

SPRUCE RUN

# Fellowship

SPRUCE RUN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION CHURCH

Winter 2017 Vol. 63, No. 4

## Pastor's Corner

Grace, peace, and mercy be unto you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!



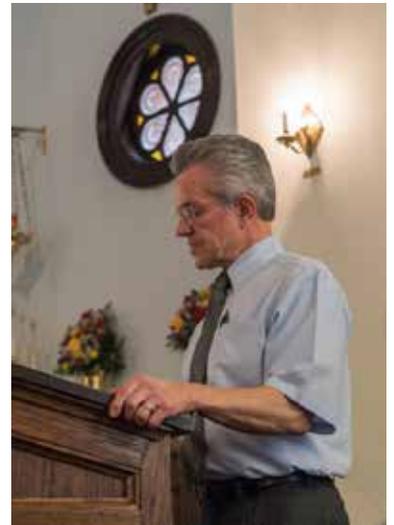
With the publishing of this issue of the Fellowship, I am mindful that Advent is upon us. We have started a new Church Year by God's grace, and in countless ways we have been blessed as a church family as we have worked and enjoyed the fellowship afforded to us as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. This issue of the Fellowship offers ample testimony that as God's holy people at Spruce Run, we are an active, mission driven, and thriving community of faith. The enthusiasm of our members for the worship, fellowship, and discipleship we share is simply wonderful! With all of those good things having been expressed, I wish to address an issue that is becoming more and more common not only at Spruce Run Lutheran, but in all churches and in

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## 500th Anniversary of the Reformation Celebration

Every space in the Spruce Run Sanctuary was filled with music on Sunday, October 8, 2017, when a special concert, *A Celebration Commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation and the Hymns of Martin Luther* was held. Featuring The Presentation Brass Quintet, this event was a highlight of our year-long celebration of the Reformation. Starting with Music and Choir Director Candy Peare's majestic rendition of "Een Vaste Burg" and ending with the Presentation Brass Quintet's powerful rendition of Larry Kursar's arrangement of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," the entire event was just superb! In addition to celebrating Luther's hymns, the concert also consisted of congregational singing and the reading of related Bible passages by George Creasy.

Tearful expressions of appreciation and applause at the end of the program resounded throughout the Sanctuary. Truly, this emotional response was testimony to the importance of music in our faith journey.



# December - February Celebrations

As we go through lists for the Fellowship, we find that there are names of people who have moved away or who have not attended worship or any church activities. "Celebrations" is not meant to be an official membership list. If there is a name of someone who wishes that their name be removed, please let us know.

## Birthdays



### December

- 1 Ruth Kopf
- 3 Kaitlin Overton
- 5 George Pugh
- 7 Rich Balzer
- 8 Deborah Timmerman  
Olivia Gorton
- 9 Rosemarie Adickes  
Jen Desch
- 10 Olga Lanning
- 14 Laine Henry
- 15 Barbara Hankinson
- 18 Polly Tyndall
- 27 George Armbrrecht
- 29 Erik Henriksen
- 30 Ginny Ettlemyer
- 31 Andrew Fielding  
Kelsey Shebey

### January

- 1 Emily Smith
- 3 Mary Lomerson
- 4 Kaitlyn D'Alessio
- 7 Emily (Groendyke) Iacucci
- 8 Timothy Naumovitz
- 9 Michael Ettlemyer
- 10 Shaun Adickes  
Maggie Desch  
Lee Worster
- 11 Christine Jones
- 15 Emalina Ascenzo
- 23 Louise Fraser
- 24 Anthony Jones  
Janet Monroe
- 25 David Glahn
- 28 Richard Henry
- 30 Lillian Balzer
- 31 Roslind Jensen

### February

- 1 Doug Downs  
Rebecca Fraser
- 3 Denise Fishburn
- 4 Annaleigh Mrozek
- 6 Timothy Peare
- 8 Joseph Codis
- 9 Dale Monroe, Jr.
- 10 Jacob Baranek
- 11 Jameson Paul Tyers
- 19 Jennifer Mansilla  
Bernice Mayer
- 21 David Adickes
- 24 Gary Thomas Ettlemyer
- 26 Frank J. Schmelz
- 27 Debbie Eustace  
Melissa Mayberry

