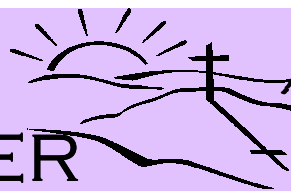


APRIL 2016

LIFE TOGETHER



Abiding Hope
Lutheran Church

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

Our greatest joy is declared in these words; our deepest hope rests on them. We go “all out” for our Easter services to express that joy—with choirs, flowers, and our brightest colors in worship, including gold. Often overlooked is the tradition that Easter is a season of joy, not simply one Sunday. Earlier generations called it Eastertide, or a “week of weeks,” consisting of the seven Sundays leading up to the Day of Pentecost. There are traditions associated with each of the Sundays, a few of which I’m going to highlight here. Taken together, the entire season tells the story of how the power of Jesus’ victory over death transforms us and the world.

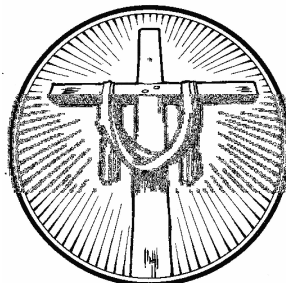
+The second Sunday of Easter tells the story of the disciples taking the resurrection message to heart. The tale of Thomas’ movement from skepticism to faith is told in dramatic fashion each year. (This is one of my favorite preaching texts of the year.) We see Jesus’ disciples transformed into “apostles”, sent out to declare the message of new life in His name.

+It may seem a bit odd but this week has been known as “Low Sunday”. This designation is based on our return to regular worship routines after the more elaborate and grand flourishes of the Easter Vigil and Easter Day. Some church members glibly comment that it also reflects much lower attendance than the previous week. Finally, there is no truth to the notion that this is designated as an official vacation Sunday for pastors. (*Oh my! I am taking it for a vacation weekend for a family wedding in Texas. It was a coincidence, really.*)

+ The fourth Sunday of Easter is known as “Good Shepherd Sunday.” All three years of our lectionary readings assign a portion of John 10 as the Gospel for the day, along with Psalm 23. We see Jesus as the true shepherd who rescues, gathers, and feeds us as his flock, for which he has given his life to protect and preserve.

+The Ascension of our Lord is marked on the fortieth day following Easter, as the scriptures recount it. It marks the end of our risen Lord’s days among his followers. This year it falls on May 5 (always a Thursday). Jesus departs from the Mount of Olives and returns to the “right hand of the Father”, as we declare in the historic creeds.

+Among many Christians, Ascension Day ranks as the third most important festival of the liturgical year, behind Easter and Christmas. Like many



Abiding Hope’s
mission is to
be a loving family...

LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!

Pray with us and join
with us as we seek
to live in a loving com-
munity with one another
and share the hope of
Jesus Christ with those
who need it most!



“LIFE TOGETHER”

A newsletter from
your friends
and family at
Abiding Hope
Lutheran Church
5312 Peach Street
Erie PA 16509
814-868-8685
fax - 814-864-3856
Church e-mail:
ahadministrator
@hotmail.com
Pastor’s email:
prdavec526@yahoo.com

***Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!***

congregations, we will mark it on the following Sunday. In recent years, some congregations have begun to renew this celebration's importance.

Taken together, all these traditions speak to a deeper joy we seek to express. We do all of these things to declare that Easter is an encounter with our living Lord Jesus. It is an event, not simply long ago, but in our lives today. Easter is the beginning of our own resurrection by the power of Jesus' deathless love.

Easter is an explosion of hope, propelling us from halting disbelief into fervent witness and genuine love for our neighbors, both near and far. It is the lift off for every believer filled with the joy of seeing the presence of the risen Lord at work in humble hearts. Easter is the unfolding of the future in which death has lost its sting (I Cor. 15:55) and 'power and riches, wisdom and strength, honor and blessing, and glory' belong to God and our risen Savior, Jesus Christ (Rev. 7:12).

