

St. John's Lutheran Church
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March/April 2022
VOLUME 48, NO. 2

The Good News

LEAD PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Pastor Sarah

“Pastor Sarah, when are we going back to how we did things before?” That’s one of those questions that I’ve been asked A LOT over the last 2 years – and I don’t always have a very satisfying answer to it for those who ask. A big part of that is that I just don’t know – I don’t know when some things will be changing again, I don’t know when this virus that seems to be everywhere will abate, I just don’t know.

I understand the frustration in hearing that – because I, too, would like to know when things might seem “back to normal.” And with each step that we take, we have to be aware and willing to take one or two back again if the need arises. But we have to keep walking forward, right?

One thing that I am looking forward to is sharing communion in a more traditional way. We have been using the individual sets for a long time now, and I greatly miss the act of coming forward and receiving the meal from those who are serving it that day. As your pastor, I miss handing you the bread and saying to each of you, “The Body of Christ, given for you.” And we have decided it’s time to work our way back to that.

Beginning a couple of weeks before Easter, we are going to start sharing communion again in a different way. We will invite you to come forward to receive the bread into your hands and to receive the wine in an individual disposable cup poured from a chalice. Just some other things that we have considered in making this change:

Only the pastors will handle the bread/wafers, and we will sanitize our hands publicly and often – we might pause several times during communion to sanitize again just to protect those who come forward.

Anyone serving as a deacon will sanitize their hands before being handed the chalice.

We will not intinct but instead use cups for the wine.

If someone is not ready to receive communion in this way,

we will still have the individual sets available for those who wish to use them.

We will need to have volunteers serve as deacons and ushers once again. Watch for information on how to sign up to serve in this way soon!

Please watch for these changes to come and know that we are doing everything with the safety of our worshippers in mind. If you have any questions, please ask! We look forward to always gathering together at the table of grace, no matter what shape that table takes!

Our Word of Life Wednesdays will have a bit of a different look in Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday, March 2nd. On Ash Wednesday, we will have dinner from 5 -6 as usual, then worship will be at 7pm.

For the weeks of Lent, our schedule gets a little bit more full, but what a wonderful opportunity we have to gather together! Our schedule in Lent will look like this:

5 – 6pm – Dinner offered – come anytime and have a good, free meal!

5:45pm – 9th Grade confirmation will gather to eat together!

6:30pm – Evening worship – Holden Evening Prayer

7pm – book study with Pastor Sarah (watch for more information on this one!)

7pm -7:45 – 9th grade confirmation class

7:15pm – bells

7:45pm – adult choir

They will be busy nights – see you at Word of Life Wednesdays – Lent Edition!

The scriptures for this Lenten season (in the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C) are filled with parables and promises of God's abundant and expansive grace. Jesus as a mother hen, a prodigal son welcomed home, a fig tree nurtured with care and hope, precious oil poured out lovingly and freely, stones shouting out with praise — these sacred texts are brimming with a gospel of grace. We've done nothing to deserve or earn this grace, and yet, like water, it spills over. *Full to the Brim* is an invitation—into a radically different Lent, into a full life. It's an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. It disrupts the scarcity mentality that capitalism, oppression, or hierarchy can plant inside of us. When we allow ourselves to be filled to the brim with God's lavish love, that love spills over. It reaches beyond ourselves; like water, it rushes and flows, touching everything in its path.

We recognize that traditional iterations of Lent often emphasize restraint, confession, and piety. The origins of Lent were that one was to leave their old life behind to fast and prepare to be baptized into a new way of living. In essence, this was a practice of stepping away from the rat race, corrupt power, scarcity mentality, and empty rituals in order to live a more expansive and full life of faith. And so, *Full to the Brim* trusts the promise of our baptisms—God has already claimed us as God's own and nothing we can do will ever change or erase that.