## Baptism Anniversaries

### December

- 5 Mackenzie Dastis
- 10 Dakota Jones
- 15 Gretchen Apgar  
Ruth Kopf
- 16 Leslie Talochino
- 24 Christopher Kisch
- 30 Deborah Timmerman

### January

- 13 Cecelia Ossi
- 29 Paul Smith

### February

- 1 Doug Downs
- 8 Cadence Grieder
- 15 Emily Smith
- 22 Matthew Smith
- 24 Vienna Rose DiRe
- 28 Andrew Curtis



## Wedding Anniversaries

### December

- 5 Jen & Peter Desch
- 17 Kim & John D'Alessio

### January

- 3 Lee & Art Worster
- 9 Janet & Dale Monroe, Sr.
- 17 Rosemarie & David Adickes

### February

- 14 Dave & Dottie Wilson
- 20 Lori & Jim Terry
- 28 Nancy & Walter Bibinger



# News from Our Committees and Interest Groups

## Women of the E.L.C.A.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You to all who made cookies for our Pick 'n Pack Cookie Table at Jingle Bell Junction. People know how delicious our cookies are and, also, a great bargain. What fun and what stories we hear about those who come every year to buy cookies for their Thanksgiving table, to give to friends, and to put into their freezers to eat later. We always tell our customers that our cookies are baked with "Butter and Love."

Our WELCA group is small but we continue to come together for our monthly meetings which are filled with love, friendship, good food, an interesting program, and our faith. Our Holiday December meeting will be held on Thursday, December 21 at Noon. Please call Annette at 908-574-5085 to tell her you will be coming.

Our recent Thank Offerings have been sent to Hunterdon Interfaith Outreach Council, Safe in Hunterdon, Hurricane Relief, and Anderson House. We also bought a piglet through the ELCA Good Gifts program.

Ruth Ruediger

## Sunday School

We had a great start to Sunday School with Rally Day on 9/10 and now have 20 children enrolled in our program. We have already been busy helping our Church, Community, and World by hosting Coffee Hour on 11/19, filling our Birthday bank, and collecting Coins for Christ. Check out our goals for our coin collection on the Sunday School bulletin board. We also helped assemble pipe cleaner candy canes to send to service people and

veterans at home and abroad. Now we are getting ready for the Christmas Pageant. Please come out and support our children as they act out the miracle of Christ's birth and make a joyful noise to the Lord. Our schedule for the next few months is as follows:

December 3rd Christmas Pageant Rehearsal – Meet in sanctuary.  
December 10th Christmas Pageant – Meet in sanctuary for rehearsal.  
December 17th Christmas Party – Bring a treat to share.  
December 24th Class Canceled – Merry Christmas!  
December 31st Class Canceled – Happy New Year!  
January 21st Class Canceled – Congregation Meeting.  
February 4th Sunday School Sponsors Coffee Hour – Bring a treat!  
February 18th Presidents Weekend – Class canceled

Yours in Christ,  
Sharon Hogan  
Sunday School Superintendent

## Finance Committee

I'd like to again take a moment during this season of reflection to thank all the people who work behind the scenes to keep SRLC going. Much of the work goes unnoticed until it isn't done. So, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You to all who contribute to SRLC with time, talent, and treasure.

I am happy to report that the finance committee, with significant participation and input from Gail and Bob and Paul, has been able to put together a reasonable and achievable proposed budget for 2018, which we will need to talk about [and hopefully approve] at the Congregational Council Meeting in January. Council will soon be asking parishioners to provide an estimate of giving for the coming year. Typically, this has been called a pledge, but it

really is just an estimate. It is NOT a contract, and it can be revised at any time if your situation changes. Please, try to find a way to increase your giving, even if only by a small amount each week. Costs will go up, and if pledges stay static from year to year, the cycle of financial uncertainty will repeat. Remember that our weekly offering supports the things we value most: our mission and ministry, the church building, and our parish community. God blesses us in so many ways – he nurtures us and sustains us, gives us purpose, love, companionship, and fellowship. We are called to serve, and a part of that includes providing financial support to our church and supporting benevolent causes. Let's continue to work together and our blessings will flow.

