

The Messenger

Volume XLV ~ Issue 5 ~ May 2023

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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www.StLukesLutheranAllentown.org ~ <https://www.facebook.com/StLukesLutheranAllentown>

Sunday Worship Service at 10:30 a.m. – Mask and Social Distancing are Optional

Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Richard Mathisen

Music Director: Ms. Andrea Berntsen

Sexton: Mrs. Beth Hickman

From the Pastor

The “St. Luke’s Family,” in Allentown and Across the Country!



I visualize the “St. Luke’s Family” as located not only in and around the church building in Allentown, PA, but as spread out across the country. These members and friends of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church are people who support St. Luke’s with their prayers, by reading our newsletters, following us on our website, social media, and in many other ways as well.

During Holy Week, the St. Luke’s Family suffered a shocking loss in the death of our Parish Administrator, Leslie Talago. We must remember all the important work done by Leslie for St. Luke’s. She was vital to our work in many different ways. This newsletter and other communications will try to reflect all that Leslie meant to us. The important work of St. Luke’s, however, must and will continue.

1. Allentown Collaborative Ministries. This collaboration is important to the future of St. Luke’s because it serves as a recognition by other Lutheran churches of the ministry of St. Luke’s in Allentown’s Center City area. Five other Lutheran Churches in Allentown joined with St. Luke’s and the Egner Chapel at Muhlenberg College to plan events for Lent and Holy Week. These events were very successful (see reports), although we also learned a lot, as well. The Allentown Collaborative Ministries has a website that contains a lot of information, including videos of some of those worship services. Leslie had been very involved in the Collaboration’s Midweek Lenten Gatherings, which attracted over 50 attendees each week during the five-week period. Leslie oversaw the name badges for the participants. She recruited many from St. Luke’s including her mother, Judy and sister, Debbie, to provide soups and desserts for the week when St. Luke’s was responsible for the luncheon.

ST. LUKE’S MISSION STATEMENT: St. Luke’s is a community of God’s people centered around the Gospel and empowered by God’s Spirit to be Jesus’ disciples now. The Lord calls us to be channels through which His love and acceptance can flow to others. Using our varied gifts, we commit ourselves as a congregation and individuals to be God’s presence to our community in both word and deed.

From the Pastor (continued)

The mid-day Good Friday observance of the Collaboration was held at St. Luke's. It was a Good Friday Meditation from noon to 3:00 pm and led by Pastor Maritza Dolich of Christ Lutheran and was considered very successful by attendees (a report is within this newsletter). St. Luke's was also deeply involved in planning the Maundy Thursday 7:30 pm service at Christ Lutheran, for which I was the preacher.

The Collaboration is planning to continue its activities through the summer and fall. It has been a number of years since St. Luke's was involved in this way with our colleagues from other Lutheran Churches. Currently, it includes Christ, St. John's, Redeemer, St. Luke's, St. Timothy, Jerusalem Western Salisbury, and the Egner Chapel at Muhlenberg College. I believe this collaboration offers many potential benefits to St. Luke's and our continuing ministry in Allentown!

2. Prayers for Peace in the Neighborhood. The very rewarding Prayer Service on March 19 was initiated by Janey Zimmerman and executed along with lay members of St. Luke's. The service attracted 51 persons, including clergy and deacons from six churches in the Center City area. As I have stated previously, I believe it will have continuing results.

There will be some changes at St. Luke's in response to recent events. As we reflect on these, I urge your continuing prayers for St. Luke's and its mission in the Allentown area, as well as for the family and friends of Leslie.

The Lord's blessing be with all of you at this difficult time.

