



SPRUCE RUN

Fellowship

SPRUCE RUN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION CHURCH

Spring 2022 Vol. 67, No.3

From the Pastor's Pen



Worship: Practice
for the Rest of Your Life

Last newsletter, I mentioned the book *"Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church"*. This book sets out a challenge of expectations for church membership: Worship weekly, pray multiple times a day, read scripture daily, regularly be in relationship with other Christians, regularly point people to Jesus, and give generously.

For the season of Lent, we've been focusing on praying multiple times a day. At this point, you've been given 16 different methods of prayer, and hopefully, one or two of them have felt right, and the practice might stick with you beyond Lent and into Easter.

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A Message from the Council President

Gifts, Talents & Passions

By now you've all heard about our 110% goal to improve attendance, giving and participation. I'd like to take a few minutes to focus on the [Gifts, Talents and Passions survey](#) that we have asked everyone to complete. We have received some responses but we need to hear from everyone! If we are to continue God's work at Spruce Run, we need everyone to make a commitment to the work of the church.

Worship and Music has had a great response. Folks are stepping up to assist with altar preparations which has been desperately needed. We've had volunteers to assist as ushers, lectors, worship assistants, and acolytes. The bell choir is still in need of "ringers". Look for Kelly's information on short-term options to join this music ministry. Additional voices are always welcome in the choir.

Stewardship is an on-going challenge. We are behind on pledges in comparison to the last few years. We are in great need of your 10% increased financial commitment. There are also opportunities to assist with this working group to find creative solutions to giving.

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Mask Optional Worship

As the number of COVID cases continue to decline, masks optional for worship.

News from Our Committees and Interest Groups

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

The winter weather was kind to the pantry this year. We did not have to postpone any set work days or distribution days. Our community continues to be generous with donations, both monetarily and with food. Boy Scout Troop 92 supported the pantry with much needed items. The Boy Scouts even separated the soup contributions by type so that the pantry volunteers could easily shelve them.

We just finished packing the April distribution bags and special Easter bags. They are ready for the clients to retrieve later in April. The special Easter bags will contain everything needed for a complete Easter dinner, including a Shoprite ham and rolls that will be added on delivery day.

A couple of the volunteers attended the annual meeting with the

Norwescap leaders on Zoom to learn about changes that are coming (no plastic bags after May 4) and ways that we can reach out to our community that is in need.

Thank you to all the dedicated and reliable volunteers and the individuals and organizations that support us.

Happy Spring,
Gail, Janet, Karen, and Sue



The Food Pantry
is seeking 12 & 18
count egg cartons.
We purchase
eggs in bulk and
give them away in
packs of 12 or 18.

A Message from the Council President

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The **Building Discernment** group keeps plugging along. Our church home is in good repair thanks to the on-going work of these trusty volunteers. There is an upcoming Spring Clean-up on April 23rd, where volunteers are needed to "spruce" up our house!

There are many opportunities to assist with on-going and upcoming **Fellowship & Outreach** activities. The Food Pantry has a group of dedicated helpers but is always in need of more hands. The recent Gnome/Bunny event was another opportunity for gathering. We need open and creative minds to help us to grow this ministry.

Lastly is **Youth**. There is a dire need for help in this area. We had one family offer to work with the youth that covers mentoring, Sunday School and Confirmation. We have underutilized space in our building and there has been talk of organizing a youth gathering room and possibly a Game Night. We're in need of ideas, creativity and muscle to make this happen. You don't need to have children in our

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Council Meeting Highlight.



January 11, 2022

- SRLC received a grant from the NJ SYNOD in the amount of \$1280 for the following three projects: special music for the Longest Night service, ELCA "Yellow Shirts" for members of SRLC to wear for community events, & to bring other local churches to join in worship at outdoor services at the Pavilion at Lebanon Township Memorial Park. A spending report is due to SYNOD in August.
- SRLC's readiness in the event of Pastor testing positive or being exposed to COVID was discussed.
- Short term & long term goals were established.
- The proposed 2022 budget has been adjusted based on input from the December 2021 council meeting.

- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 23, 2022 (snow date, January 30), immediately following worship service.
- Gene Armbrrecht is proposing a June timeframe to coordinate "Music under the Carriage House". Details to follow.

