



SPRUCE RUN *Fellowship*

SPRUCE RUN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION CHURCH

Lent 2023 Vol. 69, No. 1

From the Pastor's Pen



A Lenten Challenge

Lent is a 40-day period where Christians are encouraged to more intentionally and more passionately practice their faith. The three traditional practices of the season (paralleling the Ash Wednesday readings of Matthew 6) are Alms, Prayer, and Fasting.

Alms: Giving or collecting money or goods for those in need.

Prayer: Communicating to God our awe and thanks, our confessions and requests.

Fasting: Refraining from an action or item that you feel damages your relationship with God, your neighbor, or the creation.

These are tried and true Christian practices that have long formed God's Church. I hope some or all of them may be included in your Lenten devotion.

I would also like to offer three other Christian practices that have, in one way or another, popped up in the "Faithful Journey" training our congregation has been partaking in, Conversation, Reading, and Discernment.

Continued on page 4...

A Message from the Council President

This year's Annual Congregational Meeting was held on January 22nd and was very well attended. We reviewed the annual reports of our various committees and spent considerable time discussing the budget for 2023. Due to the efforts of Jeff Smith, George Creasy and Paul Henrikson, we were able to approve a budget that did not result in an increase of spending over last year. Sue O'Brien was elected to a new three year term on council while Gail Vajda, Gene Armbricht and Rosemary Adickes were elected to their second three year terms. We also bid farewell to Jeff Smith who has served on council for the past six years. Thank you Jeff for your service!

After the meeting, we had a potluck lunch with a wide variety of food! It was a great time for us to unwind and enjoy each other's company.

We also have a number of upcoming events including a soup and bread meal before Ash Wednesday worship beginning at 6 pm followed by worship at 7 pm. All are welcome! Additionally, we are collecting food items for Lutheran Social Ministry to provide Easter food baskets to families in need. Please refer to the weekly bulletin, e-mail blast, or the box on page 3 for the items that are needed.

Look for information on the upcoming Game Nights. They have been held monthly with a lot of fun and laughter and a wide variety of games for young and old. It's a great intergenerational evening of fellowship and pizza! Come and join us at the next one!

As you can see, we have a lot going on at Spruce Run and hope you can join us at one or more of our activities!

God Bless,

Janet

News from Our Committees & Interest Groups

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

The North Hunterdon Food Pantry had a very successful Reverse Advent Food Drive for the Christmas holiday. Our community and friends were very generous.

In January, the Lebanon Township Museum included us in their Martin Luther King Day festivities. The pantry received needed paper and hygiene items for the pantry along with a generous ShopRite Gift Card donation.

Currently, we are preparing for the March and April distributions along with the preparation of the special Easter Distribution which includes everything needed for a complete Easter meal.

In February, we had two Girl Scout troops help the pantry shelve donated groceries and separate pasta and soups. The large volume of soups were provided by Boy Scout Troop 92. Pictured is Brownie Troop 81310 sorting tomato sauce and Daisy Troop 80488 learning about the pantry. We are thrilled for the donation of 2,351 pounds of food and essential items from the community that Boy Scout Troop 92 and Cub Scout Pack 92 collected from the Scouting for Food event at local grocery stores. We are very thankful for all the support.

Gail, Janet, Karen and Sue



Family Promise

The latest update from Family Promise is that they are in the process of applying for permits to do some construction on the building in Flemington that will become the "Promise Center." They hope to open this permanent shelter in April. Family Promise is also in the process of submitting a grant to fund a new initiative that would allow FP to do outreach and engagement for those experiencing street homelessness.

Our next "hosting" is May 21-28. Maybe, just maybe, we will be actually providing some meals and our companionship by then. At FP, they are re-imagining the current model to continue the compassionate support for families. New rules and regulations are being established further to govern the center. We won't know exactly what will be expected of us until the time gets closer.

In the meantime, keep the program and the families in the program in your prayers.

Blessings,
Wendy DiNapoli

Continued on page 5...

