

Pastor Carl's Castings



Those childhood vacation trips still are some of the most precious memories. As kids we got ready with excitement for the adventure, as if the work was play. Sure, we had some changes to learn to deal with like how to live somewhere other than home for a while, how to act in a restaurant when we have been cooped up driving for awhile. Maybe you have similar memories, too?

Lent can be a lot like going on a vacation. It is meant to be a journey out from the usual, so that we can remember and prepare to celebrate on Easter how our Baptism was God's lifesaving beginning to our life together anew.



To help the journey be as blessed as possible, Lent has some suggested routines to add to our living with Christ: regular Bible reading and prayer, being regular at worship, etc.; in this family of Christ, taking time to give financially and/or time to an additional ministry(ies) not as self denial but as a joyful expression of faith. Some people will deny themselves as a form of fasting, seeking some sharpening of our awareness of God's presence in the everyday.

My prayer is that you and I will spend these days of preparation for our Lenten journey prayerfully asking God to guide us into trying something that we can add to our Lenten lifestyle that will support our faith's journey.



During Lent we celebrate how our faith partnerships enrich our lives. We will share Mid-week Lenten soup suppers and services, all at Trinity Church. On Ash Wednesday we host Trinity Lutheran Church to worship here as God hosts us to the Supper and the mysteries of Lent's beginning our journey in faith for 40 days. Pastor Keith Rohrbach (on our behalf, in turn) will lead the Lutheran Centre's spring break mission trip.

As we enter Lent, Ash Wednesday reminds us that without God's baptismal grace giving us new life, we were dying. But now we LIVE! Thanks be to God!



Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Carl Wenzel

A PASTORAL NOTE

Please call the church office or Pastor Wenzel if you would like to schedule a home visit or receive communion at home. If you need to contact him in the event of an emergency, Pastor Wenzel's cell phone number is 610-223-6555, (please note: he will not be able to answer the cell phone when visiting in the hospital).

What is: Theology With A Twist?

Hot topics, refreshing conversation with friends old and new.

**Kutztown Tavern, 272 W. Main St., Kutztown
March 22, 2011**

Dr. Francis Salerno - "A Glimpse Into the Face of the Sun:
Lessons Learned from the Greatest Transitions in Life"



Make a PERSONAL PLEDGE for Lent

“Don’t give up something, Do something!”

Jesus said, “love your neighbor as I have loved you”

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 9th. Forty days of thinking about what we have done to follow Jesus and what we have left UNDONE!

Witness Team would like you to think about adding some type of Ministry, Witness or Action to your life and worship time.

Usually we are encouraged to “GIVE SOMETHING UP” for Lent. Desserts, chocolates, smoking, etc. are just a few choices. That is nice, but how is “No Desserts” following Jesus or loving your neighbor? Your chocolate habit usually only affects you and your waistline.

The skit presented on Sunday, February 20th, “Make a Personal Pledge”, was to encourage you to choose a Mission, such as **“Reading the Bible”** and **“Praying daily”** – or **Build or help Repair a house for “Habitat for Humanity”** – **“Volunteer at Friend, Inc.”** – **“Donate Food for the Needy”** – **“Work on the Potato Project”** – **“Sing in the Choir”** – or join or create a **“Bible Study”** with your friends. St. John’s Bible Study meets each Thursday @ 9:30 Am with Pastor Carl. (No prior experience necessary). **“Visit the Sick and Lonely”** – **“See Jesus in All You Meet”** .

There are so many opportunities in the wider world or in our local community.

Witness Team made “Fortune Cookies” on Skit Sunday, February 20th. These were simple reminders that your future and your fortune lies with the Son of God, Jesus Christ who said, “Follow Me!”

Take the challenge! Pledge your heart and mind and soul to loving as Jesus loved.

DON'T GIVE UP SOMETHING, DO SOMETHING!

WITNESS TEAM LENT 2011 AND THE FUTURE AND FORTUNE OF ST. JOHN'S

P.S.

More information on these and other opportunities each Sunday in Lent.

Mid-Week Lent 2011

Once again the Congregations of Beckers St. Peter's; Trinity; St. John's and Zion Moselem will gather together for a Midweek Lenten focus. This Year the gatherings except for Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday will take place at:

Trinity Kutztown 357 W. Main Street.

