



ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

201 E. JUNIATA STREET, ALLENTOWN, PA 18103

Phone: 610-797-6440 Fax: 610-351-6114

Email: office@saintmarkallentown.org www.saintmarkallentown.org

Hospital Code - #300 Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon

God's People: Believing, Caring, Loving, and Serving

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER



He Is Risen!!!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!!

We give this response each year during the service from Easter to Pentecost. It is first called out Easter morning services, there is a pause - - - You may not notice it – but I assure you, your pastors notice it and then-----

Oh Yeah – We are supposed to respond when the pastor says, “He is Risen!” with our part - - - “He is risen Indeed. Alleluia!” Well, I’ll be ready next time. Hm-m-m, I wonder if the pastor will say it again during this service? I guess I better pay closer attention.

- *Did I take the Ham out of the fridge before I left home?*
- *Did the kids find all the eggs this morning?*
- *They were sure excited over their baskets.*
- *Was I supposed to pick up grandma for her to join us for dinner or did my brother say he would? I better text him after the service*

Oh no, - - Here it comes again.

“He is Risen!! “He has risen indeed, Alleluia!”

Come-on brain - - engage -- to what is going on here. He has risen, He has risen indeed. Alleluia!! This is Easter. We are here to celebrate the rising of Jesus. This is a CELEBRATION!! Easter is about a

How many of us have had a Sunday Easter like the one I just described? I dare say nearly each one of us at some time or another.

Here we are at Easter Sunday and looking forward to the next weeks and months knowing that God did not abandon Jesus and has not abandoned us AND NEVER WILL!!. That is why each Sunday can be

viewed and celebrated as a little Easter. When we worship, we hold an Easter celebration each week.

“He is Risen!! “He has risen indeed, Alleluia!” is a call and response throughout the Easter Season of the church calendar to remind us of the most precious Easter gift we can ever receive.

The gift of Easter – the New Life promised by the risen Christ is accepted on Easter morning by us because we have tried to change ourselves in preparation. We have spent the last few weeks reading, thinking, praying, and acting to prepare ourselves for the celebration of a new life in Christ.

We have a God of second and third and many more chances than we can possibly count wanting to accept us as broken as we are into the kingdom with the gift of forgiveness. And that is why we call and respond with

“He is Risen!! “He has risen indeed, Alleluia!”

*Happy Easter,
Pastor Ginny*

“I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4: 13 (NRSV)





**A Message from
your
Council President!!**

Dear Parishioners,

As we journey through the Easter season, we are reminded of the profound significance of resurrection and renewal in our lives. This time of year, invites us to reflect on the promise of new beginnings and the transformative power of faith.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of our Christian faith, symbolizing victory over death and the promise of eternal life. It is a reminder that even in the darkest moments, there is hope, light, and the possibility of redemption.

During this season, we are called to embrace the spirit of renewal and embrace the opportunity for personal growth and transformation. Just as Christ emerged from the tomb, we too can rise above our challenges and experience new life in Him.

As we celebrate Easter, let us not only rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus, but also in the renewal of our own spirits. Let us reflect on areas of our lives where we can experience growth and transformation, allowing the light of Christ to shine brightly within us.

Through prayer, reflection, and acts of kindness, may we embody the message of Easter and bring hope and joy to those around us. Let us be beacons of light, spreading love and compassion wherever we go.

As we continue our journey through the Easter season, let us open our hearts to the possibilities of resurrection and new life. May this season be a time of spiritual renewal, deepening our faith and strengthening our commitment to live as disciples of Christ.

Wishing you all a blessed Easter season filled with joy, hope, and the promise of new beginnings.

See you in worship!
Thomas F. Rieger
Council President

**2024 Council Members
and Financial Officers**

Council/Financial Officers:

Tom Rieger - President
Dan Christman - Vice President
Linda Raad - Secretary
Roxann Rieger - Treasurer

Anita Vandergrift - Financial Secretary

Council Members and liaisons to:

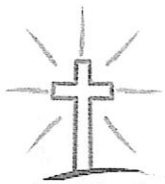
Sandy Biery - St Mark Adventurer's
Carol Hartigan - Parish Life
Gloria Hottenstein - Worship and Music/
Widow's Club
Rick Krasley - Sharing Life
DJ Landis - Open Door Food Pantry
Linda Miller - Sharing Life
Bill Walker - Property
Josephine Wieder - Christian Ed/
Sunday School/Youth

Above is the list of individuals to reach out to if you have any comments or concerns, for each committee or program here at St, Mark.



HIGHLIGHTS.....

