



SPRUCE RUN

# Fellowship

SPRUCE RUN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION CHURCH

Fall 2022 Vol. 68, No. 4

## *From the Pastor's Pen*



Don't worry, this is the last newsletter article where I'll be writing about the book "Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church." As I've said before, this book dares us to imagine church membership as more than what our congregational constitution envisions, moving from being members of a church to being formed into the image of Christ by holy habits, by following Jesus. This book sets out the following expectations of disciples: 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. Today I want us to think a little bit about the last three.

### **Witness:**

Unfortunately witnessing to the good news of Jesus Christ has gotten a bad rap. Often, we think of street preachers accosting folk, or an unwanted visit from nice young men in white shirts and black ties, or stereotypically southern "bless

## *A Message from the Council President*

The coming months will be a busy time in our personal lives as well as our church life. I'd like to encourage everyone to extend an invitation to friends to join our church family in one or many of our worship services, activities or Bible studies. There are many opportunities to invite friends and family and I'll try to mention a few of these.

On September 11th, we will be celebrating a Remembrance Ecumenical Service at the Lebanon Township Memorial Park pavilion. This service will have relevance for all of us who remember that day in 2001 that touched so many lives and changed our country.

The following Sunday, September 18th, we will be celebrating Rally Day and enjoying our church picnic. It's a great day to invite friends young and old for good food, fellowship and fun! Then October 9th, will be "Bring a Friend" to worship Sunday.

November 19th will be Jingle Bell Junction. It's a great opportunity to see craftspeople from the community as well as our congregation in action and to support their efforts. The following day, the 20th, is Christ the King Sunday where we will be remembering the church year in worship and music. Last year's service was wonderful and it would be a great time for friends to learn of our traditions and worship.

A Longest Night Service will be held the evening of December 21st. It is a more solemn gathering, acknowledging the losses that people have experienced this year or in the past. Invite a friend who is mourning to join us in worship.

There are so many opportunities to bring a friend that I can't detail them all, but I will give them a shout out: November 6 - All Saint's Day, October 2 - Animal Blessings, October 18 - Halloween Gnome event, December 11th - Caroling Capers. Additionally Bible Study will be resuming as well as Pub Theology where all are welcome.

Let's share our blessings with our family, friends and the community in the coming months! And let them see what our church has to offer them!

*Janet*

*Continued on page 5...*

# Council Meeting Highlights



## May 10, 2022

- Availability of a seminary student to preach Sept. 25 will be pursued.
- "Christmas in July" joint service with Bethlehem Presbyterian Church will be held at Finn Road Park in Pittstown.
- Setting 10 will be used for summer worship. Special worship booklets will be created/used.
- Janet Ledoux attended the "Stewardship Session" presented during the Annual Synod Assembly.
- Spring clean-up at SRLC was completed April 23.
- Handicap parking & entrance, and delivery location signs were installed.
- Financial audit is pending scheduling.
- "Music Under the Carriage House" is postponed.
- Volunteers from Hunterdon County will be at "God's Acre" cemetery June 5th to clean the headstones of veterans' graves.
- Council approved SRLC's participation in NJ Synod's "Faithful Journey" program.

## June 14, 2022

- The Treasurer & Finance Committee are monitoring the SRLC checking account level. Council approved a transfer from the CMA fund should monies be needed. A direct appeal outlining the critical need to meet budget commitment will be presented to the congregation.
- Pastor Jim Krumbholz from Edison NJ, will be guest at Carriage House Learning June 16 to discuss the Constitution.
- Additional members have volunteered to support Worship & Music. THANK YOU! Additional volunteers are still needed.
- Different ministries will present Temple Talks each month- to be scheduled.
- A security reminder was issued as exterior doors have been left unlocked.
- There is a potential Boy Scout Eagle project being considered for improvements to the SRLC Carriage House.

## July 12, 2022

- Carriage House learning and Pub"LICK" theology have

been well attended.

- George Creasy will lead service July 31 while Pastor is on vacation.
- Pastor will be on vacation September 25. Worship leader still to be determined.
- Descriptions of the various worship support positions are needed.
- "Christmas in July" joint worship with Bethlehem Presbyterian Church will take place July 24th at Finn Road Park.
- Preparations are needed for outdoor worship at Lebanon Township Memorial Park on September 11, 2022. Prepared communion cups with wafers will be used for this service.
- "Communion at the Rail" will begin August 7th. One time use, plastic communion cups will be used. Pre-packaged grape juice & wafer will also be available.
- The Holistic Stewardship Committee will meet on August 7th.

