk and spend time with someone, the more we get to know them. As we spend time with God in prayer, the closer we become. In prayer we “show up” just as we are, knowing we are unconditionally loved by our gracious God. In this relationship of trust we can share whatever is on our hearts. . . our joys and thanksgivings, our hurts and disappointments, our sadness and frustrations . . .

“Renew, Restore, Refresh: Growing in Our Relationship with God through Prayer” is the theme of this year’s WELCA retreat. You are invited to bring an object which in your experience describes prayer. This could also be an object used in your own personal prayer life such as a candle, devotional reading, prayer shawl, beads, bowl, artwork, or cross.

The retreat will take place on Saturday, April 6th. It begins with registration and coffee at 9 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. We welcome back Rev. Kris Peterson as our retreat leader. The cost is \$15. Please contact Linda Landis with any questions.

WELCA meets on March 26th to enjoy an always very informative program presented by Jack Ertell on the history of the Colonial Theatre. Thank you, Jack! Our April meeting will be April 23rd at 10:30 a.m.



Feed Your Heart, Soul and Body on Easter Morning

The annual Easter Morning Breakfast is back this year! Breakfast will take place at 9 a.m., between the 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. services on Easter morning, March 31st. The Fellowship Committee is currently recruiting volunteers to help set up, cook, and clean up. We would also like to have a count of those planning to attend. Please let Sonya know if you can assist with the breakfast, or if your family is planning to attend (please provide number of kids and number of adults). Guests are always welcome as well. One more reason to raise a “Hallelujah” on Easter morning!

Singers Invited!

Like to sing but Wednesday rehearsals don’t work? Singers are invited to join the Adult Choir in our annual “St. John’s Choir & Friends” concert on Sunday, May 5th, at 7:00 p.m. Performed will be music by William Billings, the first American choral composer, and patriotic selections.

2024 marks the thirty-first concert in the series. Past programs have included Gabriel Fauré’s *Requiem*, W. A. Mozart’s *Requiem* and *Te Deum*, Franz Schubert’s *Mass in G*, Howard Hanson’s *Song of Democracy*, John Rutter’s *Te Deum* and *Requiem*, a concert version of Gilbert and Sullivan’s *Pirates of Penzance*, *Glorias* by Antonio Vivaldi and Francis Poulenc, J. S. Bach’s *Magnificat*, Johannes Brahms’ *German Requiem*, Ralph Vaughan Williams’ *Five Mystical Songs*, Luigi Cherubini’s *Requiem*, Maurice Durufle’s *Requiem*, parts II and III of G. F. Handel’s *Messiah*, *Patriotic Selections*, *Broadway Selections* and *Spirituals*. Last year, after a three-year break due to Covid, 45 singers from 20 area churches joined in performance of Songs of Praise to the Lord!

Rehearsals continue at St. John’s on Sunday April 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th from 7 to 9 p.m., and Sunday May 5th, from 3 to 5:30 p.m.. A light supper will follow the May 5th rehearsal. Music will be provided for the singers. For additional information contact Tom Snyder, Director of Music, ftsiii@gmail.com.



Principally Harps!

Mindy Cutcher & Janet Witman

Principal Harpist with the Pennsylvania Ballet & Principal Harpist with the Kennett Symphony

Sunday, April 7, 2024

4:00 PM

Concert harp-duo transcriptions including: *Polovtsian Dances* by Borodin; Debussy's *En Bateau*; Disney classic, *Under the Sea*; jazz version of *Pure Imagination*; the beloved hymn, *Fairest Lord Jesus*, and Latin dance music- *Tango and Rumba*.



Freewill Offering

St. John's Lutheran Church

**355 St. John's Circle
Phoenixville, PA
610-933-3947**

PCO will be in concert, 4 p.m., Sunday, April 21st at St. John's! Featured work is "National Parks Suite No. 2" composed and performed by oboe and English Horn soloist Jill Haley with orchestra. Jill has written nature inspired music based on her time spent as an Artist in Residence in Glacier and Badlands National Parks. The nature themed program also includes music by Beethoven, Delius, Elgar, and Strauss.



Providence Chamber Orchestra

The Providence Chamber Orchestra, a resident ensemble at St. John's, was founded in 1999 to meet the musical needs and aspirations of its members, a group of talented, amateur musicians from the greater Philadelphia area, all of whom share a common passion for playing music.

Plan now to attend the afternoon's concert of delightful music on April 21st. There is no charge for tickets, although donations will be accepted to help defray the cost of the concert.

St. John's Scholarship apply by April 7th

St. John's offers scholarships each year to high school seniors seeking post-secondary education. Applications are now open! To be eligible for the St. John's Scholarship, you must: be a member of St. John's or attend St. John's regularly and be accepted into an institution of higher learning (university, junior college, trade school, etc.). Applicants can only be awarded the St. John's scholarship once. If you fit this description, we encourage you to apply by April 7, 2024. Applications can be found in the forms box in Kley Hall, or Sonya Sowards will be happy to email or mail one to you. Contact her at (610) 933-3947 ext. 2 or email office@stjohnphoenixville.org.