Full to the Brim doesn't ignore or deny sin and suffering. It doesn't absolve accountability for wrongdoing. Instead it contextualizes our faith. If love is our beginning, how can we live our lives led by love's promises? It reminds us to live fully—as we pursue justice and hope, or express grief and gratitude. And so, this Lent, let us trust—fully—that we belong to God. Let us increase our capacity to receive and give grace. Let us discover the expansive life God dreams for us.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Elizabeth Peter Eckman

Full
to
the Brim
An expansive lent

January 2022- Financial Manager's Report					
		Beginning Balance	Income	Disbursements	Ending Balance
CURRENT		133,888.84	40,471.08	39,143.35	135,216.57
BENEVOLENCE	Benevolence	0.00	1,619.00	1,619.00	0.00
	World Hunger	0.00	1,320.00	1,320.00	0.00
ORGAN FUND		3,937.00	20.00	0.00	3,957.00
BUILDING		76,707.51	1,855.50	700.70	77,862.31
MEMORIAL		39,830.94	190.00	1819.97	38,200.97
TOTALS		254,364.29	45,475.58	44,603.02	255,236.85

Income

1 13,943.88 School Facility Use

Disbursements

1 1,819.97 Music Supplies
 2 894.56 Organ Service
 3 313.72 Vanco fees
 4 721.00 Hudson's Salary
 5 500.00 LYO
 6 1,105.00 Snow Removal

ST. JOHN'S QR CODE

The QR code displayed here will take you to St. John's secure eGiving web page. Once there, you'll see several options to donate to St. Johns.



GOOD NEWS: The deadline for the May/June GOOD NEWS is Monday, April 4. If you have any information to be included in this issue, please have it in the Church Office by that date.

With Appreciation

Dear Pastor Sarah and Pastor Elizabeth,

We are thankful for your prayers, cards, visits and the flower deliveries throughout the year. We are very fortunate to be members of a caring church community.

*We wish you much success in your continued ministry at St. John's.
Love and Blessings,
Roger and MaryLou Ubben*

St. John's and Pastors,

Thank you to everyone for the flowers and I think of you.

God Bless each of you.

Ruth Z

Just a warm "Thank You" for the flowers and poinsettia I received on Sunday morning delivered by Vickey Wood. Many thanks for the thoughtfulness and concerns.

Dale Erdman

Members of St. Johns',

There were so many ooh's and ah's when the residents saw my beautiful poinsettia. It is a gorgeous plant and brings great color to my apartment.

Thank you for your kindness,

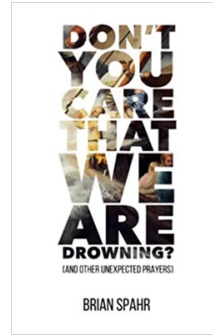
God Bless,

Nancy Whitman

Dear Friends at St. John's Church,

On behalf of Youth Education Services we thank you for your continued generous support of Youth Educational services projects and those we serve

You are invited to join Pastor Sarah for a book study in Lent. We will gather following worship for about 45 minutes each week to discuss our book and pray together. The book we will be reading is:



In, *Don't You Care That We Are Drowning?* Brian Spahr shares the unexpected prayers of people who cry out to God amid their struggle and suffering and loss. In this short collection of stories, Spahr (a hospital chaplain) takes readers into spaces where bumper sticker faith, pat spiritual answers, and surface-level prayers won't cut it. He tells stories of real loss, hurt, and suffering while still pointing to God's loving presence through it all.

Plan now to join us and sign up in the narthex or by emailing Pastor Sarah so we can get you a book!

Have you even noticed the beautiful flowers in worship each week? They are there to help make our worship space beautiful, and then following worship they are delivered to different members of our congregation that we know are sick or those who are considered homebound. Traditionally, we have had sponsors pay for the flowers each week and then dedicate them to the memory of a loved one or in honor of a special person or event.

Would you like to sponsor the flowers in worship? The cost to sponsor the flowers is \$20 per vase. One person could sponsor both for \$40, or one for \$20.

How do you sign up? There are two ways!

Go to our St. John's website, click on volunteer sign up in the upper right corner and find the Worship Flower Sponsorship Link!