- o Carol Hartigan, Linda Raad and Jo Wieder attended a synod meeting on March 25th on behalf of St. Mark
- o The office received information on Eucharistic training to be held Saturday, May 4, 2024 and June 8, 2024. Anyone who wishes to take the class, can reach out to Tom Rieger or the church office.
- o The annual Synod assembly will be held on June 8, 2024 in Wyomissing this year. Josephine Weider may decide to register by May 10, 2024 to attend. If this is something you may you would like to attend please see Tom Rieger.



The St. Mark Community Closet

We are now accepting Spring and Summer lightly used clothing at this time. We are in need of Children's Clothing. We have almost no children's clothing. Please share that we are in need. You may drop it off at any time. If the office is closed, please place the bags under cover at the front door or the parking lot door in the rear of the building.

Thank You!!



FOOD PANTRY

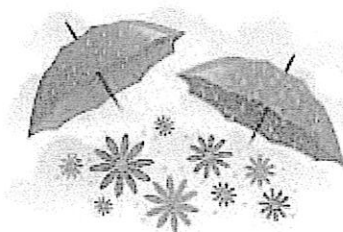
The Open Door Food Pantry

Spring is officially here along with some warmer weather! We had a busy February even though we could not be open on the 13th because of the snowstorm. We were able to serve 14 families later that week once the parking lot was plowed and we were able to get to church. The families were very thankful that we were still able to help them in spite of the snow.

The total households we served in February was 62. These households consisted of 148 adults, 90 children and 37 elderly (60 and over). Again, thank you to all the awesome volunteers that go above and beyond whenever asked!

For the month of April our suggested donations are canned corn and canned black beans. We greatly appreciate any donations!

Happy Spring!!
Sandy



April Showers bring May flowers!

Sharing Life



Happenings From the Month of MARCH...

In March we created various master pieces with mosaic art of all kinds. They were fun to make, and fun was had by all. The needlework group had a newcomer join them in March. She was ready to learn from our pros. Snacks were enjoyed by all in attendance.

We celebrated St. Patrick's Day with an Irish themed lunch of shepherd's pie and cabbage and noodles. We had plenty of green desserts to eat, some they had never seen before. LOL!! (green ambrosia salad) We then followed lunch with St. Patrick's Day Bingo, green was the color of the day and green prizes of all kinds were what they could choose from. Ex. Irish Spring soap, Lucky Charms cereal, winter green mints, etc., Sandy Dillaway is very creative.

Looking Ahead:

We are off to a great start for April, since all hams needed have already been purchased or donated. We will be celebrating Easter with a new craft and our luncheon will consist of ham, pineapple filling, green bean casserole, and corn. We will play a fun egg game, along with a few more surprises.

The Mental Health Walk May 5th from 9am to 2pm, Danny Rice Fields, 100 West Lehigh St., Bethlehem, PA. St Mark will have an outreach table at the walk. Currently there are 600 people registered, if you have nothing to do on May 5th or want to see what this is all about come join us. There will be entertainment, vendors, and speakers. (You don't have to walk to support the event)

Thank You,
Sue and the Sharing Life Team

REMINDER:

Easter Morning, March 31st
Easter Breakfast 8:30am
Easter Worship 10:00am



St. Mark wishes to send their condolences to The Heckman Family. The Lord called Marcia Heckman home on Friday, March 1st. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers in the days and weeks ahead.

St. Mark wishes to send their condolences to The Plessl Family. The Lord called Elizabeth Plessl home on Sunday, March 3rd. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers in the days and weeks ahead.

Stewardship



Time and Talent Sunday will be held on April 28th. During the March and April Worship services you will hear our Church committees speak and provide information about each of their committees. St. Mark has many active ministries that will continue to grow with your help. We hope you consider sharing your time and talent on one of our Church committees.



Anyone wishing to become a member of St. Mark or to reactivate your membership. Please contact the church office, Pastor, Tom Rieger or Terri Harkins. As we are going to install and welcome you to the St. Mark Family a during worship on April 14th at the 10:00am service.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS!!!
We want to wish you a Very, Blessed Happy Birthday!!

- David Moll – April 4
- Pastor Ginny Goodwin – April 18
- Carol Schuler– April 18
- Patricia Kleman– April 19
- Cynthia Arnold – April 23
- Myrtle Stoeckel – April 28

Share your birthday with us, please call the church office. We would love to see you on our birthday list.



We are so sorry we missed you on our list. Anthony Orlando on March 7th and Dottie Tomlinson, who turned 97 on March 8th How Wonderful! Happy Birthday Dottie!!



SHHHHHH!!! Pastor Ginny turns 80 this month and we would like to shower her birthday with cards. Please send them to the church office or if you like you can drop them off when the office is open. We would like to receive them by Sunday, April 14th and we will make sure she receives them all by April 18th Remember it's a secret so don't talk about it when she is around. Thank You!!



