

June
2022

**ST. JOHN
CHURCH COUNCIL
SERVANTS**

Matt Cote
Lee Dryden
Ginny Hohl
Rick Bosch
Marsha Irmer
Don Reidell
CJ Ullrich
Shirleen Besch
Brian Hirschey

THE PASTOR'S NOTE...

Dear Friends,

I confess to you that I feel fairly beaten up and broke down by the hardships and tragedies of this world we live in. While normal life was difficult enough, pandemic life was at times insurmountably hard. As we emerged from what we hoped was the worst of the pandemic, things were supposed to get easier - better - normaler (yes, I know that's not a word). And yet, when we glimpsed the light at the end of the tunnel we were reminded of the darkness that still permeates creation. War raged across the way. Smaller battles were waged in our country, county, city, and sometimes homes. And then the shootings happened. Again. And again.

In times like these we are often left feeling helpless and hopeless. Many of us question the difference we can make in the world. Others wonder why try anything at all. All of which I bring up to say: if you've felt that way - if you've felt helpless or hopeless or even just lost and angry, it does not make you a bad Christian or a bad person. It means you're human. It means you're having a perfectly predictable and normal response to insurmountable calamities. It means you're connected. It means you care. And that's a good thing.

Many times when we're tempted to give up or give in, we turn to our politicians for the answers and action. We expect *them* to make promises of revenge, retribution, and justice. We anticipate a response from *them* as violent as the crime(s) committed. We often allow ourselves to believe that if *they* just punish someone enough, we might feel better about all that's transpired.

But if history teaches us anything, that is that that is not how things work. They can't bomb our way to peace. They can't fight our way to happiness. They can't burn down expecting to build us up. They can't scream until we smile. It just adds fire to the fire.

On the contrary, as MLK so profoundly proclaimed, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." While we may feel helpless and hopeless, in reality we do have options right now - beyond expecting career politicians to blast us a path forward. *We* have options. Namely, we can choose grace. We can choose peace. We can listen to Jesus who reminds us that light shines in the darkness, life conquers death, and love (for God and neighbor) is key.

The verse I keep coming back to over and over again these last few weeks is from St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians. He writes, "We are hard pressed on every side, *but not crushed*; perplexed, *but not in despair*; persecuted, *but not abandoned*; struck down, *but not destroyed*. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body." (2 Cor. 4:8-10 *emphasis mine*).

Anyone paying attention right now is undeniably feeling somewhat hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down. Nevertheless, the life of Jesus may be revealed through us. So, keep the faith, St. John. breathe. be at peace. now is the time to be Christ's church.
In the Way, PSDH