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# News from Our Committees and Interest Groups

## North Hunterdon Food Pantry

The North Hunterdon Food Pantry continues to serve a number of families of various sizes in the area. We are thankful to have had many students help us over the summer with stocking shelves, packing bags and on distribution days. We are always happy to have new volunteers join us.

We will gladly take your reusable bags from your ShopRite from home orders or other reusable bags to give to our clients.

Donations of cleaning supplies and toiletries are always gladly accepted.

Check out the website to see all the ways that you can help the food pantry and the clients.

<https://www.sprucerunlutheran.com/outreach/north-hunterdon-food-pantry/>

Gail, Janet, Karen, and Sue

## Tuesday Quilters

The Tuesday Quilters are few in person, but we are busy working on some new items. We will also plan a trip to Lancaster in October to deliver the quilts we made for Lutheran World Relief. From there,

they will be delivered to Maryland, and then they go anywhere in the world, where ever they are needed. We are always looking for anyone that has some time on a Tuesday to lend us a hand. We meet every Tuesday from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. No experience is needed. We have many jobs.

Stop in and check us out.

Rose-Marie Green

## Jingle Bell Junction

It's hard to believe that it is almost time for Jingle Bell Junction. The letters have gone out to our wonderful crafters and vendors. Set-up is on Friday Nov. 18 at 7 pm and Jingle Bell Junction is on Nov. 19, 2022 from 9am to 3pm.

We need volunteers to help set-up and clean-up afterwards. Get your recipes out to help with the cookie table and the baked goods table. And don't forget the kitchen has breakfast and lunch available! For questions, please call Sara at (908)-319-5055.

See you soon,  
Sara

## Music Under the Carriage House

Come on out for some great music on Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022 from 3pm to 6pm. There is an admission price of \$10.00, but that includes hamburgers, hot dogs, side dishes, and dessert. For questions, call Gene at (908) 319-4668.

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.



We are still collecting  
magazines for Newton's  
Guest Home. There is a box  
outside of the sanctuary.

## Council Meeting Highlights ...

Continued from page 2

- Monthly Temple Talks will be scheduled.
- A breakfast will be planned for "Pledge Sunday" in December

### Fellowship & Outreach

- General guidelines will be created for hosting weekly coffee hours.
- Rally day will be September 18th.
- Annual congregation picnic will be September 18th and will be held at the home of Erik Henriksen.
- SRLC will participate in the Lebanon Township 'Day in the Park' on September 24th.
- The financial audits still to be completed.
- "Music under the Carriage House" is tentatively rescheduled for October 1st.
- The Boy Scout Eagle project has been approved and is moving forward.
- The SRLC Constitution & Bylaws require review and updates. Erik Henriksen will review.

### CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President: Janet Ledoux  
Vice President: Jeff Smith  
Secretary: Sonia Cordova  
Treasurer: George Creasy  
Financial Secretary: Paul Henriksen  
Rosemarie Adickes  
Gene Armbrecht  
Danielle Beyers  
Brad Cox  
Richard Glahn  
Erik Henriksen  
Judi Mansilla  
Laura Mortensen  
Gail Vajda

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND LIAISON

#### Fellowship & Outreach

Danielle Beyers  
Gail Vajda

#### Youth

Laura Mortensen

#### Building Discernment

Erik Henriksen

#### Holistic Stewardship

Rosemarie Adickes  
Sara Armbrecht

#### Worship and Music

Judi Mansilla  
Matt Gaydick

#### Altar Guild

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Chair:

#### North Hunterdon Food Pantry

Gail Vajda

#### Tuesday Quilters

Chair: Rose-Marie Green

#### Family Promise

Chair: Wendy DiNapoli

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

#### Superintendent

Laura Mortensen

#### Music

Qingyang (Kelly) Ye

#### Seventh Grade (Confirmation I)

George Creasy  
Rob Ossi

#### Eighth Grade (Confirmation II)

Pastor Chris Halverson

### STAFF

Pastor: Chris Halverson  
Music Director: Candice Peare  
Director, Handbell Choir:  
Qingyang (Kelly) Ye

Secretary: Karen Smith  
Sextons: Rosemarie Adickes  
Sara Armbrecht

### FELLOWSHIP EDITORIAL STAFF

Jane Creasy  
Karen Smith

### WEBSITE

Mark Creasy  
Karen Smith



your heart" judgmentalism  
masquerading as Gospel. It doesn't  
have to be that way.

