

May/June  
2023

**ST. JOHN'S  
CONGREGATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP**

Rev. Don Reidell  
*president*

CJ Ullrich  
*vice president | personnel*

Lee Dryden  
*secretary | mutual ministry*

Ellen Pancoe  
*treasurer*

Ginny Hohl  
*financial secretary*

Rick Bosch  
*building & grounds*

Lisa Leach  
*fellowship*

Candy Scorsone  
*worship & music*

Shirleen Besch  
*social ministry*

Brian Hirschev  
*finance*

# The Eagle

## THE PASTOR'S NOTE...

They saw themselves.

When the pagan Persian army captured the Holy Land in 614 CE, they did what captors have done for the last 4,000+ years... they demolished the holy places. Church after church was destroyed. Christian holy places were replaced with new temples for new gods. When they arrived at the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, they were ready to raze.

With torches presumably in hand, the Persian army entered the church. At this point, there was a rhythm to their devastation – enter, plunder, destroy, rebuild, rededicate, repeat. And yet something happened when they entered that church. They were thrown off beat and to this day the mosaic floor of that original church can still be seen (dating back to the 4th century). While they tore down every single church in the Holy Land, they did not tear down these walls. They did not desecrate the altar. They did not burn it down. Instead, they left it standing...

because they saw themselves.

When the Persian army entered the Basilica of the Nativity (a church that commemorates the birth of Christ), they looked around and noticed the art on the walls. And so, they saw the wisemen, the magi from the east (Persia), on a mosaic and they recognized themselves in the art. They saw their own clothing, likeness, and appearance. This was all it took to spare the building. This was all it took for them to put down their torches.

Too often I fear as we look around that we do not see ourselves but rather see the “other.” We notice the differences and what sets us apart. We see strangers and sometimes enemies or threats. I wonder what might change if we began to see ourselves in the people we encounter instead of someone else. I wonder if we, like the Persian army, might be moved by that realization. I wonder if it might lead to peace.

We have entered an election season where many of the powers-that-be will daily remind us of our differences. For the next year and a half, we will be pushed into corners, set on opposite sides, and convinced that the people on the other side of the room are “dangerous.” There will be vilification and defamation. It will hardly feel at times like we live in the *United States*.

Beyond politics we know this same pattern repeats itself in countless other ways. In the world, at work, and even at times at church, we find ourselves sizing one another up – noticing in what ways we are different, noticing in what ways the other seems strange. Left unchecked this pattern leads to division and distrust, and eventually to witch hunts and destruction.

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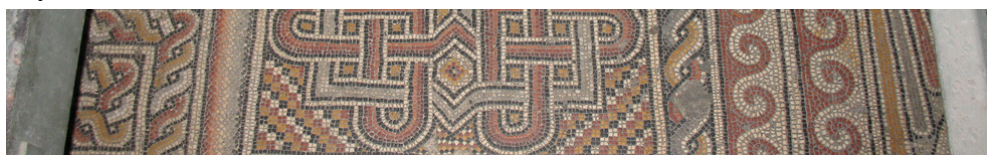
In scripture, St. Paul writes, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female for all are one in Jesus Christ." (Gal. 3:28) In short, what St. Paul was saying is: stop pointing out the differences, stop focusing on what sets you apart, stop dividing yourselves into groups and categories. Instead, see what you share. Remember all are one in Jesus Christ.

While these were instructions for the early Christian church, I believe they can also serve as wisdom for the entirety of humanity today. We are all children of God. We all bear the image and likeness of God. We are brothers and sisters. We are in this together. May we begin to see ourselves in each other. Let's put down the torches and share signs of peace.

In the Way,  
PSDH

upper right: Pastor Scott outside of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.  
lower right: A restored mosaic inside the Church of the Nativity.  
lower: original "constantinian" floor dating to 339 CE.

The Church of the Nativity is the oldest Christian Church in continuous daily use.



