

MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church of Mahoning

"A Family of friends alive with God's love. You're home!"

826 Mahoning Drive West Lehigh, PA 18235

Pastor: The Rev. Lauren Wolfe Blatt

Email: stjohns@ptd.net and secretary@stjohnsmahoning.org

Instagram: [st_johns_mahoning](https://www.instagram.com/st_johns_mahoning) Phone: (570) 386-9960

Website: www.stjohnsmahoning.org and Facebook at StJohnsMahoning



Pentecost

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR MAY

In person Sanctuary worship May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 10: 00 a.m.

Holy Communion May 2 & May 23



Dear Siblings in Christ,

Our new bishop, Rev. Christopher deForest, has established a plan for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Many of you are familiar with Bp. deForest, as he served St. John's for the better part of a decade. This plan, led by the Holy Spirit, is meant to bring our synod into the future as we wonder about God's work here and now. The synod-wide plan encourages congregations to wonder about their vital signs, what are we doing well? As I have been reflecting on this initiative, I can't help but think about all the ways **we are already serving God's people.**

As a congregation, we hosted an outdoor Christmas Eve (moved to 12/26/20 due to rain) service, where we hosted the community, as well as Trinity Lutheran Church, Lehighton, for Christmas Carols, hot cocoa, God's Word, and of course, God's love. We were excited about the feedback we received from our event, so we decided to hold an outdoor Easter event in conjunction with our Egg Hunt. We welcomed members of the community, some whom we've never met, and showed them God's love made manifest in the miracle of Easter. The food that was left from our event was donated to people experiencing homelessness near the Canal in Weissport, which is a subtle, but real way that God's love reaches out from our church community.

God's love is shown through the people of St. John's on Sunday mornings when we proclaim Christ crucified and risen. It's made manifest in our singing of praises and our preaching of God's Word. God's love radiates out from St. John's through our social media presence and our website. We've made digital contact and ministered to people who we may never see walk through the doors of our church, but nonetheless they've received the message of God's love. This can be difficult for us because we want all people to experience the welcome and home feeling that St. John's gives us, but God's Kin_dom is SO, SO much bigger than the structure in which we worship.

The bishop's plan also calls us to discern what must change. In her book *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone* Lori Gottlieb writes, "We can't have change without loss, which is why so often people say they want change but nonetheless stay exactly the same." Change causes grief, and grief is something we try to avoid. Sometimes we also want everything to change all at once, for us to already be where we're going, but that's not how sustainable change happens. Later in her book Gottlieb writes, "Most big transformations come about from the hundreds of tiny, almost imperceptible, steps we take along the way." *Change is hard* is a phrase we hear inside and outside the church because it is a reality of being human, but that doesn't mean we can't change. We can change, little by little, until we reflect God's Kin_dom here on earth in Lehighton, in the valley, and beyond.

I encourage you to consider the work we're doing, but I also employ you to consider the ways we fall short – to wonder about what changes God might be calling us to make and also what things God might be calling for us to let go, to let die. As Christians, we are a people that understand that death must come before resurrection... that doesn't make it easy, but we know it's worth it! We will continue to wonder about what vital signs we already possess, and we'll wonder about what might need to change or die in order for us to move forward. Be well as we continue our Easter journey to Pentecost!

God be with you,

Pastor Blatt



May 1	Ryanne Hoffman
May 2	Carolyn Zacharias
May 5	Jaden Michael DeBlasio
May 6	Michael Balliet
May 6	Neil Gilbert
May 7	Ann Everett
May 8	Christopher Jensen
May 8	Terene Lynne Smith
May 9	Ethan Craig Neeb
May 12	Aliyah Nothstein
May 13	Myron Everett
May 14	Madeleine Merluzzi
May 15	Kaia Heckman
May 18	Donna Horvath
May 25	Eleanor Andrews
May 25	Richard Semmel
May 26	Gene Lindner
May 27	Janice Hoffman
May 28	Nevaeh Snyder
May 28	Logan Wentz
May 29	Aubrey Green
May 29	Ryan Scheckler
May 30	Edward Frye Jr.
May 31	Marlene Woodward



Yvonne Hibbler passed away on March 31, 2021 at the age of 83 years. A graveside celebration was held Saturday, April 10, 2021 in St. John's Cemetery.



Pastor Blatt's Office Hours

Mondays 12-3

**826 Mahoning Drive West
Lehighton, PA 18235**

If you are in need of pastoral care or need to meet with the pastor another time, please call
Pastor Blatt at 610 568 8397





Office Hours

Monday-Thursday
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Holy Communion

**May 2
&
May 23**

Council Meeting


Church Council will meet Monday,
May 10th at
6:30 p.m.