Yours in Christ,  
Brad Cox,  
Chair, Finance Committee

## North Hunterdon Community Food Pantry

We've had a couple of busy months. In addition to our monthly November distribution, we filled and distributed 25 Thanksgiving Holiday dinners --- turkey, dressing, fresh vegetables, gravy, cranberry sauce, pie, and sweet potatoes from the church garden. A very special thank-you to Erik Henriksen who planted, weeded, harvested and cured all the sweet potatoes. These potatoes were many different sizes and shapes – some the size of a crooked pinkie and some about 5 lbs. The writer of this note cooked some of the unusual tiny ones and they were delicious!

Thanks to all who participated in Spruce Run's annual food collection. We try to keep our shelves full and everything on the altar will help.

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# Council Meeting Highlights



## Council President

Spruce Run Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church is finishing up another successful year of Christian education, music, and service. With your support through the offering and through the generous donation of your time, we continue to bring faith and stability to our community. The drinking water project that we began in May this year is still ongoing, but the end is near. The council has taken the revision of the plumbing in a stepwise fashion: first correcting the acidity of the well water; then attempting a filter correction; and finally replacing a section of old copper pipe with newer plastic pipe. The testing of the water for lead and copper and other material is ongoing and the most recent preliminary results suggest we have corrected the original problem. However, since the water was not yet in compliance in the quarter after our revisions began, we are required to send out another mailing to the congregation similar to the mailing sent in June. Please do not be alarmed by the second mailing which will come in December. We are required by law to make such a mailing every quarter in the year that the water is out of compliance. Our stepwise approach prolonged the resolution, but was the most cost-effective way to proceed. Please continue to use the bottled water provided for drinking purposes until we have received official notice from the State that our water test results are in compliance with safe drinking water. We will continue to provide bottled water even after our test results are in compliance. I wish all of you a Happy and Healthy Advent and Christmas Season.

George Creasy

## July 11, 2017

- ◆ VBS was superb – there were 20 participants.
- ◆ The annual picnic will be 9/24/17, and will be held at SRLC.
- ◆ Blessing of the animals will be 10/1/17.
- ◆ Pork & Oyster dinner will be 11/4/17.
- ◆ 10 people will be volunteering at the balloon festival.
- ◆ Installation of the water treatment system completed 7/7/17. Enclosure has to be built.
- ◆ Bottled water will continue to be used at the preschool for a period of time, until consecutive testing shows acceptable results.
- ◆ A concert by the Presentation Brass Quintet will be held at SRLC 10/8/17 in celebration of the 500th anniversary of the reformation.

## September 12, 2017

- ◆ Fire inspection was completed.
- ◆ The Tuesday Quilters are donating funds for the purchase of a defibrillator.
- ◆ The funeral for Caryn Smith will be held at SRLC on 9/14/17.
- ◆ The financial audit was completed.
- ◆ The carpet in the Fellowship Hall was cleaned – AA covered the cost of the cleaning.

- ◆ There are 13 students enrolled for the start of the preschool year.
- ◆ The paperwork for the water treatment system is being completed for submittal to the DEP.
- ◆ Wendy DiNapoli has announced her resignation, effective 10/16/17.

## October 10, 2017

- ◆ Retired Bishop Rudolph PF Ressmeyer passed away 10/6/2017.
- ◆ The finance committee has a meeting scheduled to discuss the proposed 2018 budget.
- ◆ Fall cleanup is scheduled for 10/21/17.
- ◆ CO detectors were installed.
- ◆ The church thermostats will be replaced with lockable, digital units.
- ◆ The first filter utilized in the water treatment system did not fully resolve the issue. There is a second filter to try. If that still does not resolve the issue, a run of piping will have to be replaced.

### *Prayer List Updates:*

*The prayer list has been updated and some names have been removed due to lack of request to continue. If you want a name placed back on the list, please let the office know.*

## Committees ...

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## Jingle Bell Junction

Another year has passed. Another Jingle Bell Junction is done. What a great day it was. So many shoppers that come through our doors. Over and over again I hear that they love coming to our event. The day would not happen without Denise Fishburn. The food that the kitchen puts out is fantastic. The ladies in the kitchen the day before and the day of are just the best. Everyone who bakes, sets up, decorates (I just love the decorations) and cleans up makes the day so much easier. The crafters we have are so talented. A large thank you to my husband, George and my son, Gene for their help during the two weeks leading up to Jingle Bell Junction. So until next year when we Jingle all the way to Jingle Bell Junction on 11/17/2018, may you have the most blessed Christmas season and a beautiful New Year.