**BEWARE OF
MEDICARE FRAUD**

Last July 2023, I wrote about mail fraud that happened to me. Here we go again. January 2024 I was involved in Medicare Fraud. I received a "This is not a bill" summary that said I may be billed for the amount of \$3416.00 for 10 urinary catheters plus supplies. I immediately checked the account number. They had used the last four of my Medicare account. I immediately called Medicare and told them I did NOT receive those supplies nor did I ever see the doctor who ordered the supplies. Medicare looked up my account and I was told that I was a victim of Medicare Fraud, which they take very seriously. It will take time but they will find out who is responsible for the fraud. They will get back to me. I'm not to call them.

The lesson here is check your Medicare "This is not a bill" summary to make sure you received the services and medical supplies they billed you.

In today's world you have to be on top of everything or have someone who is doing it for you. Take the time to check everything that has your name on.

Becareful, Blessings to All,
Pat Golley

St. Mark Cemetery Association:

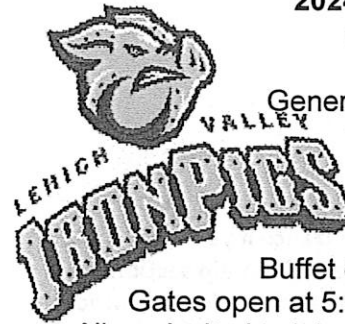
We need your help! Looking to get involved.

The St. Mark Cemetery Association needs to fill two board seats with representatives from St. Mark Lutheran to bring us up to the 5 seats required from St. Mark Lutheran. St. Mark UCC has five representatives serving. Board Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 2:00pm at the office located at 103 W Lexington Street Allentown, PA 18103. Meetings can last 20 to 30 minutes each month. If you are interested, please see Tom Rieger Council President, or contact the Cemetery Office at 610-797-4221 and speak to Larry Dotter.

Did you know? Are you doing any Estate Planning?

The St. Mark Cemetery Association has burial plots available for purchase.

The Cemetery is located at 103 W Lexington Street, Allentown, PA. Please contact the St. Mark Cemetery Office for additional information and prices at 610-797-4221.



**2024 IronPigs Baseball
with St. Mark**

Sunday, July 14th –

General Seating game starts at 1:05pm. \$12.00 person, ticket comes w/ \$2.00 food voucher.

Friday, August 30th –

Buffet on the Berks Patio,

Gates open at 5:45pm, \$30.00 per person.

All are invited to join us. Bring a friend! Sign-up sheets are on the glass case in the Narthex.

Questions about this event please see, Sue Krasley.

THANK YOU!

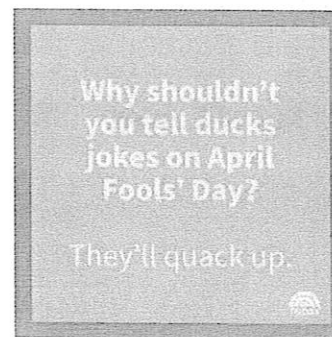
Thank You, to everyone who read, was an acolyte volunteered or helped in any way at the St. Mark Mid-Week and Holy Week services.

We couldn't do it without you!!

Thank You, to everyone who came out to support the Youth at the Egg Hunt.

Thank You, to Kathy Walker and everyone who helped with the Egg Hunt it was a huge success and had a big turn.

Thank You, to all who assisted in the Easter Breakfast!!



April Fool's Day Funnies!!!

REMINDER:

**The church office will be closed on
Monday, April 1st**



Worship SCHEDULE

Masks are optional while inside the building. Masks are available at the entrance if you wish to wear one. The pews/chairs will remain sectioned off or separated for social distancing. Please contact the church office if you believe to have been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or you, yourself has tested positive once attending church. We are streaming "LIVE" via Facebook on Sundays.

Altar Guild, Lectors, Ushers, Acolytes and videographers are asked to perform their duties each Sunday. Please find a replacement if you cannot join us on your scheduled Sunday.

April 7th, 2024 - 2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:32-35

Psalm 133

1 John 1:1—2:2

John 20:19-31

April 14th, 2024 – 3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36b-48

April 21st, 2024 – 4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:5-12

Psalms 23

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

April 28th, 2024 – 5th Sunday of Easter

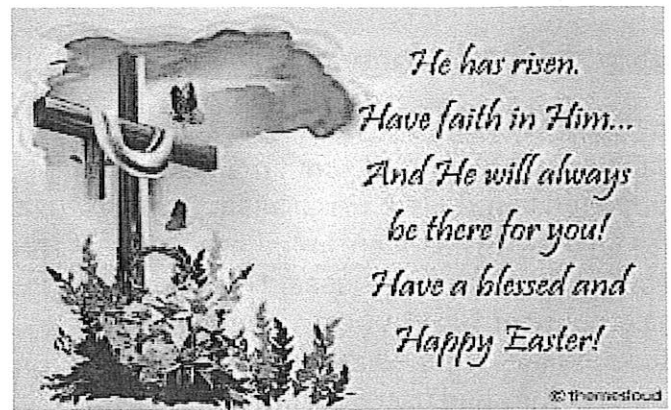
Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8