Vacation Bible School Registration Open; Volunteers Needed

Vacation Bible School 2024 will be held June 17-21 from 9 a.m.-noon. Our theme this year is *Camp Firelight: A Summer Camp Adventure with God!* Join first-time counselor Sam and his lightning bug friend Lumen as they learn to face their fears while trusting in God. Slots fill up quickly, so please don't hesitate to sign your child up. Go to https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLEUXiPpjR5Ua-nLksX708u4Gjo_L-JAw85KQ3UUReFPU7Lg/viewform or reach out to Molly via mollyo@stjohnphoenixville.org to register.

We are currently looking for adult and teenage group guides and station leaders. VBS is a huge undertaking, and we could use all the help we can get! For every gift in the Kingdom of God, there is a way to serve with VBS. If you can't serve the week of VBS, there are still opportunities to serve. One big way you can help is by joining us for our **VBS Build Day May 18th** and/or our **VBS Set-Up Day June 15th**, both from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Please email Molly if you can help.

Lhötse's Lemonade for Kitchen Aid

Beginning April 14th during fellowship time, and continuing after Sunday worship services throughout the spring, Lhötse Durflinger will be selling lemonade (and maybe some treats) to benefit the upcoming kitchen renovation.

She has set a "sweet" goal of \$5,000 which would be enough money to purchase the new gas range needed for the renovation. Please patronize Lhötse's Lemonade Stand and give your blessings and dollars towards her objective. Thank you Lhötse for your wonderful stewardship!



Many folks have expressed interest in being more involved in our prayer ministry. In addition to weekly bulletin and email announcements, we also have two active prayer chains. First, a phone chain and second, an email chain. If you wish to be added to either of these, please let Sonya know.

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 8am Holy Communion 9am Easter breakfast 10:15am Holy Communion	1 11am Alanon Family Group 7pm Property 7pm Stephen Ministry	2 6:30pm Faith Formation Committee 6:30pm Parents Grief Group 7:30pm Worship & Music	3 4pm Social Ministry 6pm Girl Scouts #4308 6pm Girl Scouts #473 7pm Alanon 7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	4 6:30pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Kiwanis 6:45pm Children's Handbells Rehearsal 7pm Naranon 7:30pm Adult Handbells Rehearsal	5 8pm Narcotics Anonymous	6 8am MLK Prayer Breakfast 8am WELCA Retreat 5pm Evening Light (w/communion)
7 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Holy Communion 4pm Principally Harps Concert 7pm St. John's Choir & Friends Rehearsal	8 10am MAEVE Moms Mingle 10:15am Staff 11am Alanon Family Group 7pm Church Council	9 6:30pm Parents Grief Group	10 4pm Daisy Girl Scouts #4863 6pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Cadette Girl Scouts #41982 7pm Alanon 7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	11 6pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Girl Scouts 6:45pm Children's Handbells Rehearsal 7pm Naranon 7:30pm Adult Handbells Rehearsal	12 Confirmation Retreat 8pm Narcotics Anonymous	13 Confirmation Retreat 5pm Evening Light (w/communion)
14 Confirmation Retreat 9am Faith Formation-Bear Creek 9:45am Fellowship Time w/Lhôte's Lemonade Stand 10:15am Holy Communion 2pm PCO Rehearsal 2:30pm Girl Scouts #41441 7pm St. John's Choir & Friends Rehearsal	15 11am Alanon Family Group 5pm Stewardship Committee 5:30pm Junior/Cadette Girl Scouts #42024 5:30pm Junior/Cadette Girl Scouts #42024 7pm Stephen Ministry	16 6:30pm Parents Grief Group	17 6pm Girl Scouts #4308 6pm Girl Scouts #473 7pm Alanon 7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	18 Circle deadline 6:30pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Kiwanis 6:45pm Children's Handbells Rehearsal 7pm Naranon 7:30pm Adult Handbells Rehearsal 8:15pm Naranon Support	19 St. Peter's lunch 8pm Narcotics Anonymous	20 1pm Snyder shower 5pm Evening Light (w/communion)
21 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Holy Communion 4pm Providence Chamber Orchestra Concert 7pm St. John's Choir & Friends Rehearsal	22 10am Covered Bridge Garden Club 11am Alanon Family Group	23 10:30am WELCA 6:30pm Parents Grief Group 7:30pm Fellowship Committee	24 4pm Daisy Girl Scouts #4863 6pm Girl Scouts 7pm Alanon 7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	25 6pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Girl Scouts 6:45pm Children's Handbells Rehearsal 7pm Naranon 7:30pm Adult Handbells Rehearsal	26 8pm Narcotics Anonymous	27 5pm Evening Light (w/communion)
28 9am Faith Formation 10:15am Holy Communion 2:30pm Girl Scouts #41441 7pm PCO & St. John's Choir & Friends Rehearsal	29 11am Alanon Family Group 1pm WELCA 5:30pm Junior/Cadette Girl Scouts #42024 7pm Finance Committee	30 6:30pm Parents Grief Group	1 4pm Social Ministry 6pm Girl Scouts #4308 6pm Girl Scouts #473 7pm Alanon 7:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	2 6:30pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Kiwanis 6:45pm Children's Handbells Rehearsal 7pm Naranon 7:30pm Adult Handbells Rehearsal	3 Synod Assembly 8pm Narcotics Anonymous	4 Synod Assembly 5pm Evening Light (w/communion)

