



SPRUCE RUN

Fellowship

SPRUCE RUN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION CHURCH

Fall 2021 Vol. 67, No.5

From the Pastor's Pen



Come On Back!

A few Tuesdays back, Spruce Run was hopping—the Quilting Group was quilting, Karen and I were editing the coming week's bulletins, some of the food pantry people were planning, and there were a bunch of folk cutting a hole in the side of the church to upgrade our furnace. And I'm happy to report all our furnaces are working again, and more than that they have been fitted with fancy UV lights that should cut down on virus transmission just like the one that serves the sanctuary. This means the whole building will be warm and as safe as we can make it during a lingering pandemic.

I bring this last point up because, back when folk started getting vaccinated, we all received a bunch of communications from our banks, sports teams, doctors, gyms, grocery stores, and libraries. They reminded us that while the pandemic isn't over, they were doing what they could to make things safe, and that those various institutions were important to your wellbeing.

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A Message from the Council President

Good news everyone! We are coming up on the Advent of the church - a time of preparation for the celebrating the birth of Christ.

We also need to prepare the entire congregation for this season and beyond. To properly prepare, we need involved members of our congregation. We need you to participate in worship, volunteer for the variety of activities we have scheduled such as Jingle Bell Junction and Caroling Capers. We are also always seeking worship assistants, ushers, altar guild members, and choir members.

It is a time of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace:

Hope that we will bring our congregation back in force and stronger than ever after an unprecedented year of a pandemic and all the restrictions that went along with it. We are slowly re-emerging but we need everyone to assist in getting us back up to speed.

Love for one another. We may have personal choices that we have made in the past year and a half that may not look like our fellow congregants' choices. Be open to the views of others, be accepting of decisions of others that may not agree with yours, be willing to engage in constructive dialogue with one another, and most importantly, be patient and kind to one and all. Above all, remember that we are a church family!

Let's celebrate the Joy in our church family, embrace our differences, our gifts and talents, our worship, our choirs, and hopefully, our return to singing the hymns!" Rejoice in the routine and also in the celebrations. And let us achieve Peace after a year of uncertainty, restrictions and constant changes.

Let us come together stronger than ever as a congregation that demonstrates the hope, love, joy, and peace of Jesus to our church and our community.

God Bless!

Janet

Council Meeting Highlights



August 10, 2021

- Rally day is changing from Sept 12 to Sept 19.
- The annual picnic will be Sept 19 at Lebanon Township Memorial Park.
- A memorial service will be held August 28 for Michael Fishburn.
- A note will be placed on the exterior door to the Fellowship Hall asking to check that it is secured when leaving.
- A good response was received to the special appeal for the furnace replacement.
- There is a candidate for Handbell Choir director. Interview is being scheduled.
- Due to the increase in number of COVID cases in the county, masking indoors will once again be implemented.

September 14, 2021

- Blessing of the animals will occur October 3.
- Replacement of the church furnace is in progress.
- Four students are completing Confirmation classes – Lily Balzer, Lucas Beyers, Lainee Henry & Geneva DiRe.
- Dehumidifiers in the lower level of the church have been piped to flow into the sinks.
- Power washing, landscaping & general outdoor clean-up is being done.
- Indoor masking remains in place.
- Sunday School will start September 19. Families that have participated in the past but are not registered currently, will be contacted.

- A Longest Night service – a solemn service for people who have suffered a loss or hardship and may not be ready to participate in the usual Christmas celebration will be held December 21.
- A Zoom interview was conducted with Handbell Director candidate – Kelly Ye. An offer was made and accepted.
- SRLC will participate in the Lebanon Township Community Day event.
- The Worship & Music Committee will be meeting within the next few weeks to discuss the Christmas worship schedule.

Spruce Run Lutheran Church Milestones

Our Sympathies to the Anderson family on Annette's passing on October 18, 2021.

News from Our Committees and Interest Groups

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

The North Hunterdon Food Pantry is going very strong. We continue to be supported with donations from our community, church, and private individuals. Special shout out to Eric for the fresh eggs and big box of fresh sweet potatoes. As seen in some of the pictures, our own congregation continues to generously donate a variety of items. On September 25th the Food Pantry participated in Lebanon Township Community Day. We introduced ourselves to the community, discussed with our neighbors exactly what we do and how with their generosity we are able to assist families in need. It was a wonderful day and we had lots of volunteers to help.