## Altar Flowers

This year we are reintroducing Altar Flowers to our worship. We encourage members to sponsor the altar flowers each week in honor, memory, or celebration of loved ones and events.

A sign-up sheet is posted in the narthex. Please place the short altar flower form in the offertory plate or return to the main office.

There are two arrangements and they cost \$30 each (\$60 total).

## youth updates

Confirmation Camp will be held at LCLC from July 9 - 14th. All confirmands are encouraged to attend.

Pastor Scott will be at LCLC that week.

First Bible will be held on May 21st.

## new members

New members will be received on Sunday, June 25th at 9:30AM during worship. An optional new member "class" will be held on Sunday, June 11th immediately following worship.

Please direct any questions or interest to Pastor Scott  
[pastorscott@sjlcamherst.com](mailto:pastorscott@sjlcamherst.com)

## Pastoral Acts

Brian & Lauren Rusin were married at St. John on March 25th.

Eleanor & Abigail Sova were baptized on March 19th.

Joshua Sova was baptized on April 1st.

Logan Walters was baptized on April 22nd.

Ashton Fink was baptized on April 29th.

On April 2nd, Sydney Menasco, Lillian Cox, Evelyn Ullrich, Declan Kruzynski, Zachary Mayer, & Timothy Lawniczak received their first communion.



# COUNCIL UPDATE - APRIL

There was no council meeting in March. In April the council met on the 18th at 7:00PM. The meeting began with scripture and prayer. The agenda was accepted and the February minutes were approved.

**Pastor Scott** reported on 3 baptisms, 6 first communions, 1 wedding, and a memorial service. Pastor thanked the council and congregation for their leadership and participation in the Lenten activities and worship. He also thanked the church for the support of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It was noted that we continue to have guests and visitors. Please be sure to greet guests and go out of your way to say hello to familiar and unfamiliar faces on Sunday mornings.

The committees offered the following reports:

**Social Ministry:** We are seeking monetary donations to build up our "Feeding Friends" fund. These monies are used to supply the monthly meal we serve at Friends of Night People.

**Fellowship:** The council spent some time considering fellowship and what next steps should be done. Lisa Leach is looking for volunteers to serve on the fellowship committee. Looking ahead there will be a coffee hour when we go to one service, a new member gathering, and a congregation-wide picnic this summer. Nametags will be produced for new members.

**Personnel:** Personnel reviews were completed. Elena has resigned. We will be posting the contemporary music director position.

**Worship & Music:** volunteer singers and musicians are leading music at the 8:30AM service. Cindy will cover hymns & various anthems. A motion was presented to go to ONE service at 9:30AM on Memorial Day weekend. It was approved. We will worship at 9:30AM from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

**Youth:** Confirmation Students are encouraged to attend camp at LCLC from July 9th-14th. Financial support will be provided.

**Building & Grounds:** Members continue to tackle ongoing maintenance and projects. Thanks to Paul Swanson for addressing the water damage in the Haller House basement.

**Cemetery:** The wrought iron fence has been repaired.

**Financial Report:** Our expenses exceed revenue by \$6,730.88 through the first quarter of the year. Weekly giving is under budget. Lent, loose plate, and building use are stronger than projected. Our savings and special accounts have roughly \$200,000.

The meeting concluded with no additional business. The council will meet again on May 16th. We adjourned and prayed the Lord's Prayer.

## Summer Services

Starting on  
Sunday, 28 May 2023  
St John will move to a  
single service at 9:30AM  
for the summer

**Womens Lunch Bunch will share a meal at  
D'Avolio's Restaurant 9570 Transit Rd.  
on May 18, 2023, at 11:30am**

**We will meet at church at 11:00am and carpool to the  
restaurant. The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex,  
please place a check after your  
name if you wish to carpool.**

**Call Donna Moore at 716-634-2179  
for more information**

# ELCA World Hunger Synodical Spring Appeal

## "BEE GENEROUS: PLANT SEEDS OF JUSTICE"



As we anticipate earth's greening after a long and bitter winter, and renewed by the promise of Lent and Easter, we are challenged this spring by our synod Hunger Justice Team to support ELCA World Hunger ministries that are seeking to make God's creation more sustainable and support families in need through the development of community gardens and bee colonies.