Yours in Christ Jesus, Pastor Richard Mathisen

Within The Messenger:

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*The May Messenger is sponsored in loving memory of our mothers
by Keith and Dolores Lewis*

Council Highlights - From the approved Council Minutes of February 9, 2023

- Prayers for Peace in the Neighborhood progress summarized with the discussion and updates on the following elements: participants, service, hospitality, promotion (including publications for the service.)
- The annual performance of Jesus Christ Superstar (Sunday, 2 April, 2:00 p.m.) free-will offering will be divided between St. Luke's Roof Fund and ELCA's Mission.
- Participation in the English Language Lessons (through volunteers from Muhlenberg College) continues to increase. On the horizon is consideration for a Citizenship Study Group.
- Concentration on necessary as well as compulsory costs of our 435 property to make the important decision of renting vs selling.

Property - March 2023

* Parts that were ordered to repair the heating zone for convectors and blower units that weren't heating were picked up, installed, and tested. We found that the thermostatic heat valve on the convector in the second-floor ladies restroom is bad and must be replaced. We also had to install a new check valve in the boiler water fill pipe.

*We are having serious safety, security and expense concerns about lights and fans being left on, doors being left unlocked or blocked open, and alarms not being reset when leaving an alarmed area.

*We put the first coat of roof coating on the third-floor residential unit roof (apartment). The roof will get a second coat as weather and time permit us to do it.

Financials - March 2023

March 2023 Financials

Income	\$5,931.00
Expenses	\$16,486.00

Roof Fund Loans as of March 31, 2023

Stifel Loan for North Roof	34,000.00
Loan Repay	(16,000.00)
Balance	\$18,000.00

Memorial Fund Loans

North Roof	16,000.00
Elevator Addition Roof	10,000.00
Apartment Turret Roof	5,000.00
Loan Repay	(1,000.00)
Balance	\$30,000.00

Lay Ministers May 2023				
Date	Offering Collector	Scripture Reader	Worship Assistant	Communion Assistant
7-May-23	Barbara Mathisen	Susan Simonnet	Corliss Bachman	Lynn Weaver
14-May-23	Deb Skinner	Janey Zimmerman	Kathy Baker	Janey Zimmerman
21-May-23	Bob Patterson	Ted Zimmerman	Monica Tucker-Morgan	Marty Westman
28-May-23	Brian Engler	Lynn Weaver	Susan Simonnet	Lynn Weaver



Pastor Mathisen informs us on the newly formed Allentown Collaborative Ministries:

After Holy Week services had been completed, the pastors and deacons of the Allentown Collaborative Ministries gathered to review the Lent and Holy Week events and plan for the future. Here is their assessment of the past and their tentative plans for the future:

Review of Lent and Holy Week

Overall, the Lent and Holy Week events were considered a major success! We should plan to do this again next year, in 2024.

The Midweek Lenten Gatherings were especially successful, attracting a steady attendance of 50 to 60 persons. We seem to have found a good mix of food and education. People enjoyed meeting and getting to know members of other churches.

Three of the Holy Week services sponsored by the Allentown Collaborative Ministries were live-streamed and are now available on video. Simply go to the Allentown Collaborative Ministries website, <https://www.christ-atown.org/acm>.

These were the Maundy Thursday evening service at Christ Lutheran, the Good Friday Tenebrae service at St. John's Lutheran, and the Easter Vigil at Christ Lutheran. These attracted about 60 persons to each service in person and another 40 or so who attended by video, for a total of about 100 participants between those present and those online. The combined choir was a major attraction and a rewarding experience for those who participated. A summary of the Good Friday afternoon service held at St. Luke's, "Stations of the Cross", follows on the next page.

Tentative Plans for the Future

1. Invite other Lutheran churches and Full Communion Partners to join the collaboration.
2. Possible Collaborative Picnic at the Pavilion in the Allentown Rose Garden. (Note: St. John's has one planned for Sunday, June 4, with 10:30 am worship followed by the picnic, and is willing to expand it if others wish to join that day.)
3. Support WOW services at St. Timothy (Worship On Wednesdays) from June 14 to August 16, which highlight a different charity each week (music at 6:45 pm, worship at 7:00).
4. God's Work Our Hands Sunday, September 10. St. John's may take the lead.
5. Crop Walk in October.
6. Lehigh Mission District Ingathering in November.