Alleluia! Christ is Risen Indeed!

Pr. Dave Connor

***Council Spends Day on Ministry Planning***

On Saturday, March 12, the church council and Pastor Connor spent a half-day session looking at the congregation's challenges in mission and ministry. Pastor Connor and the council members took time to know each other better, beginning with an exercise of personal introductions.

Through the introductions, the council reviewed much of the history of the congregation, sharing how each of them came to be at Abiding Hope. Like many AHLIC members, council members include lifelong Lutherans, along with folks who have come from many other traditions. Just as varied were the needs and motivations that drew each person to join the congrega-

tion.

Pastor Connor shared some of the cultural changes that have significantly impacted congregational life in recent years. Americans have moved away from being 'joiners'; participation in group activities has dramatically dropped. This includes churches, civic clubs (Lions, Rotary, etc.), and sport leagues like bowling and softball. He noted that some activities like bowling remain popular, but committing to long term involvement has nearly disappeared.

From that development comes the growth of persons who choose not to participate in any religious community. Approximately 1 in 5 adults identify themselves as

Parish Staff and Leadership

Interim Pastor
David Connor

Pastor Emeritus
Albert U. Gesler, Jr.

Office Assistant
Denise Miller

Financial Secretary
Liz Stroup

Coordinators of Music Ministry
Edwina Gesler
Joe Burgert
Bob Holderer

Director of Parish Nurse Program
Jeanne Tropper RN

2016 Church Council

President
Rick Penn
Vice-President
June Beard
Secretary
Jacque Holmberg
Treasurer:
Cheryl Tufts
Members:
Andy Saska
Missy Smith
Don Fuller
Joe Burgert
Kevin Petrone

Council Spends Day on Ministry



"none" when asked about religious affiliation. This segment of the population has shown the greatest growth of any identified group since studies began in the 1980s.

Pastor Connor shared that these adults, many in the age group 22-45, also call themselves "spiritual, but not religious."

When asked, they report that they strive to live ethically; they regularly pray, and even read the Bible and/or other inspirational literature. Many participate in community service efforts, including justice and environmental efforts. What they are seeking is a community where they can find a sense of genuine belonging and opportunities to 'make a difference', that is, live out their strongly held values. Pastor Connor asserted that faith communities remain uniquely equipped to provide these things.

The discussion concluded with two exercises. The first was forming a 'mission slogan' for the congregation. The slogan is meant to be a simple statement for introducing the work and purpose of the congregation. The group arrived at this-- "On the move with Christ", reflecting both our upcoming relocation and a commitment to action for Christ's purposes in our community.

The final exercise was to dig deeper into one of the elements from the Lenten study Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. Council members brainstormed some

ideas for practicing 'Radical Hospitality' here at

Abiding Hope. Strategies were set that were considered as 'simple and easy to do' and those that would be "big and bold." Here are some of the ideas:

+ Train greeters and ushers to assist visitors to quickly understand the basics of worship.

+ Have more all-member events, to build congregational unity and excitement.

+ Update and maintain a congregational website with current news, schedules, and events.

+ Plan and carry out an 'open house' at the new church site for the community.

+ Invite local TV weatherman Tom Atkins to have his 'backyard report' at new site.

+ Conduct a door-to-door invitation to the neighborhood surrounding the new site.

+ Plan and carry out a public procession for the move, with news coverage.

The council welcomes and encourages every Abiding Hope member to add to this list. As well, teams will be forming to carry out actions like these. We are counting on your participation!