A basic community garden setup, which includes seeds, soil, tools and training, combined with the development of a honeybee colony, costs approximately \$220.00. Based on these figures, every congregation in our Synod is challenged to give \$440.00 to cover two gardens and bee colonies. A garden will help a family to be self-supporting; and the honeybees are not only providing honey to eat, but to make beeswax soap and candles which allow a family to start a small business.

The gift from St. John will be taken to Synod Assembly in June, where we will reflect on the theme of "Restorative Justice", based on Amos 5:26: "Let justice roll down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream".

St. John\* has been generous in this effort to create a more just world. Thank you and bless your generous hearts.

\* Please make checks out to St. John Lutheran Church.

Pastor Marsha Irmer,  
on behalf of the Hunger Justice Team.





Thank you for the **donation of \$1500.00** to support **GiGi's Playhouse Buffalo**. We are beyond grateful for your support. GiGi's Playhouse is the **ONLY** international network of Down Syndrome Achievement Centers created to provide **FREE** life-changing programs for all ages. Your support is an amazing gesture of compassion in helping our individuals achieve their greatest potential. Our "ABCs" start with achievement, belief and confidence!

**Again, Thank you for believing! We love your support!**

GiGi's Playhouse is a 502(c)(3) nonprofit organization funded solely by donations. Your gift is tax deductible using our FEIN # 84-1992875.

Best Regards,  
Will Mondschein  
Board President



**Thank You!**

We are **THRILLED** to have your support! your donation of **\$105.00 plus you in-kind donation of gift cards valued at \$350.00** is helping us to do amazing things here at **Family Promise of Western New York!**

As a small family homeless shelter every dollar you donate helps us to deliver safe and supportive shelter for the families in our care to quickly help them succeed.


Sincerely,  
Luanne Firestone  
Executive Director

*Dear Creative Ministry,  
Thank you for your beautiful contribution to our patients. Each pouch is appreciated and goes to a patient in preparation for surgery.  
Having comfort and style normalizes the process for many.  
Thank you again for your time and energy. Much love and many blessings to you.*

*Sincerely,  
Rachel Wallmeyer  
Breast cancer patient care navigator*

Dear Creative Ministry,  
Thank you so much for your thoughtful and useful donation of handmade knitted drain pouches. Patients are sometimes uncomfortable after surgery, and these will be a big help. Plus, they help people feel cared for.  
Thank you!