The next two months will be busy for the pantry. Our goal is to provide our clients with a complete Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner, turkey, fresh potatoes, celery, carrots, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetables and dessert (Shop Rite of Clinton

donates the turkeys, potatoes, celery and carrots). The holiday meals are in addition to the regular November and December pantry distribution. The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and high school students volunteer their time packing our bags to be distributed which lightens the volunteer loads. We are also preparing our list for the Reserve Advent Calendar (details available soon).

Our client list has grown in the last month. We are able to provide for the families in need with your donations and the help of volunteers.

Happy Holidays,
North Hunterdon Food Pantry

WELCA

We had a guest speaker at our October meeting. Barbara Snyder, from the Changewater UMC, spoke on the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. We filled a number of boxes with gifts for boys and girls that will go all over the world to help needy children and introduce them to the love of God and spread the Gospel.



All ladies of the church are members of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and our ladies usually meet the third Wednesday of the month. We bring

a sandwich at 12 noon. Dessert and beverage is provided. We then have a business meeting and a program. Presently we have been doing a Bible Study on the Book of Esther.

In September Bernice Mayer attended the Gathering of the New Jersey Women of the ELCA by ZOOM as a delegate and visitor and gave a report. In addition, a representative from the National Women of the ELCA attended the meeting. As you all know, ZOOM has been a blessing during this pandemic. In the past Ruth Ruediger, Olga Lanning, and Bernice Mayer always attended the Conventions. Ruth and Olga are truly missed as is our recent member and secretary Annette Anderson who died this month.

Our Thank Offerings recently went to the New Jersey Lutheran Social Ministries for their Education Fund and the Hunterdon Interfaith Outreach Council.

Please note that our November meeting will be the **SECOND WEDNESDAY**, November 10th. On occasion we need to change our date so always check our church bulletins or call the church office or Bernice Mayer, 908-537-2250, our acting secretary (elections are at our November meeting)!

On November 20th, the ladies will have our usual Pic & Pac cookie table at the Jingle Bell Junction. All donations are welcome. Please put the name of your cookie in your container.

Bernice R. Mayer,
Acting Secretary

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Jingle Bell Junction

Let's get ready to jingle all the way to Jingle Bell Junction.

November 20, 2021

9 am - 3 pm

Set-up is Friday at 7 pm

Clean-up is Sat at 3:30 pm

We are calling all bakers!! We need your baked goods and cookies.

Help is needed at Jingle Bell Junction (November 20th) for set-up, clean-up and lots of shopping in-between! Come and have lunch, bring your friends, family and neighbors. We need everyone's support from baking, brunching, to shopping. The vendors and crafters are excited to be back (and so are we)! If you have any questions, please call Sara at 908-319-5055.

Tuesday Quilters

We will have our beautiful quilts, as well as several new items including table runners, placemats, and tree skirts for sale at Jingle Bell Junction.

We are always welcoming new members to join us on Tuesday mornings from 9 am - 12 noon. No sewing experience is necessary! We will teach you everything you need to know.

We begin with a bit of fellowship each week before we set off to work.

In January, we will begin working on quilts for Lutheran World Relief and will need help tying the quilts.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President: Janet Ledoux.....537-6974
 Vice President: Jeff Smith.....617-5351
 Secretary: Sonia Cordova.....537-2418
 Treasurer: George Creasy.....537-4034
 Financial Secretary:
 Paul Henriksen.....835-9522
 Danielle Beyers.....996-6379
 Gail Vajda.....537-6333
 Judi Mansilla... ..832-9233
 Gene Armbrecht.....689-0716
 Rosemarie Adickes.....689-1895
 Rich Balzer.....574-5239
 BobDeRemer.....689-0943
 ErikHenriksen.....835-9522
 Brad Cox.....638-8533

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND LIAISON

Service

Sonia Cordova.....537-2418

Witness

Sonia Cordova.....537-2418

Finance

Chair: Jeff Smith.....617-5351

Learning

Janet Ledoux.....537-6974

Building Use/Management

Erik Henriksen.....835-9522

Property

Erik Henriksen.....835-9522

Mutual Minsitry

Janet Ledoux.....537-6974

Stewardship

Council Liaison:
George Creasy.....537-4034

Worship and Music

Sonia Cordova.....537-2418

Altar Guild

Chair:

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

Gail Vajda.....537-6333

Tuesday Quilters

Chair: Rose-Marie Green..735-4444

Family Promise

Chair: Wendy DiNapoli..973-568-5168

SUNDAY SCHOOL Superintendent

Laura Mortensen.....732-318-8034

Music

Qingyang (Kelly) Ye

Pre-K and Kindergarten

First and Second Grade

Third and Fourth Grade

Fifth and Sixth Grade

Seventh Grade (Confirmation I)