April 2024—birthdays and anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 Malika Khan's birthday	1 Janet Reading's birthday Jeremy Unruh's birthday	2 Bob Faddis's birthday Jane Hadfield's birthday Stephen Hollander's birthday	3 Bob Kunsch's birthday Judy Wolstenholme's birthday	4 James Reading's birthday John and Bobbi Riley's anniversary	5 Joan Wilson's birthday	6 Lexi Booz's birthday
7 Lucas Pekofsky's birthday	8	9 Carly Spurlock's birthday Gabriel Mowrer's birthday Meredith LaBoon's birthday Ryan Spurlock's birthday	10 Jack Drewes's birthday	11 Samuel Fryer's birthday	12 Aaron Romano's birthday Bob and Diane Blattner's anniversary	13 Sean Weiss's birthday
14 Allen Kramer's birthday Evan Becker's birthday	15 Bill and Donna Breiter's anniversary	16 Wyatt Melton's birthday	17 Colin Riley's birthday Lisa Frees's birthday Mike Kahl's birthday	18 Mia Bomberger's birthday	19 Jean Herbranson's birthday Leah Kramer's birthday Page Durlinger's birthday	20 Andrew Blackledge's birthday Carolyn Rutherford's birthday Hope DeMutis's birthday
21	22 Cathy Garrett's birthday Chris Saeger's birthday Jason Stewart's birthday Mark Blattner's birthday	23 Donna Dries's birthday George and Anna Wilkinson's anniversary Rachel Dewey's birthday	24 Amber Carey's birthday Marc Herbranson's birthday	25 Justin and Faith Rawlins's anniversary Keith and Cheryl Kenyon's anniversary	26 Beth Williams's birthday Carter Niness's birthday Randall Carr's birthday Richard and Michelle Bader's anniversary Samantha Schumacher's birthday	27 Brian Becker's birthday
28 Morgan Klotzbach's birthday	29 Jason and Tracy Stewart's anniversary Ramona Moreland's birthday	30 Jason Birdsell's birthday Joe Themens's birthday Stephen Drewes's birthday	1 Erin Schaible's birthday	2 Linda Landis's birthday Mario Walls's birthday	3	4 Allan Moreland's birthday

Death is the
Beginning of life
Did not Christ arise
Out of death to life
A gift given that man
Eternal life shall
Know deepest depths
Holds not man's
Immortal soul
Margaret Walker

Easter Sunday everyone on the farm looks and looks for where the bunnies have hidden Easter eggs. It's traditional to put a penny inside each egg. When all the eggs are found everyone can change their coin eggs for a gift from the Easter bunny tree. I am kept very busy seeing every child has an Easter gift. There's lots of cake and ice cream for everyone. It's a crazy day. I have a lot of fun playing with children all day, until all the children fall asleep.

Happy Easter!
Sidney
Via Margaret Walker

**St. John's Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2024**

Attendees:							
Dick Kunsch	A	Mitch Reading	P	Dale Herbranson	P	Stephen Drewes	P
Kelly Gallagher	P	Janet Gerner	P	Sue Starling	P	Sandra Zimmermann	A
Aimee Hillegas	P	Elisa Kahn	P	Jeanne Schanzenbach	P	Mike Kahl	P
Pastor Crouthamel	P						
Guests:							
Sonya Sowards	P	Tom Snyder	P	Molly Oladunjoye	P		

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Aimee; Janet led with an opening prayer.

Prior Meeting Minutes

Motion by Dale, Second by Stephen to accept the minutes as presented; motion passed.

Staff Reports

Motion by Sue, Second by Kelly to accept the January Staff Reports; motion passed.

Committee Reports

Council reviewed the following Committee Reports:

- Finance Committee met 01/29/24 – accepted as written.
 - Approval of 2024 counters is requested by the Finance Committee via motion. Motion carried.
 - Motion to approve the Finance Report by Kelly; seconded by Dick; motion carried.
- Electronics Committee from 01/21/24 – accepted as written.
- Faith Formation from 02/06/24 – accepted as written.
- Property Committee from 02/05/24 (and minutes from 01/02/24 mtg also provided) – accepted as written. Still working on Kley Hall A/C.
 - Motion from committee that Property be allotted \$2000 from the Weiland fund to renovate the hospitality area of the Fireside Room. Motion carried.
 - Motion from committee that Sonya be allocated \$1000 from the Weiland fund to purchase additional fabric chairs and caddy for the Fireside Room for the larger groups that use that room. Motion carried.
- Worship and Music Committee from 02/06/24 - accepted as written.
- Social Ministry Committee from 02/07/24 – accepted as written.
- Fellowship Committee from 01/23/24 – accepted as written.
 - Easter breakfast was discussed – agreed we'd like to restart this tradition, as long as Fellowship agrees to coordinate (with volunteers). Sue to confirm with Sandy.
- Columbarium Committee – did not meet.
- Executive Committee – met prior to Council meeting.
- Stewardship Committee from 01/15/24 – accepted as written.
- Welcome Team Committee - did not meet.
- Green Team from 1/15/24 - accepted as written.
- Kitchen Task Force – from 01/16/24 – accepted as written.
 - Plan has been presented to the county for certification. Renovation update will be included in the annual meeting.