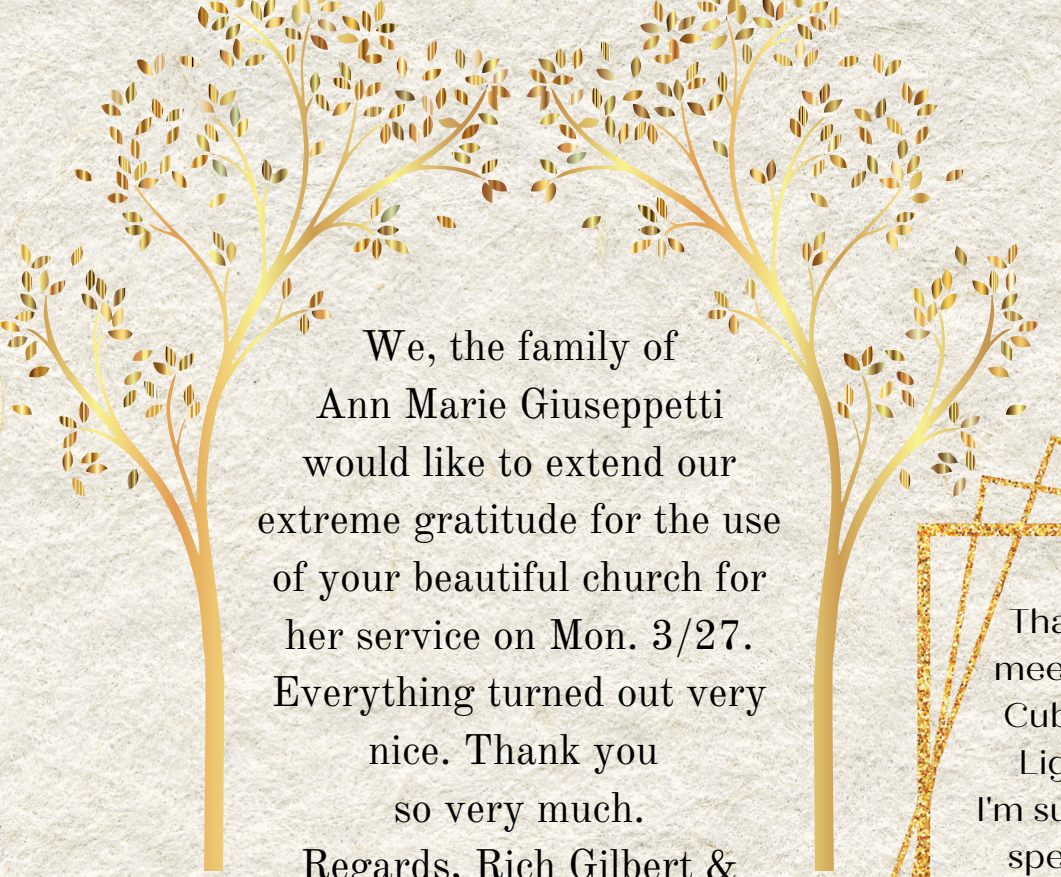
Day Power Play Resource Center  
Staff & Volunteers !







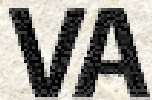
**Thank You!**



We, the family of  
Ann Marie Giuseppetti  
would like to extend our  
extreme gratitude for the use  
of your beautiful church for  
her service on Mon. 3/27.  
Everything turned out very  
nice. Thank you  
so very much.  
Regards, Rich Gilbert &  
Ann's siblings



Hello Pastor Scott,  
Thanks for taking the time to  
meet with the Scouts from my  
Cub Scout Pack 457 Arrow of  
Light Den on 19 April 2023.  
I'm sure the Scouts learned from  
speaking with you, and we all  
appreciate the work that you do  
for our community. Also, thanks  
for the tour of your church -  
the Scouts seemed to have fun  
exploring.  
Jim (pack 457)



**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Our Sincere appreciation goes out to the members of St. John Lutheran Church for the 65 -\$5.00 Tops gift cards valued at \$325.00.

Your thoughtful donation has enhanced the morale and well-being of our Veterans. We are indeed grateful for the unselfish support shown by you to help our hospitalized Veterans.

Please be assured of our heartfelt gratitude for your donation and we looks for your continued support to our Medical Center.

Thank you for your interest and support of our nation's Veterans,

Sincerely,  
Nicolas M. LaMarca





**First Communion**

**April 2, 2023**

**Lillian Gox**

**Keegan Kruszynski**

**William Lawniczak**

**Zachary Mayer**

**Sidney Menasco**

**Evelyn Ulrich**







**Wednesday Night  
Bible Study**





>>>>>  Lutheran Charities  
of Western New York Presents... <<<<<



@ SAHLEN FIELD

**FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND**

IT'S A FRIDAY NIGHT BASH!  
Resurgence Brewing Happy Hour @ 5pm  
Game Time @ 7:05 & Postgame Fireworks!