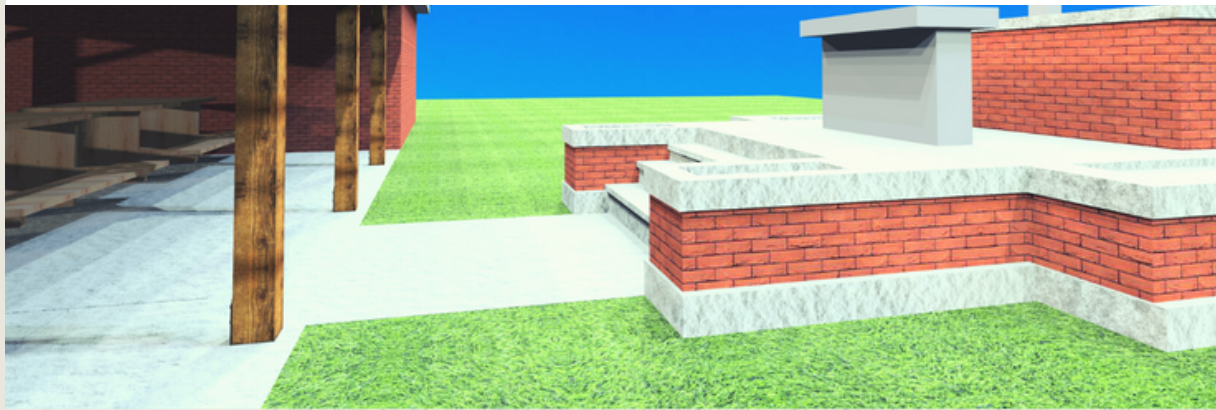


Creative Ministry

Our last meeting will take place on June 8th from 10 -12 a.m. Although we were unable to meet each month due to Covid we managed to have a very productive spring. Busy hands were able to make port pillows for Roswell Park, clothing protectors (adult bibs) for local nursing homes, marble mazes for dementia patients and drawstring bags for Haven House and Compass House. One of our other projects is to make a small teddy bear with a cross that is given to each child baptized at St. John. Lap robes (small quilts) were given to a number of people on the St John prayer list and lovely cards made by Deb Francis have been sent to St. John members though the year. Some of us will be working on our own over the summer. We sure know how to keep busy and look forward to meeting again in the fall.

New ideas for small projects to donate locally are always welcome. A small number of lap robes are available if you like one for someone who is ill.

Contact Pam Figel (716) 639-0235 or kfigel@aol.com for further information or questions.



BUILDING

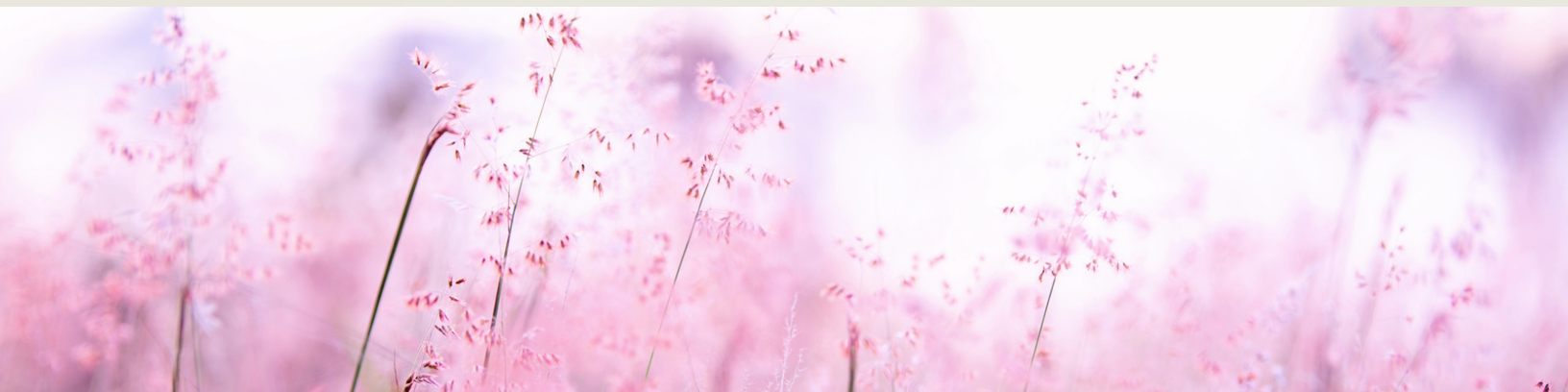
BRICK BY BRICK

with your help.

DONOR BRICKS - \$250

MEMORIAL/IN HONOR OF BRICKS - \$275

The altar of the Outdoor Ministry Center will be wrapped in bricks that name those who made this project possible. **Thank you** for your consideration. (see reverse for details)



THE BRICK CAMPAIGN

This brick campaign is intended to demonstrate our congregation's commitment to the OMC project. Beyond that, it will provide initial resources to begin building and potentially reduce the amount of money we borrow from a bank and withdraw from our investments. **Your help and consideration is most sincerely appreciated.** To purchase a brick, please fill out the attached form and return to the church office. Please call (716)632-6557 or email office@sjlcamherst.com with questions.
GOD BLESS YOU AND THANK YOU.



Then they said, "Let us arrive and build." So they put their hands to the good work.

Neh. 2:18

COUNCIL UPDATE

The May Council meeting was held on the 17th at 7:00 PM. The meeting began with devotions and reflections on the recent tragedy in Buffalo. Pastor read the beatitudes and offered prayer. The previous month's minutes and meeting agenda were approved.

Pastor reported that he was attending an online preaching convocation this week. There were two memorials last month for relatives of members (William Sherman & James Spigiel). Both scheduled baptisms were canceled due to covid. Pastor reported that worship attendance was improving and things appear on track as we head into summer.