Pastor Blatt

Are you or someone you know in need of pastoral care? Do you need someone to talk to? Do you have questions?

Pastor Blatt can be reached at
610.568.8397

You may call or text Pr. Blatt as needed.
If you wish to email Pr. Blatt you may email her at pastorblatt@gmail.com





FACE MASK
REQUIRED

All groups that meet at St. John's are asked to wear a face covering to protect each other during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Change of Address

Please notify the church office with your new address and phone number so we can keep our records up to date and save postage fees. You can do so by calling the church office at 570-386-9960 or by emailing the church office at secretary@stjohnsmahoning.org.



If you wish to sponsor the bulletin or altar flowers, please call the church office by Wednesday before your requested date.

Bulletins - \$8.00

Rose Buds - \$8.50

Memorial/Honor Bowls - \$25.00

Altar Flowers - \$30.00 per set



Book Club will continue to meet virtually every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month beginning at 6:30 p.m. The book for May is "The Vineyard" by Barbara Delinsky

Please email Deb Scheckler at dscheckler@gmail.com

Our altar flowers are now provided by Porvaznik's Flowers located in Lansford, Pa. Arndt's Flower Shop is no longer in business.

If you would like to sign up to receive **St. John's Weekly News Blast** please email the church secretary@stjohnsmahoning.org or call 570-386-9960.

The BLAST goes out every Tuesday morning!

The BLAST will let you know what is happening that week at St. John's.



ARMED FORCES
DAY

May 15, 2021

There are still some containers of filling left if anyone would like to purchase some.

They are \$7.25 per container.

Next fundraising meeting will be Wednesday, May 12th at 6:30 p.m.

ELECTRONIC GIVING

Simply click on the "Give Online" button on our church website

<https://www.stjohnsmahoning.org>.

Contributions can be electronically transferred from your checking or savings account. Options are available for weekly, bi-weekly or monthly withdrawals.

You can always mail your check directly to the church:

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church of Mahoning
826 Mahoning Drive West
Leighton, PA 18235

Newsletter

MAY

20

Deadline





ATTENTION ALL GRADUATES!

If you graduated this past December 2020 or will be graduating in May, June or August 2021, we would like to recognize your accomplishments. Please notify Lynn in the church office by email at secretary@stjohnsmahoning.org by Monday, June 7, 2021. Please provide us with your name, address and the name of high school, college, trade school, etc., where you received your degree, the type of degree you received and what your plans are for the future. We will notify you as to what Sunday you will be honored.

SMITH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

We are taking applications for the Smith Scholarship Fund. St. John's has been blessed with donations that we can use to assist our members who will be attending college, trade schools, etc. To apply, please write a one page letter telling us where you plan to attend school, what type of degree you are working towards and how you will use the scholarship money. This is not a one-time scholarship. If you received scholarship money in the past you may apply again. The deadline to submit your letter of application is June 7, 2021. Scholarship recipients will be honored at a worship service in July. Any questions, please call the office at 570-386-9960.

Please address your letter to:

*St. John's Lutheran Church of Mahoning
Attention: Julia Schock, Council President
826 Mahoning Drive West
Lehighton, Pa 18235*

What a pleasant surprise having received the delicious peanut butter eggs from you and St. John's. My ability to get out and about is somewhat limited due to my stroke, but I hope and pray to get back to being a bit more independent in the future.

Do you know how much I appreciate your thoughtfulness and your friendship?

Warmly,
Ellen Durigan



Thank you for the candy. It was good, thank you for thinking about me. Happy Easter.

Your friend,
Scott Heintzelman



Brothers & Sisters at St. John's,
Thank you so much for thinking of me at Easter. The Bible verse that was in your message that God is always with me was a verse I needed to hear. I will keep it near me.
Thank you again,
Love,
Lucille (Knittle)



Dear St. John's Members,
We enjoyed the Easter candy that was delivered to us.

Thank you for your kindness!

Love,
Marlin & Dorothy Reinhart

Spring Fling Thank You

Thank you to everyone who donated or volunteered in any way with our Spring Fling on March 27!! After having to cancel both bazaars in 2020, and still aware of our limitations of space and capacity we renamed the event and scaled it down. Happy Tummy and Pancho's provided food which could be eaten at our pavilion. We had a basket raffle, filling and soup, candy, Persians and Long Johns, and plants and pussy willows for sale.