Congregation Council 2023

President: Janet Ledoux

Vice President: Erik Henriksen

Secretary: Sonia Cordova

Treasurer: George Creasy

Financial Secretary: Paul Henriksen

Rosemarie (Posie) Adickes, Gene Ambrecht, and Gail Vajda were elected to their second 3-year term. Sue O'Brien has also been elected to council for a 3-year term.

We thank God for their presence among us and their commitment to our congregation.

Easter Bags for LSMNJ

During the 5 weeks of Lent, we will be collecting items to make Easter bags for families in the Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ programs. Each week we will collect a different item. In addition to the food items for the bag, they would like us to add any Easter items and grocery store gift cards to allow families to purchase a protein for their meal.

Week 1 - Boxed potatoes
(au gratin, scalloped or mashed)

Week 2 - Canned fruit -
(Mandarin oranges & pineapple)

Week 3 - Cornbread/muffin mix

Week 4 - Applesauce
(in non-breakable container)

Week 5 - Cake mix & frosting

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President: Janet Ledoux

Vice President: Erik Henriksen

Secretary: Sonia Cordova

Treasurer: George Creasy

Financial Secretary: Paul Henriksen

Rosemarie (Posie) Adickes

Gene Ambrecht

Danielle Beyers

Brad Cox

Richard Glahn

Judi Mansilla

Laura Mortensen

Sue O'Brien

Gail Vajda

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendent

Laura Mortensen

Seventh Grade (Confirmation I)

George Creasy & Rob Ossi

Eighth Grade (Confirmation II)

Pastor Chris Halverson

STAFF

Pastor: Chris Halverson

Music Director: Candice Peare

Handbell Director: Qingyang (Kelly) Ye

Secretary: Karen Smith

Sextons: Rosemarie Adickes

Sara Ambrecht

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & LIAISON

Fellowship & Outreach

Danielle Beyers &

Gail Vajda

Youth

Laura Mortensen

Building Discernment

Erik Henriksen

Holistic Stewardship

Rosemarie Adickes

Worship and Music

Matt Gaydick &

Judi Mansilla

Altar Guild

Judi Mansilla

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

Gail Vajda

Tuesday Quilters

Rose-Marie Green

Family Promise

Wendy DiNapoli

FELLOWSHIP

EDITORIAL STAFF

Jane Creasy &

Karen Smith

WEBSITE

Mark Creasy &

Karen Smith

Flowers for Easter

Flowers for Easter can be ordered through March 5th.

Forms are available at church, [through this link](#), and on the Altar Guild Page of the website.



Conversation: You may have noticed those two containers of marbles in front of the altar in the sanctuary. Those marbles represent 120 God Conversations I've challenge the congregation to have before the end of 2023. 120 "What's God up to in your life?" 120 "Gee, what's that doing to your soul?" 120 "What's the why behind that choice?"

I just counted the marbles and we're off to a good start, with 24 marbles moved to the larger container, meaning members of this congregation have talked with someone about what God is up to 24 times already! We've already met 20% of my challenge to the congregation, imagine if we were to have 24 more God Conversations this Lent!

Reading: While a good portion of the Bible gets read every three years in worship, and we've been roaming through wide swaths of the Bible in our various Bible Studies, there is still so much more to begging to be read. This Lent I would encourage you to read the Bible widely and deeply.

Wide: Here are a few ways you could read a fair bit of scripture during Lent. Every day during Lent read: a chapter of Matthew and a Chapter of Exodus or a chapter of Acts and a chapter of Isaiah, or read through the books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, or read Romans, 1st Corinthians, and 2nd Corinthians.

Deep: Find the bulletin from the previous Sunday and read the Gospel lesson aloud to yourself three times. After the first read through notice how a particular word, phrase, or idea feel particularly important to you.

After the second read through ask what that word, phrase, or idea means to you today. After the final read through ask yourself what actions might be a proper response to this word, phrase, or idea.

Discernment: Another practice you could do this Lent is creating a Discernment Journal.

Once a week find half an hour to consider what has happened in your week in light of the following three questions: What does the world need? What do other people say I do well? What gives me joy? Your answers to these questions should help you discover or refine what your purpose is and discern God's calling on your life.