In the event of cancellation of Sunday School and our worship service due to inclement weather, please tune into WFMZ TV Channel 69, visit wfmz.com, check the St. Mark Facebook page or website. If we are recording a "LIVE" worship service and you live close/near to the church, you are always welcome to attend while we are recording the "LIVE" worship service and worship along with us.



We hope everyone had a blessed Easter!!



We are streaming "LIVE" during the service via Facebook each Sunday.

You can access the service on Facebook, user or not, at the following web address:
www.facebook.com/stmarkallentown
Please be patient while the page loads.



Friday, April 26th is the deadline for the church office to receive all Newsletter Information for April.




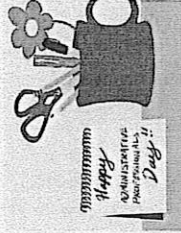
*"I am the
resurrection
and the
life."*

JOHN 11:25

APRIL 2024

St. Mark Lutheran Church
 201 E Juniata St
 Allentown PA 18103
 610-797-6440 fax 610-351-6114

www.saintmarkallentown.org
 Watch us on Facebook user or not, at:
www.facebook.com/stmarkallentown
 Hospital Code: 300

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MARCH 31 EASTER BREAKFAST 8:30am EASTER WORSHIP 10:00am	1 	2 Sharing Life Craft/Knit Day 1:00pm - 3:00pm	3 Sharing Life Craft/Knit Day 1:00pm - 3:00pm	4	5	6 *Luther Hall Rented Sandy Dillaway
7 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am Pressure Cuff Ministry	8 W/M meeting 6:00pm	9 Open Door 10:00am - 12:00pm	10 Widows Club Luncheon 1:00pm - Perkins	11	12	13
14 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am	15	16	17 Sharing Life Easter Luncheon 12:00pm - 3:00pm Council Meeting 6:00pm	18	19	20
21 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am	22	23	24 	25 Open Door 4:00pm - 6:00pm	26	27
28 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am	29	30				

Serving Our Church April 2024		
April 7 th – 2 nd Sunday of Easter		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship Pressure Cuff Ministry		
Lector/Communion Assistant: Linda Kline	Ushers: Doris Brezan Tammy Walbert	Council on Duty: Gloria Hottenstein
Altar Guild: Roxann Rieger and Edie Lindenmuth	Terri Harkins Linda Miller	Videographer: Tom Rieger Acolyte: DJ Landis
April 14 th – 3 rd Sunday of Easter		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship Welcome New Members Coffee Hour-Sponsored by Council		
Lector/Communion Assistant: Brenda Mann-Orben	Ushers: Doris Brezan Tammy Walbert	Council on Duty: DJ Landis
Altar Guild: Sue Krasley, Tiffany Miller, and Josephine Wieder	Linda Gier Terri Harkins Linda Miller	Videographer: Terri Harkins Acolyte: Raiden Thakrar

April 21 st – 4 th Sunday of Easter		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion Leader: Carol Hartigan	Ushers: Tom Rieger Roxann Rieger Kathy Walker Zachary Walker	Council on Duty: Carol Hartigan
Altar Guild: Sue Krasley, Tiffany Miller, and Josephine Wieder		Videographer: Kathy Walker Acolyte: Zachary Walker
April 28 th – 5 th Sunday of Easter		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion Assistant: Tammy Walbert	Ushers: Tom Rieger Roxann Rieger Kathy Walker Zachary Walker	Council on Duty: Josephine Wieder
Altar Guild: Sue Krasley, Tiffany Miller, and Josephine Wieder		Videographer: Dan Christman Acolyte: Patrick Merkle