Motion by Stephen, Second by Sue to accept committee reports; motion passed.

Old Business

- Coffee Hour Host Sign-ups – Thrivent to host in May – Dale will confirm.
- Church Collaboration Committee met on January 31; the new name of the group is the Muhlenberg Committee. The other four churches meet more often, as they are all without a Pastor and are working on creative solutions.
- New Council Members – Kate Hicks has agreed to be a nominee; Kyle Oszeyzik has also agreed to be a nominee. Pastor Russ noted that we should get back to installing Council members during a worship service.

New Business

- Annual Meeting Preparation – reviewed agenda; reminder that Council does have a brief meeting after the Annual Meeting.
- Synod Assembly delegates for May 3rd/4th meeting – Sonya will advertise it in the bulletin.
- Council shall approve all new member applications.
 - Per our constitution, Council should be approving new members.
 - Rev. Ghislaine Cotnoir has applied to become a new member of St. John’s.
 - Motion to approve Rev. Cotnoir as a confirmed member of the congregation made by Mitch; seconded by Dale. Motion carried.

Aimee adjourned the meeting at 7:59; meeting ended with the Lord’s Prayer. Next regularly scheduled meeting will be March 11, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Starling
Church Council Secretary

Aloha!

Mahalo for your gift to the Maui Strong Fund. Please know that your donation will be deployed effectively with a focus on relief and recovery for communities affected by the devastating wildfires on Maui. We are grateful for your generosity and aloha.

Mahalo nui loa,

*Mary Leong Saunders
Vice President of Philanthropy
Hawai’l Community Foundation*

Minutes of Annual Congregational Meeting

St. John's Lutheran Church

February 25, 2024

Attendance: 72

Weekly worship was completed prior to the Annual Meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Aimee Hillegas, Council President, at 11:21 AM. The congregation was asked to refer to the agenda in the Annual Report.

Minutes of the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting were reviewed. David Schumacher made a motion, seconded by Linda Landis to adopt the 2023 Annual Congregation Meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried with none opposed.

Committee reports were then reviewed. Shirley Platzer made a motion to accept committee reports as presented; seconded by Kelly Gallagher. Motion carried with none opposed.

Mitch Reading recognized and thanked our outgoing Council members Dick Kunsch and Sandy Zimmermann. The Nominating Committee recommended we extend for a second term both Sue Starling and Aimee Hillegas. Mitch put forth the nomination of Kate Hicks and Kyle Oszeyczik as new Council members, and reaffirmation of Jeanne Schanzenbach who joined Council partway through the year. Mitch asked the congregation for additional candidates, and none were nominated. Rich Latella made a motion, seconded by Jim Reading, to elect Kate and Kyle as new Council members, reaffirm Jeanne, and extend both Sue and Aimee. Motion carried with none opposed.

Old Business: None

New Business: Review of 2023 Financials—Jack Ertell

- Reviewed 2023 financials. Jack Ertell acknowledged folks who oversaw the operating budget and funds and thanked the financial team who served in 2023: Don Bechtel, Kevin Gallagher, Cathy Kahl, Mitch Reading, Ron Stevens, and Shirley Platzer-Treasurer, Don Titus-Assistant Treasurer, and Mary Heiser-Financial Recording Secretary.
- Referred to the various fund definitions in the annual report on pp 28-29.
- The anticipated deficit for 2023 was over \$30,000, but actual ending deficit was \$6990.

Proposed 2024 Budget—Jack Ertell

- Noted that the budget process takes about six months, gathering information from all committees.
- Page 30 documents the various incomes of St. John's. Income is based on pledges, historical giving of those that do not typically pledge and other giving sources.
- Page 31 outlines the expenses of the church, with input from committees, salary/benefits estimates, and historical expenses. Approximately 52% of expenses are related to salary, and committees are roughly 30%.
- In total, the projected 2024 budget predicts a \$95,000 deficit. Key reasons include:
 - Envelope giving is relatively stable, while expenses continue to climb.

- We are fully staffed for the first time in several years.
- Significantly increased expenses for utilities, insurance, benefits, etc.
- While we do have the funds to cover a deficit of this magnitude, it obviously cannot continue.
- Questions regarding the budget were asked and answered.
- Motion received from Finance Committee to approve the budget as proposed, seconded by Bill Starling. Motion carried with none opposed.

