



St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Reverend Daniel Warntz

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From the Pastor's Desk.

"I have seen the Lord" – John 20:18. With these few words, the One Holy catholic and Apostolic church was born. From the witness of one lowly woman spoken to a room full of scared, frightened men, her announcement must have been seen as a terrible joke. How could she have the decency to come bursting into their hiding place, and they were in hiding for fear of being arrested for associating with Jesus, the now executed political traitor to Rome. They were afraid for their very lives and did not want anyone to know where they were, or that they even knew this Jesus. How far had these disciples come from the days when they proclaimed their loyalty to Him when they all said that they would gladly follow him, even if it meant dying for him- see Matt. 26:35. Now they are holed up in secret and not even wanting to show their faces in public.

Yet, how did this band of common, everyday people become the catalyst for the formation of a movement which will alter and overtake the pages of history for the next 2,000 years? What finally brought them out of that locked upper room and into the daylight of the world around them, to push them into proclaiming the same words that Mary Magdalene spoke to them? As Luther would write in 1529 in his Large Catechism on the Third Article of the Apostle's Creed: **"But if the work remained concealed so that no one knew of it, then it would be in vain and lost. That this treasure, therefore, might not lie buried, but be appropriated and enjoyed, God has caused the Word to go forth and be proclaimed, in which He gives the Holy Ghost to bring this treasure home and appropriate it to us. Therefore, sanctifying is nothing else than bringing us to Christ to receive this good, to which we could not attain of ourselves.**

In other words, this living and active Word of God that Mary proclaimed to the disciples, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and it propelled the other disciples into action. Later that night, we read in John 20, that Jesus came and stood among them in the upper room. He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Ghost...". It is by the Holy Ghost that we are empowered to go out into the world to spread the Word of God. By our own actions and abilities, we can accomplish nothing, but with the Holy Ghost, paired with the Word of God, we can declare the forgiveness of sin, salvation and eternal life to those who are willing to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Ghost which draws all people to Christ, but we must proclaim the Word first so that it can be heard. And not only that, but we must also live out the Word of God in our lives. This was a big part of Bonhoeffer's book, "Discipleship", that he makes this very point about living out the Christian faith.

Discipleship was written in 1937, and the main focus is how the church of that day, and even the church now, has strayed from its beginnings. Bonhoeffer said that as the church became more widespread, it became "secularized" by the state, and grace became cheap. He defined cheap grace as – **"Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without**

personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ." Bonhoeffer said that the church needs to return to "costly grace" which is suffering along with Jesus Christ, to serve one another as Christ has served us and as he says; **"Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively doing God's will."** So, as Mary Magalene bravely burst forth into the room of the disciples with her Spirit-filled message of Resurrection, so we too, as Christians today, need to proclaim our message of the Gospel with boldness, not worrying about whether if society likes to hear it or not, but through the Holy Ghost, to proclaim God's Word and to live out God's Word in a world that needs no more cheap grace, but to live by the costly grace of God. Happy Easter to everyone and may you be filled with the power and the love of the Holy Ghost! Amen.

Pastor Dan.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

The Grief Support Group will meet **on Wednesday, April 16th at 7:00 PM**. Anyone who has experienced grief due to the recent or past death of a loved one is welcome to attend. This is an informal group whose purpose is to talk about any issues group members may be experiencing related to loss. Refreshments will be served.

BLOOD DRIVE

Our next scheduled blood drive will be on **Tuesday, April 22nd from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM**.

BELL / VOCAL CHOIRS

On **Thursday evenings**, Bell Choir will meet at **6:00 PM** with Vocal Choir meeting afterwards at **7:00 PM**. We can always use new members to one or both choirs. We are not professionals, just like-minded people who love music and being involved in a group.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will meet at 1:00 PM on Thursdays, followed by a study on Dietrich Bonhoeffer at 2:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.

FELLOWSHIP & EVANGELISM NEWS

CANNED GOODS COLLECTION

The first Sunday of each month has been designated as "Fill the Shelves" Sunday. St. John's will continue to collect canned goods and non-perishable items for Columbia County Volunteers in Medicine. Your generosity is supporting a vital and much appreciated ministry in our community. You can place your items in the collection bags at any of the church entrances. ~ Thank You!

*(Please remember to check the expiration dates on your donations)

THE WELCOME TABLE

Welcome Table is a place where someone can get a free meal without judgment or discrimination. It relies solely on the generosity and donations of other's and volunteers. In February we served 108 meals and in March we served 106. Upcoming meals will be held on **April 12th and May 10th - 10:30am – Noon. THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH** for your dedication and support to this ministry! Sign-up sheets are in the rear of the sanctuary, or you can call Lydia to volunteer. Please Note: For now, drop off times for donations will be on **Thursday's from 5:30 – 6:30 before the day of the meal and Saturday, the morning of, at 9:00 am. (unless otherwise announced)**

GATHERING TIME

Gathering time has been very enjoyable. We got to meet some new friends and catch up with our old friends! We are looking forward to our next Gathering time on **April 13th and May 11th (Mother's Day) following worship**. There will be light refreshments

If you would like to volunteer to bring a light snack (cookies, donuts, cake) please give the office or Lydia Ferro a call and she'll sign you up! Looking forward to seeing you!