**ST MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
TREASURER'S REPORT FOR JANUARY 2024
(Subject to Audit)**

	MONTH OF JANUARY	1ST MONTH BUDGET	1ST MONTH ACTUAL 2024	1ST MONTH ACTUAL 2023
BUDGETED CURRENT INCOME	\$6,655.29	\$6,131.00	\$6,655.29	\$6,831.76
BENEVOLENCE	\$0.00	\$270.00	\$0.00	\$197.00
TOTAL BUDGETED INCOME	\$6,655.29	\$6,401.00	\$6,655.29	\$7,028.76
NON-BUDGETED INCOME	\$1,097.00	\$0.00	\$1,097.00	\$1,875.54
TOTAL INCOME	\$7,752.29	\$6,401.00	\$7,752.29	\$8,904.30
BUDGETED CURRENT EXPENSES	\$9,973.15	\$18,597.83	\$9,973.15	\$11,710.03
BENEVOLENCE	\$157.50	\$264.50	\$157.50	\$457.50
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES	\$10,130.65	\$18,862.33	\$10,130.65	\$12,167.53
NON-BUDGETED EXPENSES		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$738.76
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$10,130.65	\$18,862.33	\$10,130.65	\$12,906.29
MONTHLY ACTIVITY SUMMARY	BALANCE 1/1/2024	RECEIPTS	EXPENSES	BALANCE 1/31/2024
CURRENT OPERATING FUND - TRUIST	\$8,240.04	\$7,752.29	\$10,130.65	\$5,861.68 +
QUAINT OAK BANK	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL OPERATING FUND	\$8,240.04	\$7,752.29	\$10,130.65	\$5,861.68

NORTHEASTERN PA SYNOD	PROCEEDS	INTEREST	PAYMENTS	LOAN BALANCE	
SYNOD LOAN	2% for 7 yrs	\$9,647.96 38TH	\$57.67	\$766.05	\$8,939.58

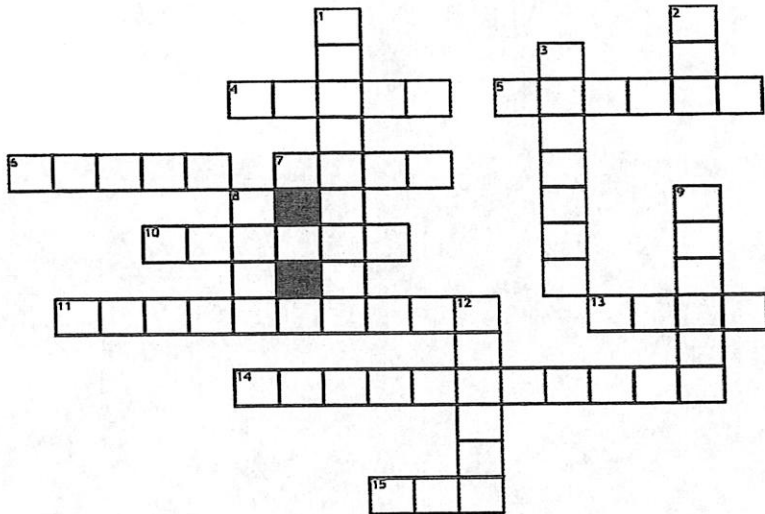
Easter Crossword Puzzle!

Across

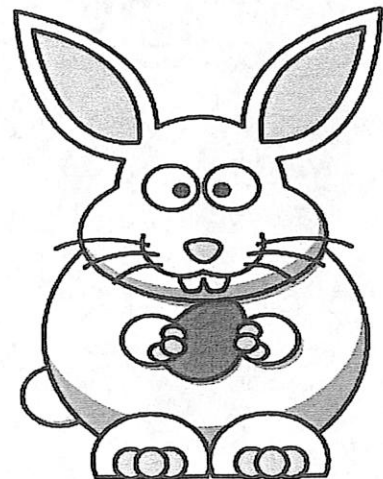
- 4. Jesus died on the...
- 5. Hat traditionally worn on Easter
- 6. Baby Chicken
- 7. Where Jesus was buried
- 10. Good _____
- 11. Candy typically given on Easter
- 13. Easter egg
- 14. He comes on Easter night
- 15. Easter _____

Down

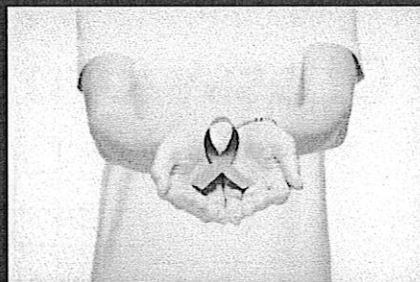
- 1. _____ rabbit
- 2. This is used to decorate Easter eggs
- 3. _____ down the bunny trail



- 8. Typical Easter flower
- 9. _____ Thursday
- 12. Easter's season



LEHIGH VALLEY
MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS WALK
&
RESOURCE EXPO