Kitchen Renovation Update – Bobbi Riley and Stephen Drewes

- Over the past year, have done quite a bit of work to gather information on kitchen renovation.
- Presented to Council in August; Council approved creation of a Kitchen Task Force, with Stephen Drewes as leader.
- We have submitted a plan to the Chester County Health Department for certification approval.
- The renovation is necessary because we can no longer support many of our Social Ministry and Fellowship functions, as those activities require a certified kitchen.
- While Council initially approved up to \$60k for the renovation, it was determined that we should raise new funds to support this project as current funds have been heavily depleted to fund other major building repairs/improvements. In the coming months, expect to see more on the need to help fund the renovation.

HVAC Update – Bobbi Riley and Rick Kramer

- Bobbi Riley gave an overview of the current HVAC status. The boilers are stable, and in good working order.
- Rick Kramer volunteered to lead the overall HVAC improvement project that the congregation approved in 2023. Heating and cooling upgrades for the sanctuary are complete and working well. We continue to pursue solutions for Kley Hall air conditioning.
- Questions/comments were asked and answered.

Other

Jack Ertell made a motion, seconded by Rick Kramer to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:57 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Starling

Council Secretary

Council Meeting Following Annual Meeting

02/25/2024

In Attendance:

Mitch Reading	Kyle Oszeyczik	Pastor Russ Crouthamel
Stephen Drewes	Dale Herbranson	Kate Hicks
Aimee Hillegas	Kelly Gallagher	Elisa Kahn
Sue Starling	Jeanne Schanzenbach	

Election of Officers:

Aimee Hillegas agreed to serve as President for one more year.

Kelly Gallagher agreed to serve another term as Vice President.

Sue Starling agreed to serve another term as Secretary.

Dale Herbranson made a motion to accept the slate of officers as presented; Mitch Reading seconded; motion carried.

Executive Committee: Aimee Hillegas, Sue Starling, Kelly Gallagher and two at-large members; Dale Herbranson and Jeanne Schanzenbach agreed to serve as at-large members.

Mitch Reading made a motion to reaffirm the following, seconded by Dale Herbranson, motion carried.

Mary Heiser – Financial Recording Secretary.

Shirley Platzer – Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have full authority to act and/or sign for investment accounts at Vanguard and other banking/investment institutions.

Don Titus – Assistant Treasurer.

Kevin Gallagher – Fund 3 Secretary. The Fund 3 Secretary shall have authority to view all investment accounts at Vanguard and other banking/investment institutions

Confirmation of Committee Liaisons:

Property: Mike Kahl

Stewardship: Stephen Drewes

Finance: Mitch Reading and Jeanne Schanzenbach

Fellowship: Sue Starling

Worship and Music: Elisa Kahn

Faith Formation: Kelly Gallagher and Kate Hicks

Welcoming Team: Kate Hicks

Social Ministry: Janet Gerner

Columbarium: Dale Herbranson

Electronics: Dale Herbranson

Mutual Ministry (new in 2024): Kyle Oszeyczik

Next Council Meeting is March 12th at 7 pm.

Motion to adjourn made by Sue Starling, seconded by Kelly Gallagher, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Starling

Council Secretary





Phoenixville Area Social Concerns Committee
 821 Gay Street
 Phoenixville, Pennsylvania 19460
 (610) 917-9890
 www.PhxSocialConcerns.org



Annual
 Community
 Prayer Breakfast
 "We Share His Dream"

**30th Community Prayer Breakfast
 IN MEMORY OF
 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Saturday, April 6 at 8 am**

Join us in celebrating Dr. King’s Legacy and our local social justice award winners!

The Community Prayer Breakfast, in memory of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., started in 1994. The 30th Annual Community Prayer Breakfast will be held Saturday, April 6, 2024 at the Phoenixville Area Middle School beginning promptly at 8:00 am, doors open at 7:30.

Come one, come all! Tickets and sponsorships can be ordered below.

~ Honor our community social justice leaders through your sponsorship! ~

- ___ Freedom Sponsor \$ 750 includes 8 tickets (1 table) and full page inside cover ad (8x5)
 - ___ Justice Sponsor \$ 500 includes 6 tickets and back cover ad (8x5)
 - ___ Equality Sponsor \$ 350 includes 4 tickets plus full page ad (8x5)
 - ___ Diversity Sponsor \$ 250 includes 2 tickets plus half page ad
 - ___ Inclusion Sponsor \$ 100 full page ad (8x5)
 - ___ Civil Rights Sponsor \$ 75 half page ad (8x5)
 - ___ Peace Sponsor \$ 40 business card ad
 - ___ Patron \$ 20 name in program
 - ___ Table \$ 150 reserved table for 8
 - (qty) ___ Tickets \$ 15 each, please specify quantity (\$1 goes to the Don Coppedge Fund)
 - \$ ___ Donation to Don Coppedge Memorial Fund
 - \$ ___ Donation to the Community Prayer Breakfast
- Total: _____ (dollar amount)**

Business name (to appear in program) _____
 Contact name _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

*****Please submit by March 15, 2024***** and email your copy-ready ad to: Theresa@MissKittysCare.com
 Any questions, please email PHXSocialConcerns@gmail.com or KrisKeller99@gmail.com

Make checks payable and mail to: Phoenixville Social Concerns Committee
 c/o Phoenixville Community Health Foundation
 821 Gay Street
 Phoenixville, PA 19460



Tickets & sponsorships can also be ordered at <https://givebutter.com/g03pER> or this QR code

Our Mission: The Phoenixville Area Social Concerns Committee promotes social justice and community harmony throughout the Greater Phoenixville community in the spirit of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., through direct action and relevant events.