The winners of our raffle ticket were:

\$350 Ahner's Furniture – Paul Kistler
\$100 cash – Doreen Roth
\$50 Tractor Supply gift card – Linda Guzman
\$50 cash – Linda Pollock
\$50 cash (Ameriprise Financial) – Pat Leiby
\$50 Giant gift card – Victoria Griffin
Instant Pot Digital Pressure Cooker – Becky McFadden
Wireless earbuds – Neil Gilbert
\$50 Walmart gift card – Anne Yenser
\$50 cash (Fritz Financial) – Lucille Knittle
\$50 Heintzelman's Meat Market gift certificate – Robbie Hawk
\$50 Feeding America gift card – Janice Hoffman

*Congratulations
to our winners!!*

10% of the Spring Fling profits will be donated to Trinity Food Pantry. A financial report will be available when all bills are paid and all sales are included.



We would like to add recipes to our newsletters and bulletins as space allows. Please submit some of your favorite family recipes to the church office by dropping them off or email secretary@stjohnsmahoning.org

Also we want to include wedding anniversaries to our newsletter together with the birthdays. Please send along your wedding anniversary date so we can celebrate with you during your special month.

PRAYER LISTS:

Prayers for our Congregation Members

Judith Ahner	Richard Semmel	Earl Andrews	Louisa Steele
Cash Althouse	Chester Bredbenner	Charles Frey	Robert Stewart
Betty Mertz	Marie Boyer	Michael Anglovich	Heather Heckman
Florence Duffy	Alyssa Zehner	Doris Fronheiser	Jean Everett

Prayers for Our Friends

Beth Baldwin	John Fikentscher	Gail Mills	Michael Hunsicker
Meredith Elinich	Michelle Baldwin	Lynn Gerber	Tim Mazenko
Annette Davis	Dr. Shaefali Rodgers	Mitchell Nace	Lois Fritz
Richard Frey	Bill Lavin	Joanne Simmons	Hope Mazenko
Shane Boyle	Steven Nuss	Clarence Derby	Richard Bloom
Drew Strohl	James Meckes	McCoy Rapa	Georgetta Perez
Erin Coombe	Kathryn Moyer	Kian Nothstein	Dan Myers
Jim Malloy, Sr.	Joan Frey	Mike Duffy	Judith Snyder
Candace Harleman	Alivia Paules	Richard Hamm	Bryan Huegel
Family of David Semmel	Chris Barry	Erika Diaz	Pastor Richard Boyer
Eleanor Drumbore	Rhonda Wenrich	Colleen & Joe Serfass	Shirley Long
Family of John Honey	Loretta Rudelitch	Luther Solt	Herman Snyder

Prayers for Our Homebound and Long-Term Care Members

Helen Stahler	Lois Fisher	Alberta Frey	Terry Terray	Ruth Foster
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Our Military Personnel at Home and Abroad

Daniel Berger	Dalton Berger	Christopher Knittle	Sean Fisher	Jordan Blatt
Jonathan Sheehan	Douglas Boyer	Aaron Cetnar	Austin Heilman	Dylan White

If you wish to put yourself, a friend or loved one on the church prayer list, please call the church office at 570-386-9960.



Donut Sale

Wednesday June 2



Persians \$1.75

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Long Johns 2/\$3

Order by Sunday May 16

Call/Text/Email Anne Yenser 570-390-9108 or anneyens@ptd.net
(checks payable to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church)

Name _____ Phone # _____

_____ (1) Persian X \$1.75 NEW LARGER SIZE \$ _____

_____ (2) Iced Long Johns X \$3.00 \$ _____

_____ (2) Coconut Long Johns X \$3.00 \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Pick up 9:00-10:00 AM



Election of officers – Julia Schock Council President and Allison Garl Vice President.

-Committee chairs are as follows:
 Cemetery – Keith Drummond
 Christian Ed – Cheryl Kistler
 Evangelism/Social Ministry/Stewardship – Mark Clayton
 Executive – Pastor Blatt
 Finance – Drew Yenser & Keith Drummond
 Fundraising – Anne & Drew Yener
 Hospitality/Kitchen – Anne Yenser
 Mutual Ministry – Cheryl Kistler
 Personnel – Allison Garl
 Property – Allison Garl
 Worship & Music – Joy Armbruster

-New council meeting layout will be as follows: All meeting handouts will be emailed and reviewed before meeting. There will be 1 hour of business and 1 hour of devotion.