Abiding Hope Contacts

Ministers

All the members of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

Council

Rick Penn-814-460-8457

Parish Nurse

Jeanne Tropper -814-823-1484

Thrivent Financial

Edwina Gesler - 814-899-0762

John & Jacque Holmberg - 814-864-3797

Worship & Music

Edwina Gesler 814-899-0762

Joe Burgert - 814-838-3820

Building Committee

Mike Paris - 814-450-3419

Finance

Cheryl Tufts-814-882-6860

Office

Denise Miller - 814-868-8685

June Beard-814-450-1579

Building Maintenance

Bob Hicks - 814-868-8560

Hospitality

Jacque Holmberg
814-864-3797

Mission Committee

Rick Penn - 814-460-8457

Care Committee

Connie Burgert - 814-838-3820

Outreach Committee

Ed Whitbred - 814-397-0990

KAFP

William Overmoyer-836-1676
& Mary Christie-490-7618

Christian Ed

Missy Smith - 814-490-6323

Altar Care

Cheryl Hicks - 814-868-8560

Stewardship

Church Council

WELCA

Liz Stroup - 814-881-3194

Newsletter

Nancy Cuning -814-833-3109

A LOVING FAMILY...LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!



April Birthdays

4/1 Brent Woomer
 4/2 McKenna Hart
 4/3 Caitlyn Smith
 4/5 Charlotte Doehrel
 4/5 Robert Plyler
 4/8 Miles Woomer
 4/9 Vanessa Powell
 4/10 April Frank
 4/11 Mariah Cree
 4/11 Kelly Lasher
 4/12 Timothy Kuzma
 4/13 Diana West
 4/15 Ester Klakamp
 4/16 Martha Harris
 4/17 Jackie Bull
 4/19 Kerry Roward
 4/19 Luke Runyan
 4/20 Mary Elizabeth Meier
 4/22 Thelma Cesnick
 4/22 Tina Sontheimer
 4/23 Christopher DiPlacido
 4/27 Aaron Doehrel
 4/27 Kelly Poff
 4/28 Tiffany Bucci
 4/29 Teresa Burgess



April Wedding Anniversaries

4/8 LeRoy & Charlotte Doehrel
 4/9 Kenneth & Patricia Smith
 4/16 David & Heather Hart
 4/23 Donald & Brenda Huth
 4/25 Brian & Melissa Smith
 4/29 Catherine & Brian Logan

Prayer requests

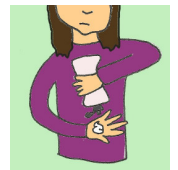
The following members of the Abiding Hope family are dealing with health issues. If you would like to send a card to let them know they are in your thoughts, addresses are listed in our current directory or call the church office. Please remember: The Family of Lois Bolla (Don & Carol King's sister-in-law), The Family of John Engel (Al & Edwina's brother-in-law), Judi Pacileo, Jo Critchfield, Ted Lata, Jan Tower, Dan & Peggy Kaeberlein and Family, Marge

Katarzynski, Baby Girl Kenly Merry & Family, Gordon Wunch, Joshua Haight, Hannah Vogt, Dan Ditzel, Carrie Fiske, Marilyn Martin, The Hoehn Family, The Turner Family, Eileen, Joyce Brucker, Chetta Crosby, Mary Anne Grumblatt, Maryellen H., Joyce Hersperger, Elmer Lawrence, Mary Sontheimer, Jim Pacileo, Kevin Petrone, Damian Santabene, Evelyn Senger, Joel Swartz.



Project Dignity Monthly Ministry Appeal

Each month Project Dignity is collecting one-of-a-kind, non perishable items. Eanthe the KAFP hopes to gather enough of a specific item to provide each of our families with that personal care or household item so that our Food Pantry patrons have not only healthy meals but personal dignity and a clean home. Please donate monthly by dropping your items in the collection basket in the gathering area. **April: Hand and/or Body Lotions**



ELCAvotes!

We are called to conversation and prayer around our role as U.S. residents and as people of faith in ensuring our election systems promote dignity and respect for all. We are called to act by speaking out as advocates and engaging in local efforts to guarantee the right to vote to all citizens. To sign up for up-to-date information on ELCAvotes, visit: <http://bit.ly/ELCAvotes>.