LENTEN MEAGER MEALS

Our final Lenten Meal will take place on **April 6th, at Faith United in Nescopeck** with a meager meal beginning at 6:00 PM. Sign up sheets can be found on the table in the sanctuary.

HOAGIE SALE RESULTS

Our thanks to everyone that supported our recent hoagie sale by purchasing hoagies, giving donations, and volunteering to help make 190 hoagies! With everyone's help we raised \$1353.00 for our church. 10% of the proceeds was sent to the American Red Cross.

Thank you, and God bless
Mark, Barbara and Nancy.

W.E.L.C.A. DONATIONS NEEDED

It can be a Challenge for women and girls to have access to menstrual supplies. Sponsored by the USSWO we are taking donations to make period packs. Please bring Regular Tampons, Super absorbency Tampons or 12 pads (unscented Long super ultra-thin pads). We will also accept monetary donations to purchase the supplies listed. There will be a box provided at the back of the church. Deadline to drop off will be July 6.

EDUCATION

As we are going through Lent we will be discussing the meaning of Easter with crafts, stories, snacks, and Games. In anticipation of our Easter Egg Hunt. Please join us outside or if weather is an issue we will be having our hunt in the basement.

We are looking forward to another Bible School Week June 16th – 19th. Our theme is
At the Table. The time will be 6:00 – 7:30 pm.

CHICKEN AND WAFFLE

Thank you to all who helped in any way for our dinner. We sold a record number of meals – 317. St. John's Profit was \$2,968.67 and our mission "Agape" will receive \$329.85. Our church family is always there and comes together for this Meal. Your support is amazing. May God Bless you all.

5K RACE

This year's mission for the 5K Race is Not Bread Alone a food giveaway in Berwick. We will be holding our race on May 31, 2025. You can register at runsignup.com, neparunner.com or there will be entry forms at the back table in the church. This is our 9th year and we are hoping for a great turnout. We will be looking for some sponsors, if you want to help with that see Diane Young.

To Pastor Warntz and
The Congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church,

I would like to thank each of you for your encouragement and extreme kindness to me on Sunday as I made my debut before an unfamiliar congregation in an unfamiliar church setting. I know I stumbled at times along the way, and I do appreciate your patience with me.

However, leading your worship service gave me the opportunity to receive needed experience, for which I am extremely grateful prior to completing the Authorized Lay Worship Leader Program.

I hope to grow less disorganized and more confident with each opportunity I am given the privilege to stand before the congregation.

I am also thankful to Pastor Warntz for stepping in at this late date as my Pastor mentor after Pastor Troy left Good Shepherd. He has tried to make the transition as least stressful as possible for me.

Again, I thank you for being so kind and helpful to me on Sunday. And now I share what I completely forgot to share with you all yesterday following the Message...

May the Peace of the Lord go with each of you always,

Amber

EVENTS FOR APRIL and MAY 2025

1. April 6th – Lenten Soup/Sandwich – Faith United at 6:00 pm
2. April 13th – Palm Sunday
3. April 17th – Maundy Thursday – FUEL 7:00 pm
4. April 18th – Good Friday – FUEL 12:00 pm- St. John's 7:00 pm
5. April 20th – Easter Morning - St. John's 9:00 am- FUEL 10:45 am

Easter egg hunt at St. John's following worship service.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Marlene Hower 2
Emily Lanning 11
Clay Shotwell 11
Raychel Mausteller 16
Latia Leiby 23
Latisha Cragle 25
Doris Knittle

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Ronald Utt 2
Kayla Hendricks 3
Dawn Massina 4
Jake Shotwell 5
Ashley Zajac 5
Sandra Musselman 9
Dan Comstock 11
Tyler Johnson 11
Ryan Young 13
Lauren Hendricks 15
Meredith Waldron 21

RAISE RIGHT!

St. John's is joining thousands of other churches and organizations who fundraise easily for themselves by simply asking people to do what they already do every day. Shop!! Simply buy a gift card (examples, Giant Foods, Amazon, Home Depot, Visa, etc.) You pay only the face value of these cards, but St. John's will be rewarded. If you would like to order, see Tenette our Project Co-Ordinator, or Alison and Carolyn who will assist her. Order forms can be found on the rear table of the sanctuary. We will be ordering once a month for now, but may change to twice a month closer to Christmas. We accept cash or checks made payable to St. John's. Please place in an envelope with your order form. Our next order will be submitted April 21st. Please have it ready by Sunday, April 20th.

TURN SHOPPING INTO EARNING



EARN
\$1,000+
per year

Experience the right way to fundraise

Gift card fundraising is the best way to raise money. Buy gift cards from your favorite brands to earn on your daily purchases. It's never been easier to create opportunities for what matters most to you. No extra money spent. No extra time wasted.

How it works



You buy a gift card
You get the full value.



The brand gives back
No extra money comes
out of your pocket.



Your organization earns
Impacting what
matters most to you.

John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
PO Box B
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St. John's Mission Statement

*"We the people of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church,
celebrate God with us as we worship, learn, grow and serve."*

Upcoming Events:

Worship

APRIL / MAY 2025 - 9:00 am

Palm Sunday

Maundy Thursday

Good Friday

Easter Sunday

Easter Egg Hunt