Wednesday Mid-Week Schedule beginning March 16th

6:00 – 6:45 PM - *A Simple Meal of Soup & Bread*

6:45 – 7:15 PM - *Holden Evening Prayer Service & Lenten focus series Justice for the Poor*

7:15 – 7:45 PM - *Conversation surrounding the evening focus*

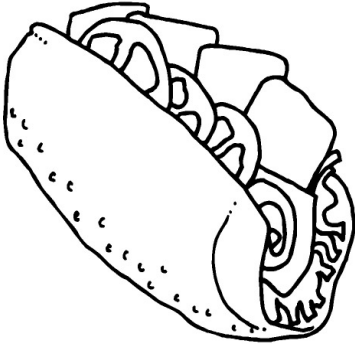
CHECK OUT THE NEW SHOWCASE IN THE OVERFLOW AREA

It is a collection of pictures of Rev. Jacob Bittner, honoring him for a lifetime of dedicated service to St. John's Lutheran Church. Hopefully, the showcase will bring back many memories of his years with us, or, if you never knew him, it will introduce you to a former pastor who gave so much to the people of St. John's over his more than 40 years here.



Recruitment is now underway for adult and youth volunteers to lead **Camp Noah**, a VBS type program for children who have experienced disaster. Programs are held at host sites in impacted areas. Lutheran Congregational Services, which coordinates the volunteers from our synod, announces that teams are now forming to serve the weeks of **July 16-23** and/or **August 13-20**. While the destinations are as yet undetermined, applications for volunteers can be found at www.lutherancongregationservices.org and are due April 15. Donations also needed to help “float the boat” (i.e. provide transportation to the host sites.) Initial training will take place April 30. Contact Ruth Doty, 484.553.1162 or ruth@lutherancongregationservices.org for more information.

In addition to the above effort, in response to the recent explosion in Allentown, Lutheran Congregational Services is *also* exploring the possibilities of offering Camp Noah in the local area.



St. John's HOAGIE SALE #2

Will be held on Thursday, March 24

Order Deadline is Sun., March 20

Proceeds will benefit Habitat for Humanity

**There is a sign-up sheet for volunteers
to help make hoagies in the back of the church.**

**There is an order sheet included in this
Spire to be dropped off at the church office.**

**If you have any questions,
call Bill Jones at 610-683-7752.**



Lenten Angel Basket

A basket will be placed in the coat area on Sunday, March 6th.
Some items needed are:

Toiletries, razors, children's shampoo, toothbrushes, diapers (all sizes), paper towels, bath tissue, socks (all sizes), and baby formula.

— *Service Team*

12 hours of Prayer for the World

Maidencreek Church 261 Main St will hold 12 hours of Prayer for the World on Friday March 4. From 6AM to 6PM we will have at least one person in the sanctuary praying for the world. If you live close by and would like to participate please call the church office. Those who cannot join us in person can join us in prayer.

Disaster Ministry and Preparedness

The Interfaith Partners for Disaster Response in Eastern Pennsylvania will hold a Disaster Ministry and Preparedness 101 event on Saturday, March 12, at Stroudsburg United Methodist Church, 547 Main Street, Stroudsburg, 18360 from 9-3. Any person or group interested in learning more about the many faces of disaster ministry is invited to attend.

Further information and registration forms are available at www.lutherancongregationalervices.org, by contacting ruth@lutherancongregationalervices.org. or by calling Lutheran Congregational Services, 610.770.9205.



In Memory of Richard Steigerwalt

Lucille Bisbing and family
Clifford and Geraldine Dettra
Joan Gordon
Dale and Betty Millham
Gail Pollock
Frederick and Martha Rummel
George and Shirley Tkach
Stephen and Helen Tkach
James and Shirley Wentz

HOSPITALIZED

Here are the appropriate codes assigned to us by the respective hospitals in Allentown and Reading. Lehigh Valley Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital – 282; Reading Hospital – 512; St. Joseph's Hospital – LU 60. You can use these codes if you are undergoing elective surgery or you can call the chaplain's office at each hospital and ask them to list you under our congregation's code for that institution.

St. John's SCS Bids Farewell to Mrs. Kim Herber

Kim Herber, a lifelong member of St. John's Lutheran Church and a Sunday school teacher for 30 years, will leave the SCS teaching team as of March 2011. Kim and her husband, Brian, are relocating two and half-hours away from the Kutztown area and we could not convince Kim that a two and half-hour commute each Sunday morning was just a short drive.