-Ministry Thru Meals will be changed to The Catastrophe Fund to help local families in need during a tragedy.

- We will move \$40,000.00 from Fundraising into the general GBU.

-Spring clean-up outside the church will be held May 1, 2021. Rain date May 8, 2021.

-Smith Scholarship money will be moved into another account and all monies together will total \$129,385.37.

-Council is inquiring where the money and checkbook is that was used for Ministry Thru Meals.

-Council is inquiring where the Dr. Steele fund and Fryman fund monies were used or moved.

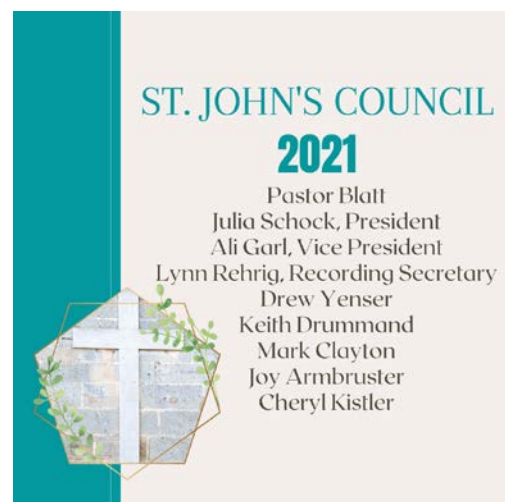
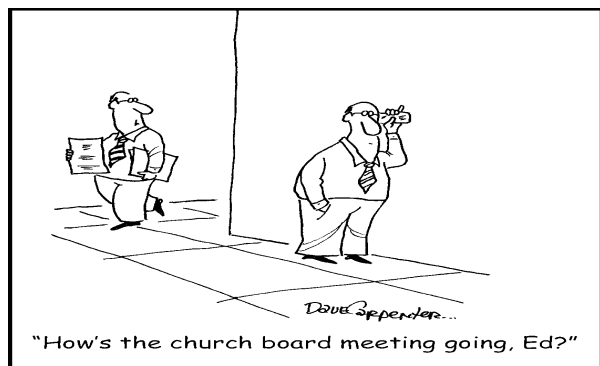
-The stain glass windows need to be painted.

-We need a committee to go through the big safe located in the church.

-We will be giving \$500.00 to a family that lost everything in a fire in March.

-We will be giving \$500.00 to the Four Mile House.

-Council is planning a fundraiser spaghetti dinner for the fall.





As Trinity food pantry is currently not accepting food items, we will continue to accept items which will be given to the homeless or other people in need. You may bring some of the suggested items (see below) or any others that you think would be appropriate. Your continued support is appreciated!

IDEAS FOR HOMELESS DONATIONS

Toiletries

Body wipes
Tooth brush
Toothpaste
Brush/comb
Travel shampoo
Disposable razors
Lotion
Chapstick
Small first aid kit
Hand sanitizer

Winter items

Hats & gloves
Scarves
Hand warmers
Foot warmers
Coats

Food & Drinks

Canned meat/soup
Applesauce/pudding
Granola/protein bars
Cracker pkgs.
Instant oatmeal pkgs
Canned/dried fruit
Instant coffee pkts
Tea bags
Beef jerky
Hot chocolate pkts
Trail mix pkts
Mints/gum
Juice cans/boxes
Bottles of water

Miscellaneous

Socks
\$5 or \$10 gift cards
Free meal coupons



Let's do good to all people.

Galatians 6:10, NASB



Thank you to everyone who helped at our Spring Fling! It was great to see everyone. Our next fundraiser is our May 5th donut sale. We will be baking, icing and packaging the night before on May 4th. You will receive a One Call with the time details. Hope to see you there!
Ali (Garl)

St. John's will be having outdoor worship services this summer! The 4 services that will be held outside will be June 13 & 20 and July 11 & 18. Please plan to join us!



Spring 2021

THANK YOU!

Mission Support Giving

We have often heard that the word "synod" comes from a root that means "walk together." In the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod we walk together to engage in ministries that no congregation can do alone. One of the ways that congregations support the synod's ministries of outreach, service, and support is by sharing a portion of their offerings in the form of mission support.

Thank you! Your generosity makes a difference. A little over half of your mission support funds ministries on our synod territory. Some of it comes back to congregations or groups of congregations in the form of grants! The rest is sent to the ELCA church wide organization to support ministries done in our name across the country and around the world.