Firstly, we can learn to listen! As  
Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote,  
"The first service one owes to  
others in a community involves  
listening to them. Just as our love for  
God begins with listening to God's  
Word, the beginning of love for  
others is learning to listen to them."  
People have actual life  
situations where they are  
encountering God's active role in  
their life, and want Christian  
encouragement. If we listen, we'll  
notice those and be able to point  
out what God is already doing in  
a person's life; surely that is good  
news!

Secondly, we can acknowledge that  
part of describing our faith is done  
for ourselves; articulating our faith,  
however tentatively, strengthens  
it. When we describe our faith, it  
moves from an abstract statement  
into a confession. This is a corollary  
to listening, we listen and describe  
what God is doing in our life, and  
that is much more compelling than  
any formula or tract or apologetics.  
After all, the most famous  
description of the faith—  
St. Augustine's Confessions, is just  
that, a confession of what he has  
experienced of God, not a  
systematic treatise, but one beggar  
describing to another where he has  
found sustenance.

Finally, it is about relationships. Our  
call is not to swoop in, say a few

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## Righteous Recipes

### Cheesy Spinach Artichoke Scoop

#### Ingredients:

- 1 bag Scoops
- 1 jar Tostitos Creamy Spinach Dip
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 2 oz. heavy cream
- 7 oz. marinated artichokes, chopped
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 1/2 cup each: shredded mozzarella, parmesan, swiss cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In bowl, combine soft cream cheese, heavy cream, and seasonings. Stir until smooth.
3. Drain artichoke hearts and add into cream cheese mixture.
4. Add spinach dip and cheeses .
5. Transfer to a dish and bake for 10-15 minutes, stirring half way through.
6. Evenly divide Scoops on serving platter and fill with cream cheese mixture.

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



Bell practice will be on September 25th.

## *Update on the Fund for Mission Grant*

As you might remember, last year we received a Fund for Mission Grant from the Synod. We are using it to re-introduce ourselves to the community, after being without a pastor for a while and going virtual for a portion of the pandemic. We've been able to fund joint outdoor worship services with our full communion partners at Bethlehem Presbyterian, including an upcoming 9/11 Remembrance and Ecumenical Worship service.

We now have "God's Work, Our Hands" T-shirts that we wear to community events. For example, we held an outdoor game night in July and all wore the yellow shirt. A few people stopped by and wanted to know what that was about. If you've not received a T-shirt yet, please talk to Pastor or Karen, we still have some extras for people who didn't put in an order.

Finally, we've contacted, and plan on hiring local cellists to play music at our Longest Night service this year. This should make an already moving worship service that much more special. We are grateful to the Synod for these pieces of ministry that probably would not have happened without the wider church's investment in us. We are also grateful for the people here on the ground who are doing the work that transforms these investments of monies into acts of ministry!

Our donations to Lutheran Disaster Relief provide money and quilts to those in need at home and abroad. In addition, our donations of backpacks and school supplies to Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey provided a whole carload of supplies to children who would otherwise not have them. Our reception and use of this Fund for Mission Grant is another example of how these types of partnerships showcase the ELCA's vision of Church; One church, three interrelated expressions of that Church.



### *Blessing of the Animals*

October 2, 2022  
2-4 PM

### *Lebanon Township Community Day*

September 24th  
from 1- 6 pm

Wear your SRLC shirt  
& join the fun!

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### *JINGLE BELL JUNCTION*



*November 19, 2022  
9 AM - 3 PM*

*Shop Wonderful Crafts!  
Come for Delicious Food!*

## *A Re-Constitutional Convention*

We recently received an update from the Bishop about the goings on at Churchwide Assembly (CWA) this year. A lot happened in that multi-day meeting in Columbus Ohio, but one of the things that the Bishop wrote about has caught my imagination: "The commission will report to the 2025 CWA with the potential for a reconstituting convention to be called. It has been 35 years since the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America began so it seems time to examine whether what served us well then still holds. I'm excited to participate in this work, especially since change is one our synod's core values."

In Aristotelian ethics there are three things a person or organization needs before doing something: Glasses, a Tool Belt, and a Map. You need Glasses to see the situation you are in. You need the Tool Belt to do the actual work—the types of tools you have limit the actions at your disposal. You need a Map to know where you are going, what you hope to accomplish with your action.

From what I've seen of the ELCA it feels like we've dealt with the Glasses and Map questions. For example, back in 2009 the ELCA did a big self-assessment eventually called "The LIFT document" (Living into the Future Together) and the current Presiding Bishop defined who we are this way: "We are church, we are Lutheran, we are church together, and we are church for the sake of the world." For that matter, our current goal as a denomination is to: "contact a million new people and introduce them to the ELCA as a community of Jesus."