God Bless you all,  
Sara Armbrecht

## Tuesday Quilters

We made 70 quilts for Lutheran World Relief so far this year.

We are always in need of gently used sheets (full flat or larger) that we use as backing for the quilts. One of our new items this year was bench pillows that have different seasons on the front, we still have orders for more which we will complete in the new year.

Thank you all for making it a good year for us with all your support and purchases.

Jingle Bell Junction was well attended and very successful for us.

From all of us at Tuesday Quilters,  
Merry Christmas & a very blessed New Year.

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The annual "Hanging of the Greens" will take place on *Saturday, December 16th, at 9:00 AM*. This is a wonderful opportunity to help beautify our sanctuary for the upcoming Christmas season. Coffee, hot chocolate, & bagels are always provided.

### CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President: George Creasy.....537-4034  
Vice President: Brad Cox.....638-8533  
Secretary: Sonia Cordova.....537-2418  
Treasurer: Gail DeRemer.....689-0943  
Financial Secretary:  
Paul Henriksen.....835-9522  
Pastor: Rev. Gary V. Ettlemyer ... 537-2333  
Richard Glahn.....236-2771  
Rose-Marie Green.....735-4444  
Mary Lomerson.....537-7377  
Jeff Smith.....617-5351  
Anthony DiRe..... 537-4398  
Rich Balzer..... 574-5239  
Doug Lanning..... 201-755-1306  
Elke Naumovitz..... 782-5710  
Lori Terry.....832-1573

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND LIAISON

#### Evangelism & Social

Liaison: Sonia Cordova.....537-2418

#### Finance

Chair: Brad Cox.....638-8533

#### Parish Education

Chair: Lori Terry.....832-1573

#### Preschool

Chair: Pastor.....537-2333

#### Property

Anthony DiRe..... 537-4398

#### Staff Support

Chair: Ruth Ruediger.....638-6661

#### Stewardship

Chair: George Creasy.....537-4034

#### IHN/Family Promise

Chair: Wendy DiNapoli.....973-568-5168

#### Worship and Music

Chair: Ruth Ruediger .....638-6661

Liaison: Sonia Cordova.....537-2418

#### Altar Guild

Chair: TBD

#### Kitchen

Chair: Eileen Clancy.....735-4612

#### North Hunterdon Food Pantry

Chair: Ruth Ruediger .....638-6661

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

#### Superintendent

Sharon Hogan.....638-5624

#### Music

Candice Peare.....534-9862

#### Pre-K and Kindergarten

Lisa Ficano.....238-3725

Cecelia Ossi.....638-5805

#### First and Second Grade

Bennett Clifford.....238-0126

Finn Fielding.....537-7195

#### Third and Fourth Grade

Beverly Fielding.....537-7195

Janine Ascenzo.....832-8944

#### Fifth and Sixth Grade

Jane Heeckt .....238-0126

#### Seventh Grade (Confirmation I)

Patrick Clifford .....238-0126

George Creasy .....537-4034

#### Eighth Grade (Confirmation II)

Pastor Ettlemyer.....537-2333

### STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Gary V. Ettlemyer...537-2333

Music Director: Candice Peare.534-9862

Director, Handbell Choir:

Diane Meyer.....735-8772

Secretary:.....537-4824

Sextons:

Rosemarie Adickes .....689-1895

Sara Armbrecht .....689-0716

### FELLOWSHIP EDITORIAL STAFF

Jane Creasy .....537-4034

Karen Smith .....537-4824





## Committees...

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## LYO

After taking a break for the summer, the youth group is gearing up for a busy year. In addition to service to the church, the youth group will be holding some fundraisers to support their trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering held in Houston, TX at the end of June 2018.

So far this year, the youth group has helped with the church clean-up day, planted mums, hosted Sunday School Halloween Party, participated in Jingle Bell Junction, and held a Soup and Salad Lunch fundraiser.