February 8, 2022

- Lent is the time for alms, fasting & prayer. For this Lenten season, the focus will be on prayer. Two ways to pray will be presented each week.
- Danielle Beyers proposed offering a "Gnome Making" craft class at SRLC, presented by a vendor that was not able to participate in Jingle Bell Junction.
- Gene Armbrrecht has been doing needed repairs on the pews.

- Permanent signage is needed to indicate the location of the office & handicapped parking.
- Quotes were obtained for replacing two windows in Pastor's office & two classroom windows. Quotes to be reviewed further.
- The Youth Gathering is cancelled for 2022. NJ Synod is working to organize an alternate local event.
- Erika Balzer discussed an idea to have a children's event at SRLC and invite the community – bring a friend!
- The financial audit volunteers are now available and working to establish a schedule.

A Message from the Council President

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programs to participate but can show our youth and their families that we're all interested in supporting them. It's important to the community and potential members to see our investment in our youth now and plans for the future!

Let's come together to grow our church! Help where you can and where you have a passion. If everyone gave 10% more of their time, giving or energy, we will find ourselves growing in a positive direction!

Join us!

Janet

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
Rosemarie Adickes.....689-1895
Gene Armbricht.....689-0716
Danielle Beyers.....996-6379
Brad Cox.....638-8533
Richard Glahn.....236-2771
Erik Henriksen.....835-9522
Judi Mansilla... ..832-9233
Laura Mortensen.....732-318-8034
Gail Vajda.....328-6027

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND LIAISON

Fellowship & Outreach

Danielle Beyers.....996-6379
Gail Vajda.....328-6027

Youth

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

Building Discernment

Erik Henriksen.....835-9522

Holistic Stewardship

Rosemarie Adickes.....689-1895
George Creasy.....537-4034

Worship and Music

Judi Mansilla... ..832-9233
Matt Gaydick.....832-6348

Altar Guild

.....

Finance

Jeff Smith.....617-5351

Mutual Minsitry

Janet Ledoux.....537-6974

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

Gail Vajda.....328-6027

Tuesday Quilters

Rose-Marie Green.....735-4444

Family Promise

Wendy DiNapoli.....973-568-5168

SUNDAY SCHOOL Superintendent

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

Music

Qingyang (Kelly) Ye.....537-4824

Seventh Grade (Confirmation I)

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

Eighth Grade (Confirmation II)

Pastor Chris Halverson.....537-4824

STAFF

Pastor Chris Halverson537-4824

Music Director:

Candice Peare.....534-9862

Director, Handbell Choir:

Qingyang (Kelly) Ye.....537-4824

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

Sextons:

Rosemarie Adickes.....689-1895
Sara Armbricht.....689-0716

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Jane Creasy.....537-4034
Karen Smith.....617-5351

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Mark Creasy.....303-4356
Karen Smith.....617-5351

Now, as we enter Easter, I want us to move from prayer to worship. As I said at my call interview way back when, I'm neither a "high church" nor "low church" kind of guy. Instead, I buy into the theory of "The Central Things." That is, if you go back to descriptions of worship in the Gospel of Luke and the earliest descriptions of Christian worship as found in the writings of Justin Martyr and the Didache, you'll find there are several things we've been doing in worship since the beginning—these are central to how we worship and as such, we ought to worship in ways that highlight them. By my count, there are seven central things in worship: Gathering, Baptism, Confession and Forgiveness, the Word of God, Thanksgiving, Meal, and Sending.

When we regularly attend worship and do these central things here, we are practicing for the rest of our life; what we do on Sunday spills out into the rest of our week.

- We practice gathering in church so we don't fall for the isolating, individualistic, and divisive impulses that can come rather naturally in our society.
- We are regularly reminded of our baptismal identity—Children of God, Beloved, Named, and Claimed by God—so that when other identities get hung on us, they don't weigh us down or define us too fully.
- We practice confession and forgiveness because both are hard to do. It is easy to hold a grudge and withhold grace. It is easy to define others by their last mistake and hold onto our own guilt.
- We read, tell, and hear the stories of God through scripture, sermon, and creeds so that we don't forget them. There are so many stories out there, some good, some bad, many just noise. Just think, the average American is exposed to at least 4,000 advertisements each day. That's a lot of stories defining who you are and what matters in life!