The committees offered the following reports:

Social Ministry – The donated items for Haven House have been delivered. They were very appreciative. A motion was made and approved to send \$700 to Haven House in addition to what was collected.

Fellowship – The men's ministry continues to meet on Saturday mornings. A 'brown bag' lunch will continue to be held on the 2nd Friday of the month for anyone who is looking for a place to gather and share in friendly conversation. A women's 'lunch bunch' met on May 18th.

Worship and Music – Beginning June 5th we will worship ONCE on Sundays at 9:30 AM.

Personnel – Our sexton, Brittany, had covid, but has returned to work.

Christian Education – Sunday School will wrap up on May 22nd with a fun day on the church playground. On Wednesdays at 7 PM the adult Bible study group will meet at the church to discuss devotions from Richard Rohr.

Youth – Youth Group will not be held over the summer, but other youth events will be provided.

Building and Grounds – Spending is out-pacing the budget due to boiler maintenance and various other projects (lights & floors). The Boy Scouts and ARC have both cleaned up the exterior of the church for which we are very grateful. Larry Schroeder has stepped up to help our volunteer mowing crew.

Stewardship – We will raise money for ELCA World Hunger on May 22nd. Cookies and milk will be provided to encourage generosity.

Finance – Through April revenue and expenditures are nearly balanced. Weekly income was lighter than anticipated in April.

In the business portion of the meeting Pastor reported that the Town of Amherst has informed the church that the Outdoor Ministry Center qualifies for a 'major site development.' A hearing will be held on August 18th with the planning board to approve the project. Lee Dryden stepped up to assist Pastor with various aspects of this part of the process.

Volunteers are needed for the Rummage Sale on June 4th.

The meeting wrapped up with further discussion regarding the shooting in Buffalo. St. John will participate in the Main Street Sidewalk Vigil on Saturday, May 21 at 2 PM. Members are encouraged to bring nonperishable food items in. Items will be donated to Feedmore. In addition, the council voted to send \$1,000 to Feedmore.

The council recommends the creation of a small ad hoc group to discuss security concerns and our ministry. Suggested members include law enforcement officers, ushers, and pastor.

The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer at 8:07PM.



ELCA World Hunger

HOLY COW

THE "UDDER" JOY OF GIVING TO ELCA
WORLD HUNGER

*From His fullness we have all received,
grace upon grace. John 1:16*

HOLY COW SUNDAY – MOOCHAS GRACIAS!!!

Dear St. John

On behalf of our Upstate NY Synod Hunger Team, I am humbled by your overwhelmingly generous response to ELCA World Hunger on Holy Cow Sunday. Thanks to your generosity, we received \$1500 in gifts – with more anticipated – to be sent to Synod Assembly (June 5 & 6), joining with other congregations whose gifts, like ours, will provide resources to empower global farmers for more sustainable livelihoods.

I am also thankful for my partners - Judy Nitchke, Kim Roll and Bobbie Traina – whose creative sharing of time, talents and good humor made this event a festive and tasty success.

To God be the glory!

Pastor Marsha Irmer



ELCA World Hunger partner in Senegal



Dear Creative Ministry,

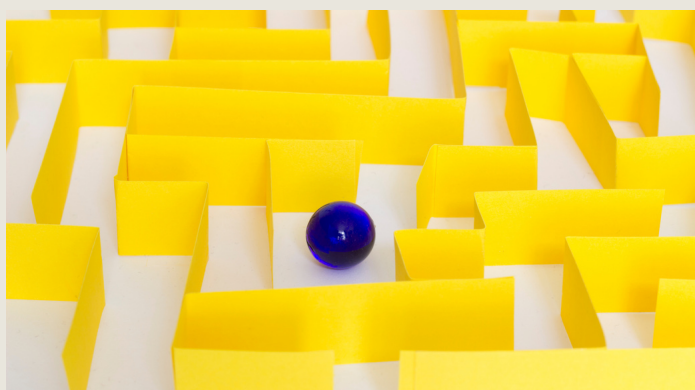
Thank you so much for the marble maze that the sewing group made. I have never seen these and they will definitely be used.

Thanks again,
Holly Lange

Dear Gathered in Prayer Group,

Thank you so much for all the prayers for healing and the delicious meals. They sure made a difference in our progress.

