



The Beacon • April 2024

Saint Peter's United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Kimberly Stryjak, Minister
2901 Curtis Road, Reading, PA 19609 • stpucc.com • stpucc@yahoo.com
610.678.3621

“The beginning is the most important part of the work.” ~ Plato.

As we end March and turn to April, winter turns to spring and all around us nature shows the sights and smells of new life, rebirth, and new beginnings. New beginnings was our stewardship/church theme this past year and there is no better time to celebrate this than through the resurrection of our Lord. Because Easter is not just a past event, it is a feast that gives us continual hope and encouragement that the Risen Lord is with us.

In Easter, Jesus' resurrection is a life-changer, affecting our whole beings calling us into new life and new beginnings.

Over the past year, Saint Peter's has been providing opportunities for new life and rebirth of our church through fellowship, worship, and stewardship opportunities. It has been wonderful seeing more people reengage in the life of the church, reminding us that we are a small-but-mighty church, growing into the new life God wants for us.

As we reflect again on the theme of new beginnings, I encourage you to think about how God is calling you to be a part of this new season that is emerging for Saint Peter's. Do you need to recommit to attending services regularly and reconnect with our church family? Do you have ideas for innovations in church programs that you would like to initiate? Do you have a zest to work on a project that will enhance our church or engage the surrounding community? We need you all to be part of our community because each

and every one of you is a vital part of our church family and working together, we can be stronger than ever!

Even though we celebrate Easter on March 31st, may we continue to experience the joy of Easter morning whenever we celebrate all God has in store for us.

Blessings,

—*Pastor Kim*

Parish News & Prayers

We are pleased to share that Saint Peter's is providing further good to the community through opening our facility as a meeting space for a newly formed community group. Please see the included note of thank you from group leader, Rev. Mark Stryjak, where he also provides some details about the group.

“As the Bereavement and Volunteer Coordinator for Tower Health at home, I appreciate the use of your church space to gather a bereavement support group on the second Thursday of each month from 12:30-2 PM. I hosted our first gathering on March 14th with the help of one of our volunteer leaders whose interest and heart is in end-of-life grieving. While the support group was originally started for extending support to the bereaved of those that were on our services, we are open to anyone who is grieving and wishes to gather in community as a way to work through their grief. Our next gathering will be held on April 11th.

I want to extend a thank you to Todd Ritzman for making a sign to help direct individuals to the church rear entrance to attend the meetings.

It is an honor to be able to provide this support to those in our community who need it and St. Peter's is a part of making that happen by providing space for us to gather.”

We appreciate hearing news from our members. If you have something you would like to share with us and have us share on your behalf, we invite you to contact the church office to let us know.

Please always remember one another in your prayers. We are grateful for the power of prayer to keep us connected to God, renewing our strength and courage. If you have a prayer request or would like to join the list of those praying for others, please contact the church office.

Outreach in April

“Blankets of Hope” Collection

The Women’s Ministry will begin collecting monetary donations for “Blankets of Hope” (BOH) beginning in April. BOH is a nonprofit corporation which provides twin bed mattresses, blankets, sheets and pillows to MANY people and organizations throughout Berks County.

Since December 2011, BOH has donated 64,000+ brand new fleece blankets to well over 100 organizations. The goal of BOH is to make sure every adult, and especially every child, is not sleeping on the floor. Every penny donated is used to purchase bedding for those in need. Please keep this fundraiser in mind as you look towards April.

Hope Rescue Mission & Lighthouse Clothing Drive

Throughout the month of April, we will be hosting a clothing drive to benefit Hope Rescue Mission Men’s Center and LightHouse, which is their recently completed women & children’s center. As a reminder of how mighty of an impact a small congregation such as Saint Peter’s can make, last August we hosted our first clothing drive for Hope Rescue Mission and collected and donated nearly 40 bags of items!

Needless to say, they were so grateful to hear that we would host another drive for them this spring. HRM will accept new or *gently used* clothing for men, women, and children, for any season.