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**Game Tickets: \$15 each**

**Game Tickets w/ Discounted Concessions: \$23 each**  
(includes: hotdog & soda)

**REGISTER by MAY 30th**  
Online at [www.WNYLutheranCharities.org](http://www.WNYLutheranCharities.org)  
or Download a Mail-In Ticket Order Form



The Lutheran Choral  
Of the  
Niagara Frontier

Julia Anne Cordani, Director

For its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert  
Presents

*Worship Through the Ages*

*Featuring selections by*

*Schubert, Stanford, Dello Joio, Britten, Rutter,  
And more*

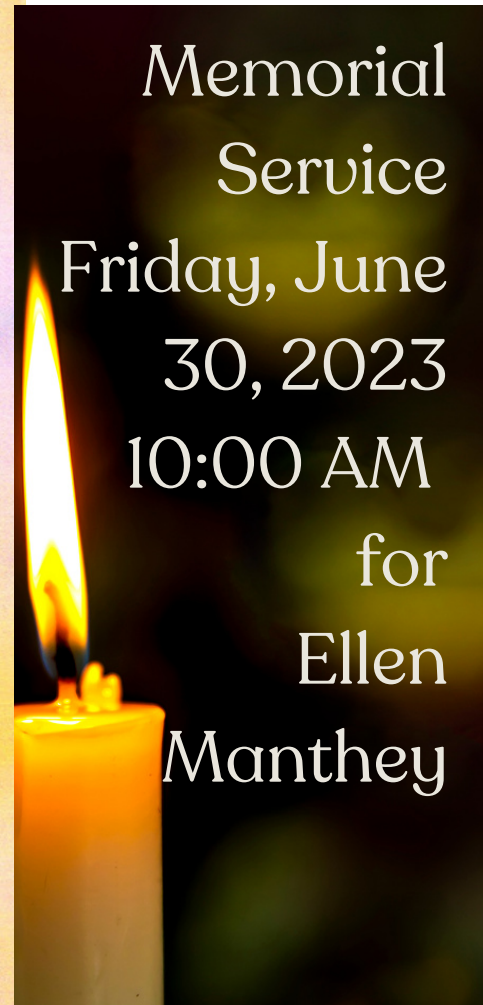
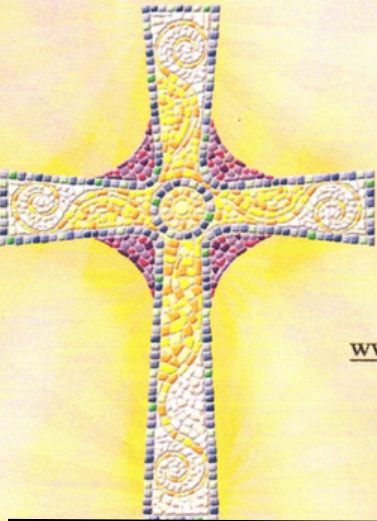
Saturday, May 6, 2023  
2:00 p.m.  
St. Luke Lutheran Church  
900 Maryvale Drive  
Cheektowaga, New York  
716-633-6752

Friday, May 12, 2023  
7:00 p.m.  
First Trinity Lutheran Church  
1570 Niagara Falls Blvd.  
Tonawanda, New York  
716-835-2220

Tickets: \$15 Adults  
\$10 Students  
12 & under free

Call 716-741-4573 for more information  
or visit our website:

[www.thelutheranchoraleoftheniagarafrontier.com](http://www.thelutheranchoraleoftheniagarafrontier.com)



Memorial  
Service  
Friday, June  
30, 2023  
10:00 AM  
for  
Ellen  
Manthey



New Member  
Reception  
on June 25th, 2023.

IRA Contributions

If you are 70.5 or older, you can make a donation to St. John directly from your IRA, called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), and reduce your future tax burden in the process! And if you are age 73 or older, IRA gifts can also help you fulfill your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for this year. The only stipulation is that the donation must come directly from your financial institution directly to St. John. Some members of the St. John are already contributing in this way. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ginny Hohl.