Teaching the Word of God is a wonderful way of sharing faith and being a witness for God. We are thankful that Kim was inspired to share her faith through teaching in the St. John's Sunday school program. The St. John's Congregation and the SCS team thank Kim for the 30 years of dedicated service, and wish Kim and Brian all the best in this new phase of their life. May God bless you and keep you.

Diane Fenstermacher
SCS Superintendent



Thank you to everyone who purchased soup at the Souper Bowl Sale. We raised \$471 from sale of soup and donations. Expenses were \$54, leaving a total of \$417. You folks are the greatest!

Special Thanks to the Quilters!

We would like to thank St. John's Quilters who donated \$1,000.00 of their proceeds to help cover heating expenses.

Applying Bible Principles

Under the Old Testament economy, people were required to give to God because this was also the means of providing the government. A theocracy was in place then, which meant that government was actually operating under the direct authority and leadership of God Himself.

Today, we are under a different economy. However, we are still required to support the government. We may not like the way government operates. We may not agree with the policies of our governmental leaders. We may not even like the political process or the individuals involved in it.

But God says that is not the issue. The issue is one of obedience. He says we are to pay our taxes to whom “taxes are due” (Romans 13:7). In spite of all the ills of government, God says that governmental agencies and government leaders are His “servants” and that they operate for our ultimate “good.”

So the question is not whether we agree with or even support the work and activities of our governments at the local, state and national levels. The question is one of whether or not we will obey God. You see, it’s relatively easy to sing, “Oh, How I Love Jesus.” It’s far more difficult to demonstrate our love for Him by yielding to Him in full and complete obedience, especially when His commands are ones we do not care for — like paying our taxes.

If He is in charge, if He is Lord of our lives, then we will do what He tells us to do. As the little chorus states it so clearly, “I’ll say, ‘Yes,’ Lord, ‘Yes,’ to Your will and to Your way; ‘Yes,’ Lord, ‘Yes,’ I will trust You and obey.” Even when it comes to paying my taxes? Even when it comes to paying my taxes! “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21).

Stewardship Committee



Day Care Highlights

♥♥♥♥♥ We love St. John's! ♥♥♥♥♥

We spent February learning how to show others how to take care of our teeth, and about Dinosaurs.

In the spirit of warmer weather approaching, we ended the month with a unit on Hawaii!

The children enjoyed their field trip to the Kutztown Post Office. It was neat to see what happens behind the scenes.

We were once again excited to have a visit by Pastor Wenzel.

As always, Dr. Messersmith's office visited us and showed us fun ways to take care of our teeth.

We are hoping our unit on Hawaii will bring on the warmer weather – our staff and children here at Daycare cannot wait for the snow to melt so that we are able to run on our playground!

We wish you all the best of luck this March!

- *St. John's Daycare*

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather please check WFMZ TV or online, or on WLEV or WEEU radio stations.



News from Christian Education Director

SCS Teaching Opportunity for Upper-Elementary Grades

St. John's Sunday Church School is looking for adults interested in teaching upper-elementary grade Sunday school students.

Teaching is a great way to get to know the youth of our Congregation, share the wonder of Jesus, and as His disciples, to live and grow our faith. If you want to participate in this teaching opportunity, contact Diane Fenstermacher at 610-682-0013, by e-mail diane_fenstermacher@yahoo.com, or contact the church office at 610-683-3140.

SCS Christmas Program – Thank You

Thank you to all the individuals who made the SCS Christmas Program and dinner a success. The students especially enjoyed they support of their parents, families, teachers and church members who attended the program. We are blessed with many talented individuals, who created costumes and the set, provided music, created bulletin artwork, managed audio/visual equipment and prepared a wonderful dinner.

NURSERY HELPERS NEEDED

St. John's Nursery (10:30 AM) is in need of more adult helpers. There will be a sign up sheet in the nursery for those interested in helping, or call the church office at 610-683-3140.



Next Meeting March 10th, 2011

**“What are they doing at the
“Build Your Church” session?”**

Speaker: Doreen Boyer

**7 PM Fellowship prior to 7:30 PM Meeting
In the Fellowship Hall**

Redner’s Save-A-Tape Program

St. John’s participates in the Redner’s Save-A-Tape Program. By collecting receipts and sending them to Redner’s Corporate office, we can earn 1% of the totals. Each person should stop by the store office or Customer Service area to get a Save-A-Tape card. Each time you shop at Redner’s with your card, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape receipt. Please place receipts in the box in the coat area. We appreciate the funds raised through your efforts in saving your Redner’s receipts!