Hope Rescue Mission and LightHouse Clothing Collection

**We’ll be collecting all seasons
of clothing for men, women
and children.**

**Coats, hats, scarves,
gloves, shoes, towels,
belts, purses, and
new underwear in sizes
small to xxxl.**



Clothing is preferred to be placed in clean plastic bags and does not need to be sorted other than to **keep “new in package” items separate from used items**. Look for a box or bin in the Welcome Center where you may drop off donations. A pickup date will be scheduled for some time in mid-May.

Fellowship in May

Spring has sprung! Perhaps even a bit earlier than we expected, and everything is quickly blooming; weeds need pulling, old growth needs trimming and we need your muscles for mulching, mulching, and more mulching. If you are willing to come and pitch in to beautify our grounds, please bring your trimmers, rakes, shovels, etc. to the church on Saturday, May 4th at 8 AM or at whatever time you have available. Did we mention...there will be mulching?

For a more relaxed gathering, our Spring book club meets on Wednesday May, 8th at 7 PM. The book selection is “The Boys in the Boat” by Daniel James Brown. The meeting will be at Kim and Brian Barndt’s home. There is a signup in the Welcome Center for those who wish to attend. We hope to see you there.

Elsewhere in the Community

The Addiction and Recovery Task Force of the PSEC will be hosting a FREE program called “You Are Not Alone” to provide connections and support for Grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. The goal of this event is to bring these grandparents together to exchange their experiences, their feelings, and their resources.

WHEN: Saturday, April 20th, 1-5 PM
WHERE: Calvary Reformed UCC, 640 Centre Avenue in Reading
REGISTER: <https://psecraisegrandchildren.eventbrite.com>

Snacks & drinks will be provided along with supervised children’s activities throughout the program.

Plan Ahead → → →

Our community partner, Western Berks Shepherding Ministry, is having a fundraising event where if you dine at either Austin’s or Coastal Grille on May 22nd or 23rd, 20% of your *food* purchase cost will be donated to them. To get this benefit for WBSM, print out this page with the invitation and present it to your server.



YOU'RE INVITED TO A FUNDRAISING EVENT

ORGANIZATION:
Western Berks Shepherding Ministries

EVENT DATE:
Wednesday May 22, 2024
Thursday May 23, 2024

Bring this invite to:

Austin's Restaurant & Bar - 1101 Snyder Road - West Lawn 610-678-5500
Coastal Grille - 2713 N. Meridian Boulevard - Wyomissing 610-743-4006

20% of your food purchases – alcohol not included
(dine in or take out) will be given to:

Western Berks Shepherding Ministries
Invitation must be presented for purchase to qualify
VOID IF DISTRIBUTED AT RESTAURANT
Reservations Suggested

A Unique, Educational Event for Youth!

**The Reading Chapter of the American Guild of Organists
*presents***



Pedals Pipes & Pizza

Introducing Young People to the Pipe Organ

WHEN: Saturday, April 13, 9:00 AM -12:30 PM

WHERE: Trinity Lutheran Church, Wernersville, PA

WHAT: Come learn about the Pipe Organ, Play the pipe organ, participate in an OrgelKids Program where you will help to build a miniature playable pipe organ.

REGISTER: Pick up a copy of the registration form in the St. Peter's Welcome Center OR email Trinity Lutheran Church at readingago@gmail.com to request the form via email.

There is no fee to register, donations will be accepted at the event.

Please fill out the registration form and return it Trinity Lutheran Church
130 South Walnut St. Wernersville, PA 19565 or send to readingago@gmail.com by April 1.

Dates to Remember



Throughout the month we'll be collecting clothing to donate to Hope Rescue Mission & LightHouse.

April 7	Spiritual Council meets Communion will not be served in April.
April 14	Bloodmobile, 9am
April 21	Consistory meets Breakfast with a Purpose
April 23	General Primary Election St. Peter's once again serves as a polling place.
Throughout April	Women's Ministry collection for BOH Hope Rescue clothing drive
May 4	Property Cleanup, 8 AM Volunteers are welcome to come anytime.
May 8	Book Club meeting, 7 PM
Mid-May	Conclusion of clothing drive