I pray that these 40 days will bring challenge and success, blessing and renewal, that they might strengthen you on your journey with Jesus.

In Christ's Peace,
Pastor Chris



Holy Week Worship Opportunities



April 2 Palm Sunday
Worship Service 10:00 AM



April 6 Maundy Thursday
Worship Service 7:00 PM

April 7 Good Friday
Worship Service 7:00 PM



April 9 Sunrise Service 6:30 AM
Resurrection of our Lord 10:00 AM

Recipes from the Congregation

Easy Cheese Danish

2 cans crescent rolls
2 8oz pkgs of cream cheese
1 egg, separated
1/2 to 2/3 cup sugar
1 and 1/2 tsp vanilla
powdered sugar for dusting top

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

Roll out 1 can of crescent rolls into 9x18 pan.

Combine cream cheese, sugar, egg yoke, and vanilla until smooth.

Spread mixture evenly onto the crescent rolls in the pan.

Roll out second crescent on top of cheese mixture*, to cover.

Brush top with egg white.

Place in oven for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

After letting it cool, dust with powdered sugar.

* You can top the cream cheese mixture with cherries, blueberries or pineapple! Then, cover with the second roll of crescent rolls. Bake a little longer.

Polly Tyndall

Worship & Music

The Worship and Music Committee continues to address any concerns regarding the liturgy and the worship life of our wonderful congregation. We increased our membership last year and gained more volunteers for the Altar Guild, but we especially need more volunteers now for Worship Assistants. It's pretty amazing serving as Worship Assistant with Pastor Chris. The view from the altar provides a totally different perspective on the sanctuary and the congregation that you can't get from the pews.. If anyone is interested in becoming a Worship Assistant, has any questions, or wants to help in any other way, please reach out to anyone on the committee.

The Lenten Season is upon us and we hope to see you at our upcoming Lenten Services:

February 22 – Ash Wednesday
Soup & Bread served at 6pm
Service at 7pm

March 1 – March 29 Lenten Vespers
Weekly on Wednesday at 7pm

April 2 – Palm Sunday at 10 am

April 6 – Maundy Thursday at 7pm

April 7 – Good Friday at 7pm

April 9 – Easter Sunday
Sunrise Service at 6:30am with
breakfast following right after
Resurrection of Our Lord Service
at 10am

Our next Worship and Music
Committee meeting is scheduled for
May 8th.

ShopRite Gift Cards

Don't forget to purchase a ShopRite Gift Card before you go grocery shopping. The church receives a percentage of cost of the card so it's an easy way to support the church. Contact Sara or Denise to purchase your card today!



MAGAZINES WANTED!

There is a box outside of the sanctuary to collect your old magazines. Each month, they are given to Newton's Guest Home. They are so happy to receive our magazines.



Pageant in a Bag

This year's Christmas pageant required some congregational participation.

Bags with costumes and lines were handed out randomly. When cued by the Narrators, Julian and Eli, participants joined them at the front of the church.

Thank you to Laura for a wonderful pageant!

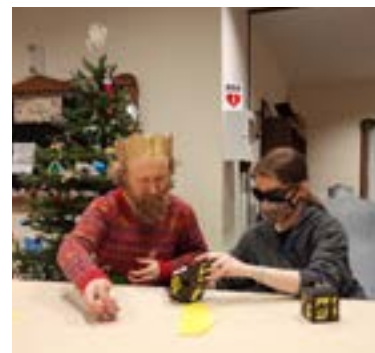
Epiphany Craft & Blessing

On Epiphany, we gathered to bless the church and took chalk home to do the same to our homes.

20+C+M+B+23

The 20 and 23 are the year surrounding the letters C, M, and B for Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, the three kings.

We also made little lanterns with an angel, Jesus, Mary & Joseph, the three kings and a camel on the sides.



Game Night

Game Night is always a fun time! A variety of board games are played which sharing pizza and fellowship. Everyone is welcome.

Bring a friend & join the fun!

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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Lebanon Township
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826-3252

www.SpruceRunLutheran.com
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Lent

"Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!"

Psalm 27:14