

The Messenger

Volume XLVI ~ Issue 2 ~ March 2024

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Richard Mathisen

Music Director: Ms. Andrea Berntsen

Sexton: Mrs. Beth Hickman

The Seasons of Lent and Easter

The season of Lent is upon us. Lent is traditionally a time of spiritual renewal. During these forty days, from Ash Wednesday (February 14) to Easter Sunday (March 31), Christians are urged to pray and to meditate anew on the Gospel accounts of Christ's redemptive passion and death.

If we open our hearts to God's Word this Lent, we will discover many spiritual life-or-death questions that are asked of us: "Am I really trying to love God?" "Do I act as if I'll never die?" "Am I willing to repent?" "Do I really love anyone but myself?" Such are the questions posed by Lent. Take a moment during Lent to conduct your own spiritual inventory. What is the most important thing to you in your life? What do you most like about your life? What do you like least about your life? If you had only one message to give to the people you care most about, what would that message be? Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that -- if circumstances called for it -- you would be willing to die for? If this were the last day in your life, what would you do with it? These are not easy questions. But then, Lent is not intended to be an easy time! Please note: The above questions are from noted author Rev. Frederick Buechner, my religion teacher many years ago.

During Lent, we prepare for Easter. The final week of Lent, Holy Week, is the most intense preparation and begins Palm Sunday, on March 24, followed by Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services on March 28 and 29 respectively. And then there's Easter! If Lent has been a time for reflection, Easter is the moment for celebration! On Easter Sunday, we celebrate the true high point of the Christian year - the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is what Christianity is all about! And Easter is not only one Sunday. Easter is an entire season of seven (7) Sundays of Easter starting March 31 and leading up to Pentecost Sunday on May 19.

May the reflection time of Lent and the celebration time of Easter be a truly blessed time for you!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Mathisen

Lent and Holy Week in Allentown 2024

Lent and Holy Week Observances in Allentown

~ Pastor Mathisen

St. Luke's is a member of the Allentown Collaborative Ministries (ACM), a coalition of mostly Lutheran churches that have also added several other churches.

Below is the schedule for services during Lent:

Lenten Midweek Gatherings, February 21, 28, and March 6, 13, and 20 - Lenten Midweek Gatherings will again be held at noon at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church. The noontime food will be prepared by the various congregations. St. Luke's will be assisting First Presbyterian Church with the food on Wednesday, March 20th.

Holy Week - During Holy Week, there will be joint services for Maundy Thursday on March 28 and Good Friday on March 29, as well as observance of the Easter Vigil on Saturday evening March 30:

- The Maundy Thursday service will be at Redeemer Lutheran Church at noon, with the evening service at Nativity Lutheran Church at 7:30 p.m.
- The Good Friday noontime service will again be hosted by us at St. Luke's, from noon to 3:00 p.m. It will again be led by Pastor Maritza Torres Dolich reviewing the Stations of the Cross, which was very well appreciated last year.
- The Good Friday evening service will be at St. John's Lutheran Church at 7:30 p.m.
- The observance of the Easter Vigil will be held at Christ Lutheran Church at 7:30 p.m.

The evening services will have a joint choir. Of course, all participating churches will plan and conduct their own services on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

We encourage all members of St. Luke's to attend these community worship services and educational opportunities in Allentown as you are able!

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.

Council Highlights – From the Approved January 2024 Council Minutes

- The sale of our 435 N. 7th St. property is moving forward and waiting on a date for settlement.
- A motion was passed to donate \$100 to The Neighborhood Center from the Outreach Fund within the budget.
- Jesus Christ Superstar, a major fundraiser, is scheduled for Palm Sunday, March 24.

Financial Highlights – January 31, 2024

Financials as of January 31, 2024

Income	\$4,733.00
Expenses	(\$14,658.00)

Roof fund Loans as of January 31, 2024

Memorial Fund Loans	
North Roof	\$16,000.00
Elevator Addition Roof	\$10,000.00
Apartment Turret Roof	\$ 5,000.00
Apartment Roof	<u>\$17,000.00</u>
Loan Repay	(\$5,093.00)
Balance	\$42,907.00

Property Highlights – February 2024

- Cleared construction trash (which was dumped in front of our 435 building) to have it removed by the city in order to avoid a fine from the city.
- Tightened the very loose handle on the freezer door in the kitchen.
- Opened blocked Sacristy sink drain by getting a lot of green frog out of the sink trap.
- Replaced burned-out bulb in the left side light fixture outside the main front church doors.
- Replaced the troublesome on/off switch for the sound system.
- Cleaned wax off the wooden candelabras and tightened the loose branch screws.
- Replaced the broken wireless doorbell for the west side courtyard door. Relocated it onto the first-floor Fellowship Hall wall in the hallway across from the elevator.
- Paul Wright Roofing replaced the third-floor roofing material. Also replaced the shingles on the third-floor front Mansard wall and on the dormer of the apartment.
- Burkholder's should be starting the replacement of the A/C units around March 11, 2024.