Jesus calls his church to look outward to bring his good news to the world. Your faithfulness throughout the year in mission support sharing is one way your congregation answers that call. Thank you! For more information to share stories of how your giving is doing God's work, please contact georgiasuranofsky@hotmail.com.



SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

Our Synod is trying something new – and we need you! As many of you will know, our 2021 Synod Assembly (SA21) was scheduled to be at the Kalahari Resort in the Poconos. COVID canceled that plan. Our Synod Assembly for this year is to be virtual once again and is scheduled for June 4 & 5.



Our theme for SA21 is “Growing Young and Vital.

It will showcase our commitment to the nation-wide church renewal program called “Growing Young”. It will also introduce our three-pronged Synod-wide emphasis on the “Vital Signs,” signs of life and thriving among us. These Vital Signs are: **Loving the Land, Healing the Hurt, and Engaging the Stranger**. Our goal was to invite many churches and ministries in the Synod to participate by bringing your ministries in the three areas to display at the Kalahari Resort. **So, what to do, now that SA21 is virtual?**

Introducing NEPA Ministry Lab 2021! (MinLab for short.) MinLab is your opportunity to spotlight how your churches or organization’s ministries are already showing evidence of these Vital Signs. Where is your congregation shining as a “Jesus-Centered Community” (Growing Young)? Think of this day exactly as the name implies: *a ministry laboratory*. 1.) we give you a display area. You showcase your ministry in that space exactly how you choose. It is up to your creativity. 2.) this is your opportunity to mingle with others doing ministries like yours. And, 3.) perhaps most importantly, be inspired by others doing ministry around one of the other vital signs.

We will hold the event mainly outdoors at the Lutheran Center in Allentown – our Synod headquarters – on August 14, 2021 from 10:00AM to 3:00PM. More details about exactly when and how to participate will be coming soon. **This is where you come in!** How can your churches or organization’s ministries help all of us in our synod to see the signs of life among us?

This is your opportunity to proclaim to all the signs of life that are active in your local community. To inspire others to partner with you, or to start a ministry of their own. To show the rest of us how it works, right where you are planted. There will be lots of fun and excitement on full display. We will use as much of the Lutheran Center’s parking lot and property as we can to accommodate all who

TROUBLE THE WATER RACIAL JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION

Registration is now open for the Trouble the Water:

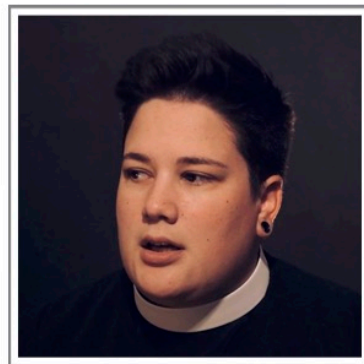
Racial Justice & Reconciliation event on Saturday, May 22. This is a completely virtual conference with our keynote speaker, the Rev. Cecee Mills, and featured speakers the Rev. Marsha Williams, Dr. Helen Davis, the Rev. Melissa Pohlman, and as both a workshop leader and preacher for the event we have the Rev. James Thomas. This is a day of **worship and workshops** to better grow in our understanding of racial justice and reconciliation that is open to all people: Pastors, Deacons, staff, lay member, non-church people, etc. Some of the topics of the workshops are a biblical view against racism, white privilege, how congregations can support communities during social unrest, & what is implicit bias is all about. Register from the synod's website. Please register and join us for this important and timely event. A suggested donation for the event is \$25 per person.

want to participate. There will be music – with an emphasis on Growing Young and Vital. Does your church have a ministry in music that reached out to others? Please bring that gift to share with us. There will be food – with an emphasis on food insecurity – an excellent example of all three of our vital signs. Loving the Land by using locally sourced ingredients; Healing the Hurt by sharing generously with those in need; Engaging the Stranger by showing love and compassion to “the least of these”. Join us!!

-Dan Raudenbush, Trinity Lutheran Church, Kutztown

Meet the Staff: Rev. Lauren Wolfe Blatt

I joined the synod staff in January as the **Director of Communication and Events**. I also serve full-time at St. John's, Mahoning, which is a small rural congregation nestled in the Mahoning Valley farmlands. I received my undergraduate degree in Philosophy from Alvernia University, my Mdiv from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and I am currently working on my DMin from United Lutheran Seminary. I was ordained in 2017 as a Minister of Word and Sacrament, and I love pastoring God's people.



I enjoy spending time at home with my wife, Hannah, our dogs (Riley & Sirius), and our cats (Finnegan & Tank). In my leisure time, I enjoy anything related to Pokemon, reading, video games, and completing projects around the house!