George Creasy.....537-4034
Rob Ossi.....638-5805

Eighth Grade (Confirmation II)

PastorChrisHalverson.....537-4824

STAFF

Pastor Chris Halverson537-4824
Music Director:

Candice Peare.....534-9862

Director, Handbell Choir:

Qingyang (Kelly) Ye

Secretary: Karen Smith.....537-4824

Sextons:

Rosemarie Adickes.....689-1895

Sara Armbrecht.....689-0716

FELLOWSHIP EDITORIAL STAFF

Jane Creasy.....537-4034

Karen Smith.....617-5351

WEBSITE

Mark Creasy.....303-4356

Karen Smith.....617-5351

Now, since churches are innately intergenerational (meaning youngsters who were unable to be vaccinated aren't excluded), much of what we do in worship involves singing and speaking collectively (a no-no during an airborne pandemic), and our foundational principle is love of neighbor, we didn't lay it on thick like a lot of these other organizations did. We're now living with the consequences of that choice. As people began to put their life routines back together those organizations who reached out early have gotten first dibs on people's new post-pandemic priorities.

So, in case you need to officially hear it:

No, the Pandemic isn't over yet, but we here at Spruce Run continue to do all we can to make things safe. As I said above, we've installed furnace filtration systems that drastically cuts down on germ and virus transmission, we continue to follow the CDCs safety recommendation for Hunterdon County, reviewing it when they release their latest analysis on Thursdays at 8pm. We are limiting singing to the last 15 minutes of the worship service, following the recommendations of various national choral organizations, and in general doing what we can to keep everyone safe.

Having a healthy spiritual life and a community of faith that you belong to is important to your wellbeing. It

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New Handbell Choir Director

Kelly Ye joined the Church Staff this September as the new Handbell Choir Director, replacing Jason Steiner who left to pursue a residency with Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dayton, Ohio. Kelly is originally from Hangzhou China and is currently pursuing her Music Education and Music Theory and Composition Degree at Westminster Choir College at Rider University. Welcome Kelly!



The Handbell Choir rehearses Sundays after worship. You don't need to have musical experience to join!



Advent

Celebrating Advent is an excellent way to prepare your mind and heart for Christmas.

Join us each week at 10 am. in person or online.

- November 28 ~ First Week
- December 5 ~ Second Week
- December 12 ~ Third Week
- December 19 ~ Fourth Week

Christmas Eve Service

Friday, December 24, 2020

4:30 pm and 7 pm

Re-forming Confirmation

A few close colleagues and I agreed to read through Andrew Root's *Ministry in a Secular Age* trilogy about doing ministry in a secular world. The first book is *Faith Formation in a Secular Age: Responding to the Church's Obsession with Youthfulness*. I have to admit it was a difficult book; I'm glad I wasn't muddling through it on my own.

The major take-away is that the church in North America has confused being "hip" with actual young people and church attendance with actual faith. This means, instead of helping young people trust in Jesus, we seek to be hip large congregations.

One of the take-aways my colleagues and I came away with was that we need to re-think confirmation, particularly the starting point for confirmation. You see, there was a school of thought in youth ministry that as confirmation classes shrunk and became less formalized Pastors needed to adapt by creating "plug and play" lessons, where content could be dropped in as convenient, regardless of process. My own way of creating something that can be slotted into schedules and fit to the number of students was to think of confirmation as a toolbox with five sections in it: Hebrew Bible, New Testament, History, Catechism, and Worship & Personal Prayer. Each of these sections could be presented in any order. But, per Andrew Root, where we start matters, and the starting point for faith formation ought to be the student's experience.

So, going forward, second year of confirmation is getting a bit of a makeover. We're going to be starting with personal prayer and experience of worship, then from there we're going to go through Luther's Small Catechism essentially backward. We'll segue from personal prayer and our experiences of worship to Luther's recommendations about morning and evening prayer and description of those essential elements of worship, the sacraments. Then on to the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and finally the 10 commandments. Then we'll pan out from these uniquely Lutheran things to the history of the whole Church. At essence, we'll begin with the student's experience and widen out from there.

I'm writing this article for the whole congregation, not simply for information but, because we're all, from the youngest to the oldest of us, in the process of learning the faith. We're all folk who have faith and are seeking to more fully understand it. We're all in that moment of anticipation, we're always receiving the bread of life and waiting to hear those blessed words, "for you."