A pancake breakfast fundraiser will be held on December 10th between the services. Be sure to look for the Super Bowl Sub Sale in January/February!

## Family Promise/IHN

Thanks to all who contributed to a great year of kindness! Our final Family Promise hosting of 2017 was September 3-10. We hosted Yonna and her three boys, who have since found an apartment and moved out of the program. Yeah! Kia was also with us, and I am pleased to say that she too has moved out. She found a great home for her and her two dogs. Our third family was Catherine and her three teenagers, who made the week fun and interesting! It was a great group, filled with energy and thankfulness.

Over the week, we served many delicious homemade meals, helped to entertain youngsters, provided school supplies for the start of school, and gave a listening ear when we could. All together 37 Spruce Run volunteers, 15 St. John Neumann Church

volunteers, and Brianna Ficano's Girl Scout troop pitched in to make the week a success. Thanks to all of them and to Roxanne Overton and Debbie Hunt for their extra efforts and help!

It is in our actions that we show our love, kindness and compassion for God and for others. If we use our talents as God intended, then we share our time, skills and passion to the best of our abilities with our neighbors. "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his neighbor, he is a liar." (I John 4:20). I share this with you to remind you to be open to helping out with the program next year. "There is a wide choice of things that you can do for God and neighbor, in and through your church community if you have the good will. With good will you also find the necessary time for such projects, even though you may have to cut and pare in other directions." (Stewardship, Parish Publishing August, 2016)

Mark the dates for 2018! We will be hosting April 1-8, July 29 - August 5, and December 9-16. We need all the help we can get! Fun fact... if all Family Promise volunteers across the nation were actually employees, Family Promise would represent the 35th largest employer in the country. So, keep up the good work!

I will continue to be coordinating our hostings at Spruce Run as I love the program and wouldn't want to see it end. If you have any questions, would like to get more involved, or have suggestions, please contact me at 973-568-5168.

Blessings,  
Wendy DiNapoli

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## Righteous Recipes

### Pork and Beans Bread

- 1 c Raisins
- 2 c Sugar
- 1 c Oil
- 3 Eggs
- 1 can Pork and Beans
- 1 t Vanilla
- 1 t Cinnamon
- 1/2 t Baking Powder
- 1/2 t Baking Soda
- 1/2 t Salt
- 3 c Flour
- 1 c Chopped Walnuts

Pour 1 cup boiling water over raisins and set aside. Cream sugar and oil. Add Pork and Beans and beat until well mixed. Add vanilla, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Drain water from raisins and add raisins and nuts. Mix again. Pour mixture into 2 greased bread pans (5 x 9 x 3). Bake in 325 degree oven for 50-60 minutes.

Enjoy!

Submitted by  
Karen Smith

## Stewardship

*Advent is a time of preparation,  
a time to reflect on the greatest gift  
we have received. How should we  
prepare?*

# Milestones & Announcements

## Pork & Oyster

Our Pork & Oyster Dinner was a great success! We served 119 meals with the net proceeds for our efforts were approximately \$3200.00.

A special thanks goes out to Harold Moore, who prepared a delicious dinner, and to all his crew as well. Great job!

Thank you to all who helped, especially Eileen Clancy for coordinating, Mary Lomerson, Linda Cunningham, Rosemarie Adickes, Joe Codis, all the kitchen and food help, food servers, waitresses, take out, beverage and dessert station volunteers and the clean-up crew.

Thank you to everyone who donated all the delicious items for the Bake Sale and the desserts for the dinner.

## Preschool

Typically October, November, and December have been very busy months in Preschool! We had our annual Halloween Trunk-r- Treat on a Monday and Tuesday this year, with parties continuing in the classrooms. Our class moms came in and assisted the children with a fun project and played games with the children.

The children had a blast working with their families to disguise their turkeys for the hallway bulletin board. You may have had a chance to walk down our hallway and see some of the creative "costumes". The classes also had an opportunity to join together in the Big Room for their Thanksgiving Feast! Turkeys and Native American Indians were represented with head-dresses and/or vests.