**St. John’s Bible Study group meets
Thursdays at 9:30 AM
in the Council Room**

We're always looking for new people to join us, so as your schedule allows consider meeting us as we study God's Good Word, fellowship, and pray together.

Thank You!



Dear Members of St. John's,

Thanks be to God for His many blessings as he gently guided Perma Dreibelbis down the long passage toward improving health.

Thanks for our family members, the church family, and neighbors and friends. You have been so generous, self-giving and compassionate with cards, food, transportation and help.

May God richly bless each of you.

John and Perma Dreibelbis

Dear St. John's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for the lovely altar flowers which Anna Herman delivered to me on February 6th. They certainly brightened up my day. Thanks also to the Women of the ELCA for the goodie bag you delivered to me for Valentine's Day. It was greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,
Mrs. Joan Hill

Dear Members of St. John's,

St. John's Women of the ELCA wishes to thank all members of the congregation who donated money to help us fill our Valentine Gift Bags. All expenses were covered by donations. We filled 23 bags. Each bag contained at least 16 snack items and several small crafts. Personalized Valentines were made by Mary Beck. Candy was made and donated by Mary Beck and her granddaughter Brittany. We also wish to thank the members who helped us deliver the bags. We were very grateful for the help.

Our heartfelt thanks,
St. John's Women of the ELCA

March Sponsorships

The following people are scheduled to sponsor bulletins, candles and flowers during March:

BULLETINS

- 3-6 Mary Krumanocker
- 3-13 Victoria, Caroline, and Diane Fenstermacher
- 3-20 Amy, Sarah, Becca and Connor Koenig
- 3-27 Diane Haring

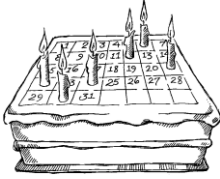
CANDLES

- 3-6 Karen Hartman
- 3-13 Don Boyer
- 3-20 Brian and Kimberly Miller
- 3-27 Shannon Sanders

FLOWERS

- 3-6 Joyce Leibensperger
- 3-13 Carol Diehl
- 3-20 Sue Teti
- 3-27 Steigerwalt family

Please complete the sponsorship form and submit it along with your payment to the office at least one week before the date of your sponsorship. To ensure proper credit on your giving statement, please submit a form to the office.



March Birthdays

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|----------------|---|----------------|---|
| Mar. 1 | Matthew Lindenmuth | Mar. 17 | Timothy Fenstermacher
Brent Koller
Carol Sechler |
| Mar. 3 | Brian Fox
Kenneth Herman
Douglas Mertz | Mar. 18 | Emily Miller
Myrtle Reber |
| Mar. 4 | Alyson Coburn
Warren Wessner | Mar. 20 | Beulah Miller
Janelle Spohn |
| Mar. 5 | Ryan Herb
Owen Tomasi | Mar. 21 | Nicholas Barrell |
| Mar. 6 | Donald Bieber | Mar. 23 | Darlene Seyler
Kimberly Warshel |
| Mar. 7 | Kyle Crespo | Mar. 24 | Linda Delp
Erin Smith |
| Mar. 8 | Lisa Savage | Mar. 25 | Catherine Kramer
Katie Miller |
| Mar. 9 | Annabell Clauss | Mar. 26 | Timothy Biltcliff
Carl Wenzel
Eryn Ziegler |
| Mar. 10 | Mary Beck
Nicholas Hill
Kristin Hartman | Mar. 28 | Steven Moyer |
| Mar. 13 | Kimberly Davis | Mar. 30 | Clifford Hilberg
Elizabeth Mertz
Karla Rosenbusch |
| Mar. 14 | Ronald Struble | | |
| Mar. 15 | Jeanette Tomasi | | |
| Mar. 16 | Sarah Koenig
Nicholas Mills | | |

If you notice that your birthday or the birthday of someone you know is not listed among those in The Spire, which means that the birthday information is not entered in the church's computer. Please contact the church office and let us know of anyone missing from the birthday list. We want everyone to be included.