Guidelines for Submission of Articles for St. John's Communications

Submissions to the Parish Administrator for insertion in St. John's communications may include worship, faith formation, social justice, music and community events, and any items directly related to St. John's mission of "*Living, growing & sharing in God's love through Jesus Christ.*" Submissions received by Monday at 11:00 a.m. will be included in the following Sunday's bulletin. Later submissions will appear in the following week's bulletin. All submissions are also included in all other applicable forms of communication (email, social media, website, slides, etc.) as soon as possible after receipt.

Submissions for *The Circle* newsletter are due on the 18th of every month (except July). Submissions received after this deadline may appear in other applicable St. John's communications and in the following month's newsletter.

When submitting articles, please include complete information such as date, time, location, and how to sign up for events (including links and QR codes to forms). Images are welcome but should be photos taken around St. John's or posters created by the submitter—not stock images or any images downloaded from the Internet which St. John's is not licensed to use.

If you have any questions about St. John's communications, please contact our administrator, Sonya Sowards, at office@stjohnphoenixville.org or (610) 933-3947 ext. 2.

Kid-Friendly Worship Resources

We have children's worship bags available to use during services.

We also have children's bulletins/activity sheets available on the "triangle table."

The nursery is open on Sunday mornings during church for children who may need a break/extra care/etc.

Please ask an usher for help finding these resources! We welcome and celebrate all the ways children participate in our community.

Communion Records and Prayer Requests

RECORD OF COMMUNION AND/OR PRAYER REQUEST

I've taken communion (date & time):
 5P
 10:15a
 9:00a (summer)
 other date & time: _____

I'm a visitor

St. John's Lutheran Church

Name(s): _____ Env. # _____

New or change in contact info? If so, print corrected information below:

Prayer request(s): _____

Please place this card in the offering plate or hand it in on the offering kiosk in the narthex (lobby) when you leave. THANKS!

Our constitution defines members eligible to vote at regular meetings of the church as those who "shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record" in the calendar year. Your contribution is recorded when it includes your name and/or envelope number. To ensure that your communion is recorded, please fill out the "Record of Communion and/or Prayer Request" card at least once a year. Communion cards can be found in the pew racks at the end of each pew. The card may also be used for prayer requests, address changes, questions, or comments. If you are worshipping exclusively from home, please contact Sonya Sowards with prayer requests and worship dates.

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Donating Stock to St. John's

One of the many ways to financially support St. John's is through the donation of stock. Donating appreciated stock will benefit the church and provide a potential tax benefit to the donor. For stock that has been held for more than a year and has appreciated in value, one can take a charitable deduction based on the stock's fair market value on the day of donation. Additionally, making such a donation will avoid capital gains taxes on the increased value of the stock. If interested in donating stock to St. John's, contact our Church Treasurer, Shirley Platzer, at (484) 938-7763.

ACOLYTES NEEDED

Serving as an acolyte is a great way for young people to be a part of worship here at St. John's! All students who have completed their First Holy Communion are eligible to serve. Pastor Russ, Tom and Molly are always happy to train those who would like to learn. We need acolytes for 2024. Interested? You can sign up by emailing Molly at mollyo@stjohnphoenixville.org or by filling out our NEW sign-up form online.

Save Your Cans

The St. John's youth are collecting aluminum beverage cans as a fundraiser to help with the costs of mission trips.

Please bag your cans and drop them off in Kley Hall.

Thank you!!



People of God Involved in God's Work

April Worship Staff

Acolyte

- 7 TBD
- 14 TBD
- 21 Brett Gallagher
- 28 TBD

Altar Guild

- 7 Nancy Cressman & Janet Ertell
- 14 Donna Anderson & Cathy Garrett
- 21 Jean Herbranson
- 28 Betty Hans & Jean Herbranson

Assisting Minister

- 7 Bill Starling
- 14 Tom Snyder
- 21 Deb Ahola
- 28 Ron Stevens

Communion Assistant/Lector

- 7 Mimi Woods
- 14 Walt Deichmann
- 21 Nancy Cressman
- 28 Lynn Titus

Counters

- 7 Jack & Janet Ertell; Donna Anderson
- 14 Jeff & Jeanne Schanzenbach
- 21 Mary Heiser; Mike & Cathy Kahl
- 28 Stephen & Jen Drewes