ELCAvotes is an initiative to:

- Expand the role of the church in encouraging faithful and non-partisan voter participation by providing faith based resources around voting;
- Provide a framework for all Lutherans to understand and speak out about the intersection of voting/elections, racial/gender and economic justice;
- Provide young adults the tools to understand and speak about what it means to be a young person of faith who is civically engaged; and
- Engage with and equip ethnic communities to talk about voting rights and race and their connection with elections today.

(From <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Publicly-Engaged-Church/ELCAvotes>)

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Mission Support = Benevolence = Advocacy

How are our offering dollars used by our NWPA synod and the ELCA churchwide ministries? The past couple of months, we have looked at two synod-supported ministries: Gettysburg Seminary (theological studies) and Lutherlyn (outdoor ministries).

This month we take a look at Lutheran Advocacy Ministry (\$900). To advocate is to plead the cause of those suffering injustice. Advocacy ministry is rooted in Scripture, Lutheran theology and our baptismal calling to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. It is expressed by advocating with and for our neighbors in need, for the sake of the common good, in places where important political and economic decisions are being made. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa) is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and serves as a State Public Policy Office of the ELCA. The LAMPa Mission Statement is "In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good." LAMPa addresses

issues such as civil rights, creation justice, child protection and welfare, economic justice, education, health care, housing, hunger, immigration, predatory lending, and racial justice. LAMPa's ministry is based on ELCA Social Statements and social policy resolutions and the ELCA Constitution. To become involved go to <http://www.lutheranadvocacy.org>, or contact Jacques Holmberg at 864-3797.

There is also an ELCA Washington Office that works for change in public policy at the federal level, based on the experiences of Lutheran ministries and projects around the world and in communities across the U.S.

To sign up for the national e-Advocacy network and receive federal legislative updates and alerts, go to www.elca.org, and Search "e-advocacy"

Like ELCA Advocacy on Facebook at "[ELCA Advocacy](https://www.facebook.com/ELCAAdvocacy)"

Follow ELCA Advocacy on Twitter at [@ELCAadvocacy](https://twitter.com/ELCAadvocacy) www.twitter.com/ELCAadvocacy



April Scriptures

- 4/1 Acts 5:17-26
- 4/2 Luke 24:36-40
- 4/3 Acts 5:27-32
Psalm 118:14-29;
Psalm 150
Revelations 1:4-8
John 20:19-31
- 4/4 Revelations 1:9-20
- 4/5 Revelations 2:8-11
- 4/6 Luke 12:4-12
- 4/7 Revelations 3:14-22
- 4/8 Revelations 4:1-11
- 4/9 Luke 14:12-14
- 4/10 Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]
Psalm 30
Revelations 5:11-14
John 21:1-19
- 4/11 Acts 9:19b-31
- 4/12 Acts 26:1-18
- 4/13 Luke 5:1-11
- 4/14 Revelations 5:1-10
- 4/15 Revelations 6:1-7:4
- 4/16 Luke 12:29-32
- 4/17 Acts 9:36-43
Psalm 23
Revelations 7:9-17
John 10:22-30
- 4/18 Revelations 15:1-4
- 4/19 Acts 9:32-35
- 4/20 John 10:31-42
- 4/21 Revelations 10:1-11
- 4/22 Revelations 11:15
- 4/23 Revelations 11:16-19
- 4/24 Acts 11:1-18
Psalm 148
Revelations 21:1-6
John 13:31-35
- 4/25 Acts 11:19-26
- 4/26 Acts 11:27-30
- 4/27 Luke 10:25-28
- 4/28 Acts 15:36-41
- 4/29 Acts 16:1-8
- 4/30 Luke 19:1-10

Name Tags

Please continue to wear your name tags at services so Pastor Dave may become familiar with the Abiding Hope family. Advise Denise in the office if you do not have a tag.