Call the office during the week and Deanna will be able to help you sign up! (717-761-5121)

March

March 6th 5:30pm: Dinner and games at Dave and Busters. More info to come as we get closer to the event:)

March 20th 6-8pm: Youth gathering in our lounge space. We will gather for a few hours to relax, talk with friends, enjoy games and Bible study together, and have lots of snacks!! Please bring a friend or lots of friends and share this fun and low key time with them!!

April

April 1-3: Spring retreat at Nawakwa.

April 10th 6-8pm: Youth gathering in our lounge space. We will gather for a few hours to relax, talk with friends, enjoy games and Bible study together, and have lots of snacks!! Please bring a friend or lots of friends and share this fun and low key time with them!!

April 22-24: ALiVE is our annual synod middle-school retreat at Camp Nawakwa. Congregations from across our synod gather with their adult advisors and youth for a weekend that includes large group gatherings with singing led by our ALiVE Alumni Band, theme-centered videos and stories, and games, interspersed with small group gatherings, where youth gather with peers and a small group leader, to converse about the theme and its impact in their lives of faith. It's a great event for your Confirmation students and classes.

The weekend also includes crafts, games, campfires, free-time, and community-building that allows youth and their adult counterparts time to deepen existing friendships, and create new ones. Congregational advisors can also count on the option of receiving some intentional continuing education. Plus, inspiring outdoor worship often highlights our last morning together at Nawakwa's famous Upper Temple!

Join the 21-Day Challenge to Race Against Racism!



St. John's is forming a team to participate in the **18th Annual Race Against Racism** again this April. The Race Against Racism is a mission-driven event promoting awareness of racism in our community and raises critical funds to support the **Greater Harrisburg Area YWCA** and racial justice programming.

Beginning **Friday, April 1st through Friday, April 29th**, team members will receive daily weekday emails with resources, podcast, or videos to engage in racial and social justice concerns in our community and are encouraged (but not required for participation) to complete a 3.1 mile walk or run at the end of the challenge. Our team will meet at church at **6:30 p.m.** on **Sunday, April 10th, Monday, April 18th, and Sunday, April 24th** for a time of **Reflection and Prayers**. Our culminating event will be on Sunday evening, **May 1st**, with a walk at Wildwood Park and dinner together in Harrisburg. Participating in this **21-Day Challenge** is designed to discover how racial and social injustices impact our community, to connect with one another, and to identify ways to dismantle racism and other forms of discrimination. There is a **\$20 donation fee to participate**. If you'd like to participate but are concerned about the donation fee, please speak to Pastor Sarah or Pastor Elizabeth. We encourage all adult and youth members to

participate! To learn more about the challenge, visit the following sites online:

General Information:

<http://www.ywcahbg.org/events/21-day-racial-equity-and-social-justice-challenge#.YfxSmf7MKUn>

21-Day Challenge Website:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/cu/wo6VlFP>

FAQ's:

<http://www.ywcahbg.org/sites/default/files/manager/FAQ%202022.pdf>

To register as a team member, please contact team leader, **Sandra Kroft**, at hokie_sandra@yahoo.com or **717-592-0860** (text or call) by **Wednesday, March 30th** for registration details. Thank you for your support!

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
greater harrisburg

Join us on Ash Wednesday for Worship
March 2nd
At 7 pm



Ash Wednesday
— Lent Begins

March/April Special Days 2022

- Ash Wednesday, *March 2, 2022*
- World Day of Prayer, *March 4, 2022*
- Daylight saving time begins, *March 13, 2022*
- First day of spring, *March 20, 2022*
- Palm Sunday — April 10, 2022
- Maundy Thursday — April 14, 2022
- Good Friday — April 15, 2022
- Easter — April 17, 2022
- Earth Day — April 22, 2022
- Administrative Professionals Day — April 27, 2022



Join us for worship!

Lead Pastor—The Rev. Sarah Keilholtz
Associate Pastor—The Rev. Elizabeth Eckman
Seminararian—Jennifer Morris
Minister of Music—Thomas A. Notestine
Youth Director—Stephanie Alsvan
Office Manager—Deanna Kendall

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IN FAITH
SHARE
God's Love
SERVE
OTHERS
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