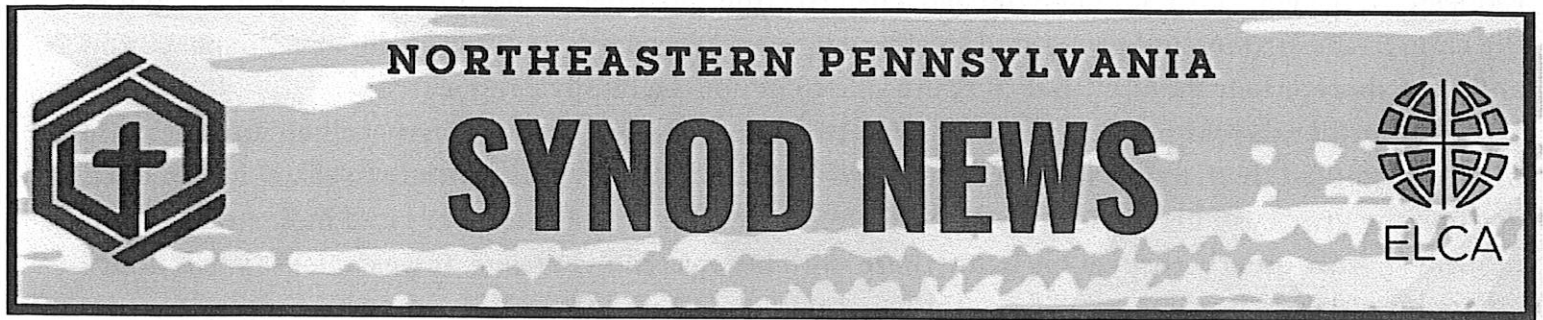


Friday May 3, 2024
Daniel Rice Field
100 W. Lehigh St.
Bethlehem, PA
9:00AM -2:00PM



Scan for more Info
or to register!

LEHIGHVALLEYMHWALK.ORG



Just Being There: Our Alaska Experience as Sitka Lutheran Church Volunteers

By: Gail Colahan

Sitka is located on the west coast of Baranof Island in the Alaska panhandle. Most of the island lies within the limits of the Tongass National Forest, a temperate rainforest, rich with wildlife and scenic vistas. Inhabited by Tlingit for over 10,000 years, ruled by Russia starting in 1799, then transferred from Russia to the US in 1867, this island community of 8,400 people continues to reflect characteristics of these varied cultures. For over 30 years the abundance of nature, scenery and cultural heritage has attracted cruise ships to Sitka. For most of that time Sitka Lutheran Church (SLC) has supported a summer volunteer program to assist the church in being a welcoming presence amidst a burgeoning tourist presence, which numbered nearly 600,000 in 2023 when we participated as volunteers.

Flash back to June 2019 when we first visited Sitka, not as cruise passengers but as plane travelers on a self-guided tour throughout Southeast Alaska. It just so happened we were in Sitka on Sunday morning so we decided to go to worship after finding an ELCA church within walking distance of our hotel. Entering the church, we read from hallway signage that in 1840 while Sitka was a Russian colony, Finns founded SLC making it the oldest Protestant congregation on the US West Coast. Included with other historical signage hung a poster declaring "Volunteers Wanted". The sign combined with our fascination with the church's origins, its geographic location, and the history and culture of this place prompted us to make further inquiries. We learned about SLC's program inviting volunteers to come to Sitka for a month to welcome summer cruise ship visitors to SLC, with the SLC faith family providing housing and the use of a car during the volunteers' stay. Our intrigue with the idea of such an opportunity prompted us to complete an interest form despite knowing we weren't in a position at the time to make such a commitment.

Four years later we found ourselves in Sitka. Driving into town to open the church, we marveled at vistas of Sitka Sound and surrounding forest-covered land while passing marinas filled with fishing vessels. On days when large cruise ships were in port, Greg greeted visitors outside SLC's front door, enticing them with the smell of freshly popped popcorn and the query, "Did you know that Sitka Lutheran is the oldest Protestant congregation on the west coast?". Gail provided a brief overview of the church's history and pointed out historical objects from the original 1843 church for the curious who ventured inside, and at times drifted into conversations about faith and the church. All visitors received a warm welcome whether they choose to hear the church's history, find solitude in the sanctuary, take a much-needed rest break, or buy some popcorn.

While Greg often felt frustrated when people just walked by with their heads down (probably in part due to the modern façade of SLC's 3rd church building as compared to the original features of the nearby Russian Orthodox Cathedral), he did experience some gratifying encounters - a conversation with a gentleman from China who was interested in talking about the history of Sitka and well-wishers who knew about SLC's volunteer program and just wanted to say hi. On the day we transitioned with the previous volunteers, Greg stood alongside Kurt out in front of the church. A family walking by stopped and

requested a prayer for their child who had a health affliction. Kurt, an ordained pastor, knelt down close to the child in the stroller and proceeded to offer a prayer. Afterwards, the family departed in peace and Greg and Kurt shared their thankfulness in being able to honor the family's request.