We're in the exact same place as the Confirmands, in every aspect of the faith—when we engage with scripture, go back to the Catechism, attend worship, kneel in prayer, serve our neighbor, sing a hymn, or anything else—we need that same assurance that it is true for us, so that we can find those points of connection and then follow them wherever they lead us, finding there the rich inheritance we have in Christ.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CONFIRMANDS



GENEVA, LILLIAN, LAINEE, AND LUCAS

Stewardship

Dear Faithful Stewards,

A common thread through the Old and New Testaments was the need for individual Stewardship during a period of change. None of the transitional biblical events could have led to the adoption and spread of Christianity without stewardship.

The past year or two has certainly been a time of change and transition for us. Think for a moment about what the prophet Isaiah was telling us (Is 43:18-19) "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" We are being challenged to be good stewards.

The mission of our stewardship, in short, is to 'spread the Good News in WORD and Sacrament through Christian Education, Music, and Service!' The mission remains the same even though the activities may have changed. Be a steward for change.

Yours in Christ,
The Stewardship Committee

ShopRite gift cards are available. Please contact Sara or Denise if you would like to purchase some. This is a very easy way to financially support our church.



can center your days, ground your choices, and bless your endings. So, as you are able, come on back! God's doing a lot of good stuff here at Spruce Run and we'd love for you to be a part of it. Sunday School continues to meet, our Zoom Bible Study is back in action on Sundays, and on Thursdays, PUBLIC Theology is meeting the first Wednesday of the each month. We confirmed four young people on Reformation Sunday and remembered those who passed in the last year on All Saints Sunday. We are opening up the church to the community for Jingle Bell Junction, preparing for Christmas during the season of Advent. We are mourning with those who mourn during our Longest Night Service and celebrating Christ's birth at our Christmas Eve services.

In Christ's Peace,

Pastor Chris

Righteous Recipes

HARVEST CHOCO-PEANUT BUTTER BALL

Ingredients:

- 12oz. cream cheese, softened
- 3/4c. powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla
- 1 c. peanut butter, warmed in microwave
- 1/2 c. chopped Reese's peanut butter cups
- 2 c. Reese's Pieces, for decorating ball
- Graham crackers or vanilla wafers, for serving

In mixer, blend cream cheese, powdered sugar, vanilla, peanut butter, and chopped Reese's until combined.

Transfer mixture to plastic wrap and shape into a ball.

Fold up sides and cover with plastic wrap.

Refrigerate until slightly firm, 1 hour.

Unwrap and place on serving platter.

Place Reese's Pieces all over and let soften 20 minutes before serving.

Serve with graham crackers or vanilla wafers.

Caroling Capers

Sunday, December 12, 2021 3 - 5 pm

Bring an appetizer or dessert to share

Join us for fellowship, food, and carols.

Everyone is welcome!



Musicians Wanted

Our Christmas Eve Services will begin by members of our congregation sharing their musical gifts. If you play an instrument or sing and would like to participate, please let Candy know by December 12, 2021.

This is such a wonderful way to begin our service celebrating the Nativity of Our Lord! Please come and join us. Everyone is welcome!



JINGLE BELL JUNCTION

November 20, 2021
9 AM - 3 PM

Shop Wonderful Crafts!
Come for Delicious Food!
Bring Friends!

Volunteers are needed to help with many different tasks to help make this day a success. Please contact Sara if you can help in any way!



Saturday, December 11th
9 AM - 12 PM

**Decorating our church for
Christmas**

Everyone is invited!





Church Picnic

On Sunday, September 19, 2021 we held an outdoor worship service followed by the annual church picnic. Everyone enjoyed a great time of fellowship and food with burgers, hot dogs and lots of other great food.

No picnic is complete without the Egg Toss! Thanks to Erik for providing some extra tough shelled eggs for the Egg Toss to make the toss extra challenging!

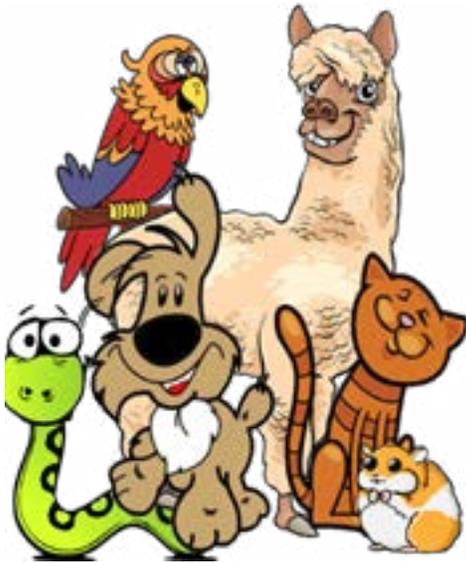


Lebanon Township Community Day

On September 25, 2021 we joined many other community groups at the Lebanon Township Community Day. At our table, we gave away fall crafts for the kids with an invitation to church and Sunday School. We also gave away mugs filled with information about the church, upcoming events and candy.