Lay Ministers March 2024

Date	Offering Collector	Scripture Reader	Worship Assistant	Communion Assistant	Greeter
3-Mar-24	K. Baker	K. Patterson	S. Simonnet	T. Zimmerman	B. Mathisen
10-Mar-24	R. Patterson	K. Baker	T. Zimmerman	M. Westman	J. Zimmerman
17-Mar-24	D. Skinner	B. Mathisen	J. Zimmerman	L. Weaver	B. Engler
24-Mar-24	J. Zimmerman	M. Tucker-Morgan	L. Weaver	J. Zimmerman	E. Hickman
31-Mar-24	B. Engler	D. Skinner	C. Bachman	M. Westman	K. Baker



Blessings on your birthday

March 4	Mary Davis
March 9	Janice Updegrove
March 17	Franklin Johnson
March 21	Elizabeth Hickman

Easter Sunday - March 31

Continental Breakfast

9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

- Please consider bringing a food item to share on the buffet table ~ baked goods (loaf cake, cookies, muffins, doughnuts, bagels), fruit salad, juice ...
- We'll have coffee, tea, water
- If you have any questions, please contact:

Kathy Patterson:
Telephone: 484-633-0333
Email: robert.patterson@rcn.com



To sponsor flowers, The Messenger or Sunday bulletins, please contact Kathy Patterson for available dates:

- Altar Flowers** - \$16.00 per vase
- The Messenger** - \$35.00
- Sunday Bulletins** - \$12.00

Email: robertpatterson@rcn.com
Telephone: 484-633-0333

REMINDER:

Lilies for Easter

Sunday, March 31, 2024

Easter lilies will once again adorn our sanctuary on Easter Sunday!

Please note, we are again offering the choice to sponsor lilies or to donate to our Raise the Roof campaign in memory or honor of your loved ones.

ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Envelope No. _____ Telephone No. _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Given by: _____

- I will pick up my plant(s) _____ • Please donate my plant(s) _____
- No. of plants _____ x \$11.00 = \$ _____
- I prefer donating to the Raise the Roof campaign \$11.00 or \$ _____

Paid by check no. _____ OR Paid by cash _____

- The deadline for all orders is Sunday, March 10, 2024
- Please return this form with payment to Kathy Patterson, the offering plate, or via email to robert.patterson@rcn.com or telephone Kathy at 484-633-0333
- Please make checks payable to: St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Thank you!



On Sunday, March 10:

Our clocks officially "spring forward" at 2:00 a.m. creating an extra hour of daylight in the evening.

Allentown Collaborative Ministries Lenten Luncheon Themes:

Wednesday, March 6: The Lies We Tell Ourselves: Engaging neighbors with compassion

Wednesday, March 13: Building Community: Before, during and after experiences of homelessness

Wednesday, March 20: And Grace Will Lead Us Home: What can we do to help make a difference with our neighbors who are unhoused?

• All sessions are held at noon at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – 140 S. Ott Street, Allentown, PA 18104 •

A pleasant surprise!

On Sunday, February 11, St. Luke's had a special guest within our congregation! We were introduced to Staffan Nelsson, a long-time friend of Pastor Zimmerman's, who came to Allentown to visit with him and Janey. Their relationship goes back to their childhood. Both sets of parents were Lutheran missionaries – first in China and later in Hong Kong. Staffan's family is from Sweden and Pastor Zimmerman's, of course, is from the United States. The two young boys met in Hong Kong. Pastor recalls his family arriving on his 5th birthday and Staffan's family had already been established there for a year or two. He doesn't remember not knowing Staffan, nor his older brother Anders, or his younger sisters Monica, Ingela, and Dorothy. Therefore, he can only guess that they were friends from about 6 or 7. They shared a love for playing with toy cars and trucks (as evidenced in the photo).



Friends Staffan (left) and Ted (right)
Hong Kong

When they were in grade school, Staffan's family lived in town close to the school. Since Pastor and his family lived farther out in a more rural area, several of the missionary children went to Staffan's house for lunch on school days. He's certain he enjoyed the Swedish food Mrs. Solveig Nelsson, gave them! Later, Staffan's family moved closer to Pastor's family and were able to spend more time together playing and running around the nearby hills.

Staffan's older brother, Anders, still lives in Hong Kong. The Zimmermans are in touch with him as well and are keeping the tradition of their families' relationship into another generation.



An additional well appreciated surprise:

A celebration for the Chinese New Year occurred on the same Sunday as Staffan's visit. A tasty array of specialties was thoroughly enjoyed by all after the worship service.

Photos: Pastor and Janey Zimmerman with Staffan (top left & bottom right)
A small portion of the Chinese New Year buffet (top right and bottom left)



**St. Luke's Lutheran Church
135 Years "In the City to Stay"**

St. Luke's Synoptic Players
and the JCS Band Present

Musical Selections from Tim Rice
and Andrew Lloyd Webber's
Classic Rock Opera

Jesus Christ Superstar



Sunday, March 24

2:00 PM

Doors open

1:30 PM

Free Admission

Freewill offering
benefits St. Luke's Roof
Fund and ELCA Mission

417 N. 7th Street, Allentown 610-434-3943

FREE PARKING IN THE LOT NEXT TO THE CHURCH