On another day with few visitors in town, two seasonal shuttle bus drivers walked into the church. After Gail guided them to the sanctuary to share the church's story, the gentleman asked for time to pray. Sensing the gravity of his request, Gail invited him to stay as long as necessary and indicated she would request visitors quietly respect his being there until he was ready to leave. It was at least a half hour before he and his friend emerged from the sanctuary and shared that his sister was dying and he couldn't be with her and that his time spent in prayer in the church had been the best way for him to face the crisis. Thanks be to God.

In addition to our encounters with visitors, the people of Sitka Lutheran Church blessed us with the warmest of welcomes. Pastor Rudd shared personal and church background and introduced us to Alaska Synod's Bishop Shelly during a SLC hosted Southeast Cluster Meeting. Heather, the secretary who grew up in Sitka, assisted with everything from the latest cruise schedule updates to lending intriguing details and answers to questions about Sitka's more recent history. Sue provided a tour around town to familiarize us with the schools, hospitals, and businesses that are part of the daily life of this area and took us to a refuge for orphaned bear cubs. Paula, another parishioner, gifted us with sweet treats and invited us to her house for a grilled salmon dinner. Wayne guided us through the Alaska wilderness on a glorious hike past cascades and waterfalls to Bear Lake. Harvey and Kathleen, managers of the SLC volunteer program, provided not only a place to stay but enjoyable storytelling over meals and desserts. Even the neighbors extended their welcome with soup and muffins. We were truly humbled by the kindness, generosity, hospitality, and support we received.

Just being there was such a wonderful experience on so many levels – experiencing what it's like to be strangers welcomed into a community, serving as volunteers at SLC, living for 5 weeks on an island in a different environment, exploring the beauty and wonder of the Tongass rainforest and its wildlife, learning about the history and cultures that influenced and characterize Sitka, meeting and talking with people from around the world, and getting to know and become friends with the SLC faith family. We will never know the impact of our being there for most tourists who visited the church. However, SLC parishioners were abundantly grateful and thanked us profusely for assisting in their being a welcoming presence. We also know that the experience had a profound impact on us. Just being there we experienced so many wonderful God moments and blessings – lives touched, joy witnessed, beauty revealed, friendships made. We are so much richer for having had the opportunity to live in a different place and serve as volunteers for Sitka Lutheran Church.



Keynote Speaker: Marie Anne serves as the Senior Director for Building Resilient Communities (BRC) at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Ms. Sliwinski has 20 years of experience working in the non-profit sector, 14 of which are dedicated in international humanitarian and development programs. Ms. Sliwinski oversees BRC, which draws together the ministries of ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, AMMPARO and the ELCA's Social Ministry Organization to share knowledge, collaborate effectively, invest in new ideas and foster new opportunities for the ELCA partners, companions and neighbors to strive together "for justice and peace in all the earth." Marie Anne holds a master's degree in international relations from the University of Chicago, and currently resides in the Chicago suburb with her husband and two children. Register today at norsewood.org/assembly2024/

VOLUME 29
ISSUE 4
April
2024



Lehigh Mission District
NEWSLETTER

The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, Dean
The Rev. Jean L. Huber, Assoc. of the Bishop
Elizabeth Leibenguth, Mission District Chair
Linda Gery, Newsletter Editor

610-653-5858
610-704-5133
484-550-0057
610-395-5535



*May 2024 LMD NL news
will be due April 15, 2024.*

Please email any information to
lmdnewsletter@lca.org

REMINDERS to the Lehigh Mission District Rostered Leaders

*Please keep the following
dates on your calendars:*

April 10, 2024 - Collapse &
Restructuring of the ELCA
The Rev. Thomas Busteded

May 5, 2024 - LMD Spring
Assembly 2024 at 4:00 PM
Lutheran Center, Allentown

June 8, 2024 - Synod
Assembly 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
"Hungry for Life Together in
Christ" at Atonement Lutheran
Church, Wyomissing
Register by May 10th

July/August – off

*Event updates will be made
available at meetings and
here, in the LMD Newsletter.*

SUMMER INGATHERING 2024

We would like to collect the
following items to help
support Holy Trinity Lutheran
Church (Catasauqua) with
their outreach program for
youth in the community:
Individual salty snack bags,
16 oz water bottles, \$10.00
Wal-Mart gift cards

We will be collecting items
through the end of May.

Please contact Pam Page at
610-360-0226 or
ppage619@gmail.com if you
would like to help or if you
have any questions.

ELCA's Annual Congregation Report & The Ethnic Question Part 1

Dear Lehigh Mission District,

"These are always hard to answer" read the fluorescent orange Post-It Note attached to the annual Congregation Report that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America sends churches each year in the United States.

The church administrative assistant's note referred to items number nine and ten of the congregation report. The question is on "Race/ethnic origin." The boxed choices in the report asks the number of church participants of these categories: African American/Black, African National/African Caribbean, American Indian/Alaska Native, Arab/Middle Eastern, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino/Hispanic, Multiracial, White.