What we've not dealt with, is restocking our tool belt. By that I mean the ELCA's constitution, how we define the rules of the game. The ELCA was formed by a merger of three different forms of Lutheranism, and where there were disagreements we often papered over them, were a little vague, allowed for regional variety, and said, "we'll define that more clearly when we've lived into this arrangement." Well, we've now lived into this arrangement for 35 years, and it might be time to intentionally go through that tool belt: your beloved trusty hammer that you got from your great grandfather—maybe it is time to hang it up on the mantel and replace it with the other one that has less sentimental value and you'll actually use with full force, clean the rust off the screw driver and WD40 the wrench, and buy a whole new tape measure—they have some with lasers now!

As I said, the prospect of a reconstitution convention has caught my imagination. Imagine the ELCA as a confident and self-aware church, newly equipped for the opportunities of 2025, empowering each and every congregation to reach 112 people in our local communities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

nice words about Jesus and swoop out, but to consistently be salt and light for our neighbor. Be Christian in such a way that our neighbors know we're safe and good people to turn to when the Holy Spirit moves them to ask God questions and seek the one who has saved us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Stewardship:**

Stewardship can be an awkward subject, and some of that has to do with two competing impulses when the church talks about it. On one hand, part of my job as Pastor is to help you all be generous people, because God has first been generous to you. On the other hand, I need to keep the Churches doors open by meeting our budget. These aren't mutually exclusive things, but the waters can easily get muddled. So, let's talk about both.

It takes approximately \$220,000 a year to run our congregation. Most of that money comes from our offering. So, part of cultivating generosity is encouraging giving to the congregation. My own household will give Spruce Run approximately 11% of our yearly income. Ten percent of a person's income given as a religious offering is in biblical terms, a tithe, which is what the ELCA requires of their ordained leaders. This year Lisa and I gave that extra bit in order to put our money where our mouth is regarding the 110% challenge—as a rule, I'll never ask anything of any of you that I myself won't do. When you have a moment, think through how much you will be giving in offering this year, what percentage of your household income is it?

Consider, in the coming year, if you would be able to increase that giving by a percentage point.

One of our five focuses for the year is "Holistic Stewardship" which was my, perhaps overly complicated, way of saying that stewardship is about our whole life, not just money given to church. Christians are to be generous people; we are to be generous with our time, talents, and possessions. We ought to reflect on how we are stewards of all those things. For example, if there was a 25<sup>th</sup> hour added in the day, how would you use it? Does your Christian faith shape your answer? It should!

### **Fellowship:**

A group of us got together for our game night last week. For two hours or so we spent time together, playing games (everything from Sequence and Scrabble to Hogger Logger and Calico—) casually chatting and generally having a good time. The funny thing is, we were doing more than just having a good time, we were creating social capital—the networks of relationships needed for organizations, and society at large, to function effectively. We grew trust there, together, that night.

Trust is a precious commodity these days. We live in a distrustful world, the chasms between people widening on account of modern tribalism and political polarization, not to mention that so much of life is mediated by the semi-anonymous medium of screens. The church offers a different vision. At that

game night, or look around at any coffee hour, and you'll see the same thing, you'll find people crossing generational, economic, and partisan boundaries!

In addition to the benefits the secular world can see when it looks at the social capital that Christian fellowship creates, there is also a spiritual dimension worth stating. We encounter the Body of Christ when we gather together. We become the Body of Christ in these encounters. As much as our individualistic society might tell us the Gospel is a "me and Jesus" transaction, it is so much more than that. The Gospel is the whole world being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, and the main place we know we'll see this is in the face of our fellow Christians gathered together.

In Christ's Peace,

Pastor Chris





# JOIN US FOR FALL GNOME MAKING NIGHT & FELLOWSHIP

Spruce Run Lutheran Church 442 W. Hill Road, Glen Gardner, NJ

▶▶ OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 @ 6:30PM



Bring an appetizer  
to share!

Gnome w/pumpkin \$30pp and Black Cat w/pumpkin \$20pp

Sign up sheet in the lounge.

Any questions reach out to Sara Armbrrecht or Danielle Beyers

[George.armbrecht@verizon.net](mailto:George.armbrecht@verizon.net) or [Danibeyers31@gmail.com](mailto:Danibeyers31@gmail.com)

# *Fellowship Fun*



## BACKYARD GAMES





# BOARD GAME NIGHT



# 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)

*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”*

Galatians 6:9

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