Evening Light Assistant

- 6 Rich Latella
- 13 Sandy Momyer
- 20 Shirley Platzer
- 27 Toni Hadfield

Fellowship Time Host

- 14 Kitchen Task Force

Lock-Up

- 7 Kyle Oszeyczik
- 14 Jeanne Schanzenbach
- 21 Mitch Reading
- 28 Stephen Drewes

Lock-Up

- 7 Kyle Oszeyczik
- 14 Jeanne Schanzenbach
- 21 Mitch Reading
- 28 Stephen Drewes

Stream Team

- 7 Josh Romano & Paul Miller
- 14 Aimee Hillegas & Paul Miller
- 21 Dale Herbranson & Paul Miller
- 28 Aimee Hillegas & Dale Herbranson

Ushers

- 7 Sue Starling & Cathy Garrett
- 14 Jen Drewes & Nancy Cressman
- 21 Mike & Cathy Kahl
- 28 Don Titus & Donna Anderson

Feeding Fellowship Ministry via a Modernized Kitchen Is One Step Closer

The MUCH needed and long discussed kitchen upgrade is one step closer to reality as our renovation design plan was recently approved by the Chester County Health Department!!

Why is this important and what is next?

To safely—in accordance with Health Department regulations—prepare any food for fellowship, within the St. John's congregation or in support of the great need of the surrounding food insecurity of our neighbors, we need to have a Health Department Food License. Our current kitchen arrangement does not comply to safety standards and prevents us from getting a food license. But we have an approved renovation plan to get there.

Now that we have a "Green Light" from the Health Department to proceed, we just need the funds to purchase some new equipment and do the work to upgrade the space.

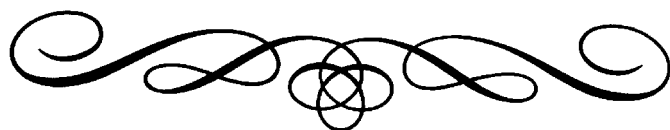
In August 2023, Council approved doing a kitchen renovation and created a Kitchen Task Force to oversee the design and fundraising objectives. With the design work completed, it is time for the KTF to launch a fundraiser for this critical need.

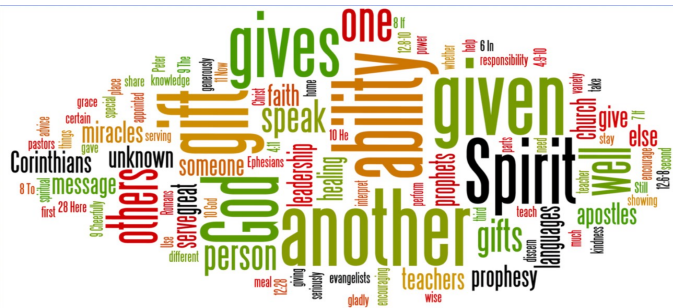
Your opportunity to donate and contribute is at hand. An official "Help the Kitchen" appeal will be mailed shortly to all members. Please be generous to allow us to quickly get to our goal. The KTF is hosting the April 14th fellowship time. Information on the full renovation and equipment needs will be available then.

Our Social Ministry Committee is using *another church's kitchen* to do their ministry. We need to correct this problem and give them, WELCA, Fellowship, and Faith Formation a worthy kitchen space *in our building* to serve God's people. Please be generous when you receive the kitchen fundraiser request.

God Bless

The Kitchen Task Force





There are so many ways to use the gifts God has given you at St. John's! We always need:

- Communion bread bakers
- ushers
- communion assistants/lectors
- assisting ministers
- live stream staff ("Stream Team")
- Committee members
- Teachers
- choir members
- drivers to bring shut-ins to worship
- Stephen Ministers

Please let Sonya Sowards know how you would like to use your time and talent at St. John's, and she will put you in touch with the appropriate leader. Ministry group leader names and committees can also be found on the last page of this newsletter.

Give to St. John's Via App

Vanco, our eGiving provider, has launched an updated mobile app called Vanco Mobile (to replace GivePlus Mobile, which has been retired as of September 30th). You can download the Vanco Mobile app for free from the App Store or Google Play. From there, you can make a one-time donation or set up recurring giving right through the app. Just select your fund and amount, enter a payment method and complete the donation. If you have questions or need assistance, email Dale Herbranson at dale.herbranson@outlook.com.

Scan this QR code to give to the many ministries of St. John's from your phone!



Live Generously

If you are a member of Thrivent, you are eligible to apply for two Action Team Grants each year to benefit your church. Please contact your Thrivent representative if you would like to apply for an Action Team Grant in the coming year. You can learn more about Thrivent at www.thrivent.com.



Sponsor Flowers, Bulletins & Vigil Candle

Members and friends are invited to sponsor the **vigil candle** in memory of or in honor of loved ones. The cost is \$12 per month. You are also invited to offset the cost of the weekly **bulletins**. That cost is \$20 per week. Our florist supplies **flowers** (visible on our live-stream as well as in-person services) at \$25 per vase for a total of \$50 for two. Contact Sonya Sowards for available months and dates and to specify the occasion, or you can use the sign-up sheets on the hallway bulletin board. Thank you!