Allentown Collaborative Ministries (continued)

7. Possible Thanksgiving Eve event.
8. Possible Advent Luncheon Gathering, either one event or weekly.
9. Lehigh Valley Pride (typically August).
10. "Support St. Luke's in their outreach to their neighborhood."
11. Possibly arrange ACM visits to Lehigh Valley Conference of Churches center to increase awareness of their excellent work.
12. Possible choral/oratorio or other musical events.
13. Possible progressive dinner involving several congregations.

As you can see, there are many good ideas. I call attention to two of them involving us and our immediate neighborhood – No. 10 – "Support St. Luke's in their outreach to their neighborhood" and No. 11 – Possibly arrange ACM visits to Lehigh Valley Conference of Churches center to increase awareness of their excellent work. I encourage anyone interested in pursuing these initiatives to get in touch with me or other persons!

Regards,
Pastor Mathisen

Allentown Collaborative Ministries Choir
Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023
Egner Chapel of Muhlenberg College



Allentown Collaborative Ministries - Good Friday Service at St. Luke's

Entering the church on Good Friday, worshipers were welcomed with candlelight around the perimeter of the nave. At the entrance to the sanctuary was a temporary candlelit altar with our black cross in the center. Pastor Maritza Torres Dolich of Christ Lutheran Church joined us in meditation and accompanied us on a profound spiritual journey of the stations of the cross. She defined each tableau during our walk throughout the church and encouraged thoughtful conversation and prayer along our spiritual journey.

"Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps."

Prayers for Peace Service -Sunday, March 19, 2023



ATTENDED BY:

Participating Churches

Lehigh Valley Conference of Churches

Pastor Eugenia Watson

Ministerio Fortaleza de Amor

Pastores Emilio and Raquel Morales

New Bethany E.C. Church

Pastor Gus Al-Khal

Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Orthodox Church

The Very Reverend Robert Rebeck

Resurrected Life Community Church, UCC

Rev. Dr. Gregory Edwards, Senior Pastor

Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church

Father Gibbons & Father Winne

Deacon Miguel Vargas

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Pastor Richard Mathisen & Rev. Dr. Ted Zimmerman

Union Baptist Church

Rev. Benjamin T. Hailey Sr. & Pastor Yvette Hailey

Neighborhood Organizations

8th Ward – Bonnie Wachter

The Neighborhood Center – Karen Berard

Promise Neighborhoods Lehigh Valley – Jeani Garcia

Salvation Army Allentown



Birthday Celebrations

May 1 Charles Ripper

May 29 Jacqueline Gehringer

Thank you

to everyone who assisted in Leslie's funeral and luncheon.

to the sponsors for our altar flowers, publications, and coffee hours.

to the anonymous donor for the new curtain in the ladies room.

to all who support the ministries and works of St. Luke's.

Coming Events

- **May 7** – Deadline to order geraniums for Pentecost Sunday, May 7th

Please telephone Kathy Patterson to place your order: (610) 797-0567
or send her an email to:
robert.patterson@rcn.com
Plants are \$5.75 each.

- **May 14** – Mother's Day
Please join us after worship for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Really Useful Links:

- There's access to a wealth of information from the **Lehigh Mission District, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod** and much more all in one place:
 - Simply go to the **Lehigh Lutherans Churches** website: — <http://lehighlutherans.com> — to access the congregations, ministries, partners, Lehigh Mission District newsletter. Within the same site, there is access to the Synod website to access their weekly and monthly newsletters, useful information, events and more.
 - **The Lehigh Conference of Churches Newsletter:**
<https://lehighchurches.org>
 - **Allentown Collaborative Ministries:**
View updates, videos of recent services and more.
<https://www.christ-atown.org/acm>
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