Our annual Butterbraid fundraiser has come to a close, with the



**We are happy to announce that Sue and Jack O'Brien are the proud grandparents of two new little ones:**

- **Darren Teague O'Brien, son of Drew and Rachael O'Brien was born on October 24th, and**
- **Elise Marie Clark, daughter of John and Courtney O'Brien Clark was born on November 2nd.**

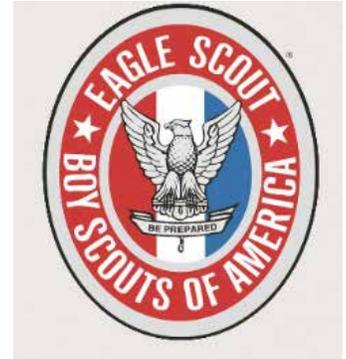
**Congratulations!**

preschool raising over \$700. Thank you to everyone who participated. These funds help defer our operating costs in the classrooms and mulch upkeep for our playground.

We have started to prepare for our Holiday Show. This year's show is scheduled for Friday, December 15 at 9:00 a.m. We will travel around the world with Santa and Rudolph visiting different countries at their Holiday times. The first three months of the new year will be filled with field trips, fun themes surrounding the winter weather, and even a class party for Valentine's Day.

We would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at Spruce Run Preschool!

Anne Alderman-Person ☺



**Congratulations are in order for Erik Young, son of Joni and Jeff Young, who has attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He is the 83rd young man to have attained the rank in Troop 288. Erik thanks those who made donations to his special Eagle project.**



**Congratulations to Lucas Beyers who has completed the requirements for the Boy Scouts of America God and Family Award.**

Everyone enjoys beautiful music during the Christmas season! On Christmas Eve, we traditionally begin our Christmas Eve service with inspirational Christmas music. We would like to invite everyone in the congregation to join us in participating in this annual event. Whether you sing, play an instrument or just listen, please come and be a part of this wonderful evening! All those joining us with voices or instruments, please let Candy Peare know by December 10th. We look forward to seeing you!

## Pastor's Corner...

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all denominations: church attendance and commitment. To make the point I offer the following, most of which was published several years ago in the Fellowship.

### On Church Membership

There are various ways the people become members of a congregation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and in each case the local congregation is responsible for maintaining accurate records of membership. A quick review of our Constitution and Bylaws would be helpful here. (Please note that the asterisked items are required to be included in the constitutions of the churches in the ELCA.) This information is taken from the Constitution and Bylaws of Spruce Run Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church, our congregation's governing document:

#### Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP

\*C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the rolls of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

\*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

a. Baptized members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.

b. Confirmed members are

baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

c. Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record, (as defined in the By Laws) during the current or preceding year.

d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

\*C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

## O Come All Ye Faithful...

*Come join a merry group in Christmas Caroling to our home bound friends. We will meet at 4:30 PM on Sunday, December 10th in the upper parking lot at church and drive together to make our visits. All voices are welcome regardless of ability. It's the joy you bring that makes this a special experience! Hot chocolate and cookies will be served at church following caroling.*



\*C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;

b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and

c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

\*C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

a. death;

b. resignation;

c. transfer or release;

d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or

e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

## *Pastor's Corner...*

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The Constitution and Bylaws specifically charge the Congregation Council with the responsibility of doing an annual review of the rolls of the congregation for the purpose of identifying and contacting those individuals who have not met the basic requirements for maintaining active membership in the congregation, according to Section C8.02.c.

Combining the two provisions just cited, our Constitution and Bylaws specifically state that members are to regularly attend worship and receive Holy Communion, live a Christian life according to the Scriptures and teachings of the Lutheran Church, and support the work of the congregation and the Synod through their time, talent, and treasure.

To say that one is a member of any organization is to say that the member has accepted responsibility for regularly supporting and maintaining a relationship with that organization. As we all know, failure to do so in most organizations results in removal from the rolls.

In the church, however, it's not so abrupt. We encourage each other to strive to do our best to respond to our calling as God's people. We do our best to regularly attend worship and encourage others to do the same. We must do our part to support our mission and ministry through our offerings of time, talent, and treasure – when and where needed. When we begin to lose momentum in our calling as disciples and as co-workers

in Christ, we should redouble our efforts at attending worship and find new ways we can be of service in our congregation.