Summary Financial Report as of February 29, 2024

	Monthly		Year-to-Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Income:				
Envelope Giving	\$ 27,995	\$ 24,980	\$ 55,988	\$ 48,761
Other Income	3,791	3,418	7,584	6,539
	\$ 31,786	\$ 28,398	\$ 63,572	\$ 55,300
Expenses	\$ 39,745	\$ 42,224	\$ 79,491	\$ 85,226
Income (Deficit)	\$ (7,959)	\$ (13,826)	\$ (15,919)	\$ (29,926)

Did you know? Many employers offer the ability to have your donations deducted from your paycheck and then forward those donations on to us. Some, such as Vanguard, offer a generous match so that your donation has the potential of a nice increase. Contact your Human Resources Department to see if this is a possibility for you.

St. John's Lutheran Church
355 St. John's Circle
Phoenixville, PA 19460
(610) 933-3947

www.stjohnluthphoenixville.org
E-mail: office@stjohnphoenixville.org

CHURCH STAFF

Lead Pastor

The Rev. K. Russell Crouthamel

Pastoral Associate:

The Rev. Thomas Kochenderfer, Jr.

Director of Music:

F. Thomas Snyder III

Organist & Pianist:

John A. Quinn III

Director of Children's, Youth

& Family Ministries

Molly Oladunjoye

Parish Administrator:

Sonya K. Sowards

Sexton:

Mark Yancheck, Jr.

Nursery Coordinator:

Arlene Hudak

CHURCH COUNCIL

President:

Aimee Hillegas

Vice President:

Kelly Gallagher

Secretary:

Sue Starling

Treasurer:

Shirley Platzer

Assistant Treasurer:

Don Titus

Financial Recording Secretary:

Mary Heiser

Fund 3 Secretary:

Kevin Gallagher

Executive Committee:

Dale Herbranson

Jeanne Schanzenbach

Other Members of Council:

Janet Gerner

Mike Kahl

Kate Hicks

Kyle Oszeyczik

Mitch Reading

Stephen Drewes

Stephen Ministry Leader:

Linda Landis — (610) 933-9544

COMMITTEES

Columbarium:

Bill Starling, Chair

Dale Herbranson, Council Rep.

Electronics:

Bill Schoellkopf, Chair

Dale Herbranson, Council Rep.

Executive:

Mitch Reading, Chair

Faith Formation:

Erica Reading, Chair

Kelly Gallagher & Kate Hicks

Council Reps.

Fellowship:

Sandra Zimmermann, Chair

Sue Starling, Council Rep.

Finance:

Jack Ertell, Chair

Mitch Reading & Jeanne Schanzenbach

Council Reps.

Mutual Ministry:

Kyle Oszeyczik, Council Rep.

Property:

Bobbi Riley, Chair

Mike Kahl, Council Rep.

Social Ministry:

Janet Gerner, Chair & Council Rep.

Stewardship:

Stephen Drewes, Council Rep.

Welcoming Team:

Kate Hicks, Council Rep.

Worship and Music:

Jean Herbranson, Chair

Elisa Khan, Council Rep.

Office Assistants:

June Henzie

Joan Carl

Pat Renninger

The Circle Editor:

Sonya K. Sowards

First Communions

Isaac Henderson

Lhötse Durlfinger

Leah Kramer

Charlotte Reading

Madelyn Hicks

Nicholas DeWolf

Quinn Oszeyczik

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St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
355 St. John's Circle
Phoenixville, PA 19460-2582



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

(610) 933-3947

www.stjohnluthphoenixville.org



E-mail: office@stjohnphoenixville.org

office hours 9-3 M,T,Th & 9-12 W,F (*barring exceptions*)

please call for appointments with staff members

***A Caring, Sharing, Growing Congregation of the ELCA
Participating in Stephen Ministry***

Worship Schedule

Saturdays

5 p.m. Evening Light with Holy Communion

Sundays

10:15 a.m. Holy Communion

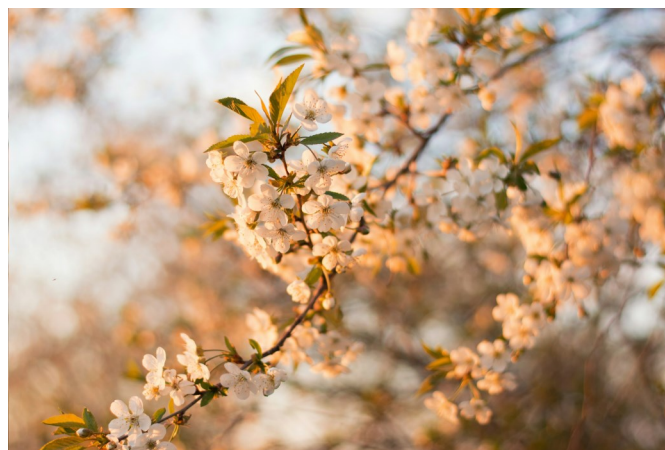
(fall, winter and spring)

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion

(Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day)

Handicapped Accessible

THE CIRCLE



April 2024