MAY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Holy Communion</i> <i>Fifth Sunday of Easter</i>	3 6:00 p.m. Grief Support	4	5 Donut Pick-up 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	6	7	8
9 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Sixth Sunday of Easter</i> Mother's Day	10	11 6:30 p.m. Book club meet (virtually)	12 6:30 p.m. Fundraising meeting	13	14	15 Fellowship Hall Reserved
16 10:00 a.m. Worship Baptism Hall Reserved Donut Orders Due <i>Seventh Sunday of Easter</i>	17 6:00 p.m. Grief Support	18	19	20 <i>Church Office Closed</i> Newsletter information deadline	21	22
23 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Holy Communion</i> <i>Day of Pentecost</i>	24	25 6:30 p.m. Book club meet (virtually)	26	27	28	29
30 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>First Sunday after Pentecost</i>	31 <i>Memorial Day</i>					



RUMMAGE SALE SET UP

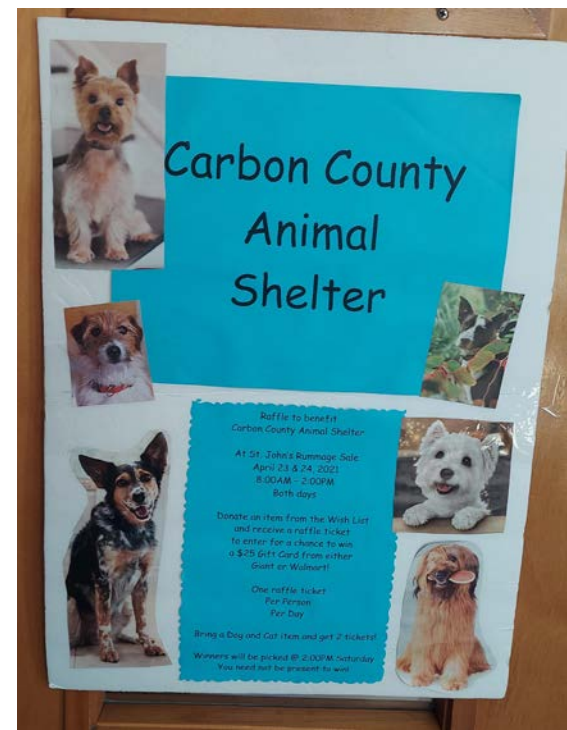


SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE





Thank you so much for all your donations! We collected \$206.00 in cash donations for the shelter along with all the goodies!!





Rummage Sale – A Success!!

A big Thank You to everyone who helped with our Rummage Sale. We pulled together and pulled this off. There were lots of positive comments and lots of sales made.

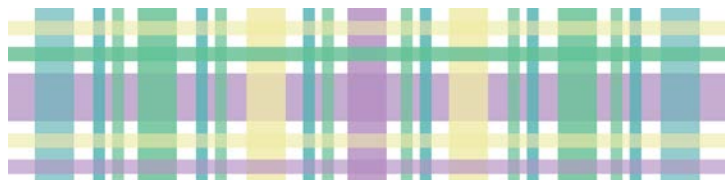
Our total for the two days was \$1,617.92!

Those items that did not sell will be donated to The Gathering Place Mission in Weissport, Pa for their rummage sale in June, 2021.

We are going to take a break from donations for now as we will not be having a rummage sale in the fall.

More info to come later as to when we will start taking donations and a tentative date for next year's sale!

Again, THANK YOU!



The week of May 30-June 5, 2021 we are responsible to supply food to Family Promise. Because of Covid we will not host the families but give the monetary donation needed to purchase food for the full week. We did this last year as well when we were scheduled. This date is an automatic schedule by Family Promise. ~ Thanks Colleen

"Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."



Acts 16:31, KJV



Jack and Jill Preschool at Trinity Lutheran Church, Leighton, is looking for an assistant pre-school teacher beginning August 2021. Interested individuals should email the Director of the Preschool at JackandJillPreschool@yahoo.com by May14, 2021. Additional information about the position and its requirements can be obtained through the email process.

Our "sister church" Ben Salem will be having a fundraiser by selling **HOMEMADE Peach Crumb Pies!** They are \$10.00 for a 9 inch pie and the deadline to order is May 9th. The pick-up date is Saturday May 22 from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Call Sue at 570-386-2880 if you would like to order!!



Ben Salem will also be having a Spring Rummage Sale on May 14th and 15th from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.