Unfortunately, all churches have members who seem to fall by the wayside for one reason or another. They stop coming to church. They stop supporting the work of the parish by not giving of their time, talent, and treasure. Some don't seem to care about this, while others have simply gotten into bad habits. Many assume they're still members of the church, even though they don't support it in any way or attend worship. Our Constitution requires that those individuals be removed from the rolls, although we take seriously the provision of C8.05d where it says, "Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern."

For us, people are not statistics and they are not regarded by how much they give of their time, talent, or

treasure, but at the same time it is to be understood that all are to give something of their time, talent, and treasure.

All people are of concern to us as we proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Yet we have had to remove people from our "active" rolls because they have absented themselves from the life of the Church and from the Means of Grace. In all cases where this has been done, it has been with great hesitation and with a great deal of concern for those who have had to be removed.

What can we do in cases where this step has been required? Continue to encourage these children of God to come back to the church and continue to be a part of God's family. Just as the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son was always waiting for the son to return, we wait for those who have fallen away to return so that we can rejoice with them in their newly rekindled faith and life in the Church.

*Continued on page 12..*

### *Worship Opportunities*

*4th Sunday of Advent - December 24th 9:30 am*

*Christmas Eve - December 24th 7:30 pm & 11:00 pm*

*Christmas Day - December 25th 9:30 am*

*1st Sunday After Christmas - December 31st 9:30 am*

*Epiphany of Our Lord - January 6th 7:30 pm*

## Christmas Eve Preludes



*Be sure to arrive EARLY Christmas Eve! Starting about a half hour before both services you will be treated to lovely musical selections by our Celebration Choir, the Handbell Choir, and children from our church!*

### *Pastor's Corner...*

*Continued from page 11*

We need to encourage our young people to grow in God's grace through their continued participation in the life of the church, and we can best do that by being examples of worship faithfulness, by encouraging each other in the faith, and by sharing God's love with everyone in the congregation. If we all do that we will be strengthened. We will be blessed as our young people grow and have families of their own, and have those families continue to be a part of God's holy Church.

We all need to address the issue of our responsibilities from time to time. This is no less true when it comes to God's holy Church. For every person who makes up one excuse or another for not participating in or supporting a church, or

not regularly hearing the Word and receiving the Blessed Sacrament, there are hundreds of thousands more in God's holy Church who are richly blessed for their efforts. On the local level, just ask the young parents who regularly attend and participate in our parish's life! Just ask the long-standing members who continue to support our mission and ministry. Look around and ask those who have renewed their participation in the life of the church, and you'll see what I mean!

Advent begins a new year in the life of the Church as we focus on the coming of our Savior not only at his birth but also at his Second Coming. As the new church year begins, why not make one of the best "new year's

resolutions" you can make, and renew your commitment to God's holy Church and your church family? My prayer is that all of us will be blessed by a renewed commitment to our Lord's work here at Spruce Run Lutheran on the part of all members, so that our ministry and service will encourage others to be a part of our parish family, and thus enable us to do far more for the building of God's Kingdom, as I remain

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor +*

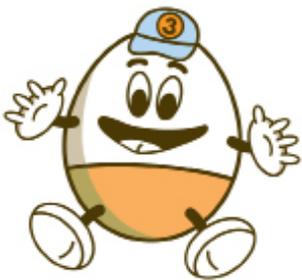


# Blessing of the Pets

10 dogs and 2 rabbits participated in the annual Blessing of the Pets. Owners enjoyed “tacos in a bag” and cookies before and after the blessing.



# Church Picnic





# Our Mission

For over two centuries, Spruce Run Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church has existed to draw people into a community of faith which proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament.

As we move into the next century, our sense of hope, strength, and grace—our Lutheran heritage—will nurture our Congregation and we will reach out to the community through Christian education, music, and service.



## Fellowship

Spruce Run Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church  
442 West Hill Road  
Lebanon Township  
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826-3252

[www.SpruceRunLutheran.com](http://www.SpruceRunLutheran.com)

*“He will be a joy and delight to you,  
and many will rejoice because of his  
birth, for he will be great in the sight of  
the Lord...”*

Luke 1:14-17