I fit into various categories. African Caribbean, American Indian (Indigenous), and White (Spanish European), Latino/Hispanic, and Multiracial. What can I say? I am Puerto Rican.

How do I categorize my curly-hair-white-complexed son who would show up to track and field one week wearing Puerto Rican flag running shorts and the German flag shorts the next week? It was a delight to see him fly over the hurdles. He wanted to honor his Puerto Rican Papi and German descent Mommy. Do I check the category Multiracial? Latino/Hispanic? White? He appears to feel all of the above.

This is a difficult question. Pastors across the ELCA are given the responsibility to look from their pulpit and to guesstimate what ethnic backgrounds are seated in the church pews and then place them in one of the boxes of the congregation report.

According to the report's instructions, "This is not an exact count but an informed estimate. The number should reflect the participant's self-identification of race/ethnicity origin as much as possible. "Multiracial" is provided for people of mixed race/ethnicity."

Perhaps the problem lies on this idea of race in the report. Black is not a race. White is not a race. Is Multiracial a race? Black and white are skin pigmentations. Under this understanding, my son's skin pigmentation boxes him into the "White" category. One can argue that's why there's the "Multiracial" box for him. But is this category a race or even an ethnicity?

The report gives the impression it appears that the "White" box category is for the American born Lutheran. It sounds like there's some white privilege going on for a few.

(continued on the next page ⇒)

Please support these fundraisers:

St. Peter's Lutheran Church
(1933 Hanover Ave East,
Allentown, PA 18109)

ANNUAL BASKET SOCIAL
Sunday, April 7, 2024

Ticket pre-sales are going on now, in the narthex before Sunday services or stop by (or call) the church office (610-432-8762).

Buy 4 Get 1 Free - ends March 31, 2024!

All proceeds are used for outreach projects for the church and community.
See attached flyer.



Zion Lehigh Lutheran Church (8269 Spring Creek Road, Alburdis, PA 18011) partnering with the Alburdis Lion's Club

All You Can Eat Spaghetti Dinner 4-7 PM on Saturday, April 13, 2024

The cost is \$10.00 and includes salad, roll, dessert, coffee and water.

Any questions, please call the church 610-395-3919.



Thank you in advance for your support of these events!!!

(continued from previous page) The irony is that Lutherans in North America were German immigrants. Before the umlaut (ü) was dropped off his name and Americanized to Henry Muhlenberg, the German-born immigrant was Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg.

While the approach to race and ethnic categories on the report may be questionable, the report is about the ethnic immigrant diversity found in the Lutheran North American landscape.

Peace,
The Rev. Nelson Quiñones,
Lehigh Mission District Dean



SPRING DANCE: Saturday, May 4, 2024
Dance to the music of the Hanover Township Society for the Preservation of Big Band Sound in America from 7-10 PM.

St Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church (140 South Ott Street, Allentown)
\$15/person - all proceeds benefit Lehigh Conference of Churches.

Tickets are available at the church office (610-435-6512 x 200) or from Rick Focht (610-393-8914) *See attached flyer for details.*



OPERATION SUNSHINE

1933 Hanover Ave, Allentown, PA 18109
Phone: 610-435-9155
Open: Mon 11-3 and Wed. 11-3
Email: LMDopsunshine@aol.com
Website: www.LMDopsunshine.com
Paula & Dick Skelly, Co-Trip Coordinators

Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers.

All single-day trips for 2024 are currently SOLD OUT!!!

We have been experiencing cancellations and encourage you to put your name on our waiting list.

Operation Sunshine is proud to announce our **2024 Multi-Day trip to the GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS OF TENNESSEE.**

September 15-20, 2024
Please see the attached brochure for a complete rundown of the itinerary and costs.



CROP Thank You:

Thank you for helping our 2023 Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk raise **over \$30,000** (as of 1/31/24) to help our neighbors in need locally and around the globe!

As a result of your faithful efforts, the Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank and Lehigh Conference of Churches Kitchen will each receive **over \$3800** for their vital ministries. And our food insecure neighbors who have survived floods, drought, war, and other disasters are receiving life-giving assistance.

Thank you for your generosity that offers life-giving help to so many of our neighbors!

Please Save These CROP Dates!

Greater Allentown **CROP Hunger Walk:**
Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024, 1:30 p.m.,
with registration beginning at 1:00 p.m.
at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown, PA 18104

Find more information about the life-saving work of Church World Service at www.crophungerwalk.org

CROP Pizza Party/Kick-off:
Sunday, Aug. 25, 2024, 1:30-2:30 p.m.
(to receive materials, ideas, and inspiration for yourself and your congregation)
at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown, PA 18104