# ST. JOHN PRAYER LIST

Hospitalized and Homebound  
**Colleen Gunning, Ann Henry, Wayne Yendall**

Loss and Bereavement  
Pastor Hubert I Burkat, Pastor and Friend of Candice & James Pankow  
Rosemary Glavinic, sister-in-law of Kathy Wood

Healing, Comfort & Special Concerns  
**Rick Bosch, Bob Tiffany,**  
**Gayle Bosch, Jerry Szykowny, Jennifer Ekberg, Judy Yendall,**  
**John Sivak, Ethel Semrau, Millie Webb, Peggy Dryden**  
Lori DeNapoli, friend of Marsha Irmer  
Nan Bader, friend of Marsha Irmer  
Margaret Borger & Toni Spence, friends of Barb King & Jeane Delamere  
Jennifer Matajasik, friend of Lee Dryden  
Carol Dixon, sister of Joni Coté  
Pam Burns sister of Matt Coté  
Carol Allison, sister of Deni Krantz  
Peggy Warfield, friend of Marsha Irmer  
Alan Benjamin, cousin of Pam Figel  
Guy & Mary Wilcox, friends of Marsha Irmer  
Jen Diakun, daughter of Kate & Jim Olson  
Miriam Benson, friend of Kate & Jim Olson  
Paula Altieri, friend of Iris Reese  
Rev. Gene Ferguson, father of Lori Schonrank  
Mary Mussel, family of Susan Hadala  
Rick & Jan Vincent, sister of Deb Francis

For wise governing dealing with world tension, suffering, and war in Ukraine.

Healing, comfort and strength for those seeking refuge from climate change and natural disasters, especially those in Turkey and Syria.

For all suffering after mass shootings, especially our neighbors in East Buffalo.

Those victimized by any form of violence, racism, abuse, coercion, and addiction.

Military  
Matt Newman, Drew Steinhilber, John Wendelin, Nicholas Ford, Ben Hoyt

**Names will be kept on the prayer list for 4 weeks, if you need your loved one on the list longer please let the office know and we will be glad to keep them on.**



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## MAY

Christopher Stohl, 05/01  
William Westley, 05/01  
Katie Dryden, 05/03  
Laura Kachelmeyer, 05/04  
Ellen Pancoe, 05/05  
Carole Reid, 05/06  
Dave Barth, 05/08  
Wayne Yendall, 05/11  
Todd Johnson, 05/12  
Melissa Licht, 05/13  
Ashley Merlihan, 05/13  
Bob Tiffany, 05/13  
Samantha Kozlowski, 05/16  
Chantal Rubino, 05/17  
Jocelyn Hirschey, 05/19  
Heather Swanson, 05/20  
Edward Utz, Jr., 05/22  
Norm Hirschey, 05/23  
Barb King, 05/24  
Nicole Lawniczak, 05/24  
Jane D'Agostino, 05/27  
Candy Scorsone, 05/27  
Charles Greene, 05/28  
Jonathon Johnson, 05/29  
Joan Metzger-Hubbell, 05/30  
David Ekberg, 05/31  
Ronin Rainero, 05/31  
Vincent Tobia, 05/31

## June

Christine Bosch, 06/03  
Denis Goubiski, 06/09  
Kristen Silveri, 06/10  
Owen Zdrojewski, 06/10  
Jennifer Goehle, 06/11  
Rachael Mayer, 06/11  
Alicia Morrell, 06/12  
Scott Hannon, 06/13  
Rich Traina, 06/13  
Blake Gerstung, 06/14  
Shirleen Besch, 06/15  
Jamie Favale, 06/17  
Eli Pawlowski, 06/18  
Alexander Hong, 06/19  
Fran Kaye, 06/19  
Sandra Stricko, 06/20  
Brian Hirschey, 06/23  
Daniel Kutis, 06/24  
Marilynn Todd, 06/24  
Angelika Fronczak, 06/25  
Andrew Scorsone, 06/25  
Deb Francis, 06/26  
Dylan Parker, 06/27