We also had a table for the North Hunterdon Food Pantry where we collected donations, raised awareness, and gained a few new volunteers!

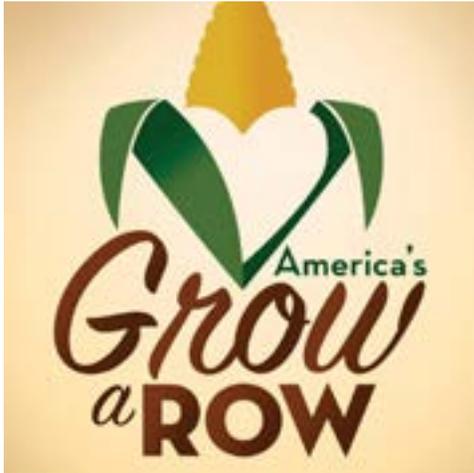




Blessing of the Animals

On October 3, 2021,
9 dogs, 3 cats and 3 ducks
were blessed.





America's Grow-A-Row

On October 7, 2021, we joined America's Grow-A-Row in their Pittstown Farm fields to help with their harvest. During the two hours that we were there, we helped to pick 6,000 pounds of corn and tomatoes. That is about 24,000 servings! We are happy to support Grow-A-Row's mission to feed those in need. Grow-A-Row provides the North Hunterdon Food Pantry with fresh produce each month for the distributions.



2021 Reverse Advent Calendar

The North Hunterdon Food Pantry helps many families each month. Typically after the holidays, our shelves are almost empty. Please consider finding a box, basket or bag and filling it with the suggested items (or other items) each day as you count the days until Christmas. Your box will be empty when you start, but by Christmas Eve it will be filled and will help our neighbors who might otherwise be hungry or need some of these suggested items.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 28 Strawberry or Grape Jelly	Nov 29 Minute Rice	Nov 30 Cookies	Dec 1 Juice Boxes	Dec 2 Bag of Sugar	Dec 3 Bottle of Shampoo/ Conditioner	Dec 4 Coffee &/or Tea
Dec 5 Jar of Applesauce	Dec 6 Cake Mix & Icing	Dec 7 Container of Salt or Pepper	Dec 8 Canned Ravioli	Dec 9 Bottle of Syrup	Dec 10 Dish Detergent	Dec 11 Paper Towels or Napkins
Dec 12 Condiments: Ketchup, Mustard, Mayo	Dec 13 Box of Pancake Mix	Dec 14 Can of Spam or Hash	Dec 15 Laundry Soap	Dec 16 Can of Chicken or Tuna	Dec 17 Bottle of Apple Juice	Dec 18 Can of Sweet Potatoes
Dec 19 Oatmeal	Dec 20 Pasta Sauce	Dec 21 Jar of Pickles	Dec 22 Bottle of Body Wash	Dec 23 Cleaning Products	Dec 24 Bring your box to church!	

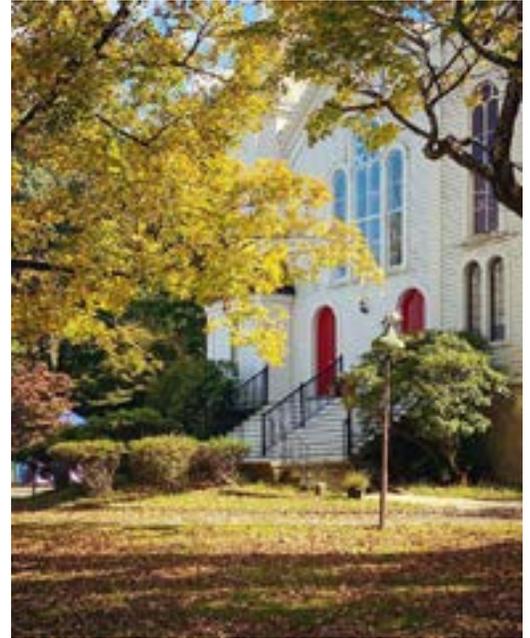


All donations benefit the North Hunterdon Food Pantry.

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

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Lebanon Township
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826-3252

www.SpruceRunLutheran.com

“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.”

Isaiah 40:8

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