With love and hope,
Rick and Gayle Bosch



Brown Bag Lunches



We will meet at a park on the second of every month, weather permitting. We will be meeting this month on Friday, June 10th, 2022. We will meet at the church. We will sit outside if the weather cooperates.

Altar Help



We will need help with preparing the Altar for Communion. What we will need help for is to fill the communion cups up, or clean up after the 8:30 service. If you can help please reach out to Joni Cote, she regularly helps us with this and would know more information.

Joni Cote: pokerjoni1956@gmail.com

BJ's Membership

BJ's memberships are available through St. John at a discounted rate.

For details please contact the church office.

Men's Group



We will be meeting outside weather permitting, if not outside we will meet inside in the Gathering Space.

Also, the Men's Group will be meeting for breakfast at Helen's Kitchen on Monday, June 6th, 2022

Mission Message

WHEN WILL IT END? by Marcia Brown

I write this from Buffalo, only two days after a mass shooting in a grocery store took 10 lives, and the feelings are still very raw. The names and photos with bios are out now, making it all the more painful. These tragedies have always been somewhere else—Minnesota, Colorado, Texas—but this is right at home, and for the rest of our Synod, too close to home.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is saddened by the all-too-frequent occurrences of gun violence in the U.S. We mourn the loss of life. We grieve for the victims and their families, who often feel silenced. And we lament for those who have done violence to others and often feel removed from a community of faith. But what can we do besides be sad, grieved, and lamented?

The ELCA actively works to prevent gun violence, through Advocacy to state and federal law makers, and through its Racial Justice Ministries. It calls us to work toward the prevention of gun violence as people of God who strive for justice and peace in all the world. Your gifts to Synod Mission Support help these efforts to end the madness. Because it must end! Thank you!

We are church together for the sake of the world. God's Work. Our Hands.

ST. JOHN PRAYER LIST

Hospitalized and Homebound
Colleen Gunning, Ann Henry

Loss and Bereavement
Family and friends of Ruth Whitfield, friend of Candy Pankow
Family and friends of the individuals who lost their lives in the tragic Tops shooting
Family and Friends of Gordon Steinhilber

Healing, Comfort & Special Concerns
Charlotte Carnes, Mary Koehneke, Rick Bosch, Marie Palermo, Steve Favale, Bob Tiffany, Wayne Yendall, Gayle Bosch, Merv Moore, Ellen Manthey, Gordon Steinhilber, Jerry Szykowny, Ed Utz, Jennifer Ekberg, Judy Yendall, John Sivak, Ethel Semrau,
Brent Chornysik, friend of John Sivak
John Senn, uncle of Rich Bosch
Jen Diakun, daughter of Kate and Jim Olson
Miriam Benson, friend of Kate and Jim Olson
Jan Vincent, sister of Deb Francis
Elaine and Syd Small, friends of Marsha Irmer
Carol Dixon, sister of Joni Cote
Michelle Newman, friend of Susan Hadala
Ana Senn, cousin of Rick and Gayle Bosch

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

Healing, comfort and strength for those seeking refuge from world events and natural disasters..

The homeless, hungry, cold and lonely.

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

Military: Matt Newman, Drew Steinhilber, John Wendelin, Nicholas Ford, Ben Hoyt ,Jacob Roy,
Zachary Beers

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



JUNE BIRTHDAYS



Amanda Stricko 6/3
Christine Bosch 6/3
Denis Goubiski 6/9
Kristen Silveri 6/10
Owen Zdrojewski 6/10
Jennifer Goehle 6/11
Rachael Mayer 6/11
Rich Traina 6/13
Scott Hannon 6/13
Blake Gerstung 6/14
Shirleen Kowalczyk 6/15

Jamie Favale 6/17
Eli Pawlowski 6/18
Alexander Hong 6/19
Sandy Stricko 6/20
Brian Hirschey 6/23
Daniel Kutis 6/24
Andrew Scorsone 6/25
Angelika Fronczak 6/25
Deb Francis 6/26
Dylan Parker 6/27

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Scott D. Hannon, *Pastor* | Rev. Charlie Greene, *Visitation Pastor*
Cindy Lin, *Traditional Music Leader* | Elena Erokhina, *Contemporary Music Leader*
Sara Accardi, *Administrative Assistant* | Brittany Grabowski, *Sexton*



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