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Spring Property Clean-Up

Saturday,
April 23rd

9 am - 12 pm

*Bring work gloves
and gardening
tools if you have
them. If you have
any questions,
ask Erik.*



- We practice giving thanks in church, because so often our impulse is to consider what we lack. Gratitude is genuinely transformative—couples who thank each other regularly are more able to have difficult conversations with each other; writing a meaningful thank you note to another person decreases the likelihood of developing depression for a month and increases a sense of general wellbeing for up to six months.
- We come to the Lord's Supper for a physical reminder of God's love, to receive the body of Christ, and the blood of Christ. We do this to balance out the hate and pain in this world, the bombs and bullets, the pink slip or the sign of cancer.
- We are sent out into the world every week; the church is an organization that exists not for itself but for others. We are sent out to be God's body in the world, and to meet God out in the wide world as well, entertaining angels unaware. To practice what we preach. Those seven bullet points are a lot, right? Well, fear not!

On one hand, you can always go to [this YouTube link](#) to review what the seven central things are, and, on the other hand, the Thursday/Sunday Bible Study group will be taking five sessions to unpack these ideas together. That Bible Study should be starting on April 28th. If you'd like to join us just let me know!

In Christ's Peace,
Pastor Chris



Shop Rite gift cards are available. Please reach out to Sara or Denise if you would like to purchase some. Remember this is a very easy way to financially support our church.

Righteous Recipes

Applesauce Cake

- 1/2 c soft shortening
- 2 c white sugar
- 1 very large egg (1/2 cup)
- 1 1/2 c applesauce
- 2 1/2 c sifted flour
- 1 1/2 t soda
- 1 1/2 t salt
- 3/4 t cinnamon
- 1/2 t cloves
- 1 1/2 t allspice
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cups walnuts (chopped)
- 1 cup raisins (cut up)

Grease & flour 9" x 13" oblong pan.

Cream together shortening and sugar until fluffy.

Beat egg in thoroughly.

Sift together flour, soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves, and allspice.

Stir in dry ingredients alternately with water.

Stir in walnuts and raisins.

Pour into prepared pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 to 50 minutes or until cake tests done.

Cool and finish with cream cheese icing or desired topping.

Submitted by: Bernice Mayer

God's Unstoppable Love

On Easter, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, find ways to live into the new life we receive in baptism, and strengthen our hope in the future general resurrection. The resurrection points to a fundamental truth about God—Easter, and the whole of Holy Week, welcomes a truth we ought not forget: God's love is unstoppable.

On Palm/Passion Sunday, we hear that the rocks themselves would sing of the glory of God's love entering into Jerusalem and that God's love extends even to those who shout, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

On Maundy Thursday, that unstoppable love of God is expressed in Jesus' command to us all "Love one another," tasted in that meal of love—the Last Supper, and experienced, that humble love, in the washing of feet.

On Good Friday, we are assured that God loves us to the end. God even loves betrayers and deniers, loves the men who run away and the women who remain with him even to the end.

On Easter, we know that God loves us to the end and beyond the end to new life! God's love is found in Peter and the beloved disciple as they hold their foot race to the empty tomb. God's love is there, waiting with Mary at the tomb. Easter is the beginning of the love of God overflowing to all the earth!

Holy Week Worship



April 10
Palm Sunday
10:00 AM



April 14
Maundy
Thursday
7:00 PM



April 15
Good Friday
7:00 PM



April 17
Sunrise
Service
6:30 AM*



Breakfast following
Sunrise Service

Easter Egg Hunt
9:30 AM

Resurrection of our
Lord 10:00 AM

*At Spruce Run Cemetery
next to the church.

Fellowship

On March 29th, friends and members gathered to make bunnies and spring gnomes. A wonderful and creative time was had by all!



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
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www.SpruceRunLutheran.com



*"See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.
Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing
has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land.
The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines
spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my
beautiful one, come with me."*

Song of Songs 2:11-13

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