WELCA Spring Gathering

Saturday, April 16th
St. John's Lutheran Church
23rd & Peach Streets
9:30 AM Registration
10:00 AM Program

RSVP to Judy Sweeney at 455-5685

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**Watch Parish Notes and the Bulletin Board for more information or contact Cheryl Hicks**

## *Abiding Hope Council Update*

At the March 8 meeting, the February 2 minutes were approved. Written- and verbal-committee reports were received. The complete minutes may be found on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Highlights include:

- Pr. Dave C. reported his FIRST IMPRESSIONS (Congregation seems generally friendly and comfortable among themselves; Leadership seems a bit overburdened and stressed to greater degree than general membership; Congregation seems solid in Lutheran identity and tradition), his OBSERVATIONS/CONCERNS (Congregation seems segmented into several small groups – possibly centered around worship schedule); Late arrivals and early departures; Connection of the congregation and the community is hard to see; Demographic profile (especially age); Connection to synod and wider church seems weak; Level of excitement/engagement regarding relocation seems low, and his INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS: (Reconfigure worship schedule prior to relocation; Possible "Every Member" contact process and outreach; Intensive outreach/publicity campaign leading up to relocation; Identify and engage local ministry partners—become part of an active cluster?
- The Parochial/Congregational report is due.
- Pr. Dave C. will be on vacation March 30- April 5 (for a family event) and he will participate in a continuing education event April 17-18 (beginning after worship).
- The memorials/fundraising/capital funds campaign planning continues with Pr. Dave C. consulting members of the congregation and Kevin P. serving as council liaison in this endeavor.
- New business – None.
- Please read the articles in this newsletter which will elaborate additional highlights discussed by council. (Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 7:00 PM at church.)



### **First Communion Class receives First Communion on Easter Sunday!**



**We rejoice with Lindsey Burgert, Gabriel Stroup & Isabella Smith on this milestone in their faith journey!**

## *What is going on in our synod and cluster?*

The most recent "NWPA Synod Newsletter" will be posted in a timely manner on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall, or can be read online at [www.nwpaelca.org](http://www.nwpaelca.org), select Resources. Here is a little of what you will read about: CAMPBLAST at Lutherlyn Sat. May 7 at 11AM to 4:30 PM (free); 2016 Synod Assembly June 16-18 at Thiel College; Prayer Labyrinth Dedication at synod office Apr 23 at 2 PM; Youth Fest 2016 at Lutherlyn Apr 8-10 (Gr. 7-12); "On the Trail of

Martin Luther" June 12-22, 2017, info meeting June 18 at 10:30 AM at Thiel College; 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bethesda Gala at the Riverside Apr 8. There are no cluster meetings presently scheduled. All West Erie Cluster congregations were invited to the Abiding Hope Easter Vigil and some participated. Who is part of the West Erie Cluster you ask? Abiding Hope, Immanuel, St. James (Fairview), St. John's (Girard), St. Paul's, St. Peter's (Hershey Road), and Trinity (McKean).

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## Women of the ELCA

All women of the congregation are invited to participate in any, and all, activities of WELCA, as you are able. The monthly meetings, the 3rd Tuesday evening of every month, offer various activities (Bible study, crafts, prayer, etc.) - and always offer a time for fellowship, food and fun. Come join us. Our next meeting is: **Tuesday, April 19th at 6:30 PM at Cheryl Hick's house on 5221 Schwartz Dr., Erie.** Join us!

## You are invited to CampBlast! at Lutherlyn

**Saturday, May 7, 2016 - FREE!**

**Join us for a day of FUN that highlights all that Lutherlyn has to offer.**

Horseback riding, campfire, crafts, gaga, archery, high ropes course, zipline, bouldering room, hikes, nature activities, canoeing, hay rides, games, sports, archaeology, rockets, disc golf, kayaking, biking, tours, displays and activities that highlight the "second season" (non-summer) things going on at camp, great food, worship, presentations, **visit the NEW Woodland Pottery Studio and MORE! The best part.... EVERYTHING IS FREE!**

There will be special summer camp discounts for NEW campers & for registered campers who bring friends who are NEW to Lutherlyn! Join us for a GREAT day at camp!

**No registration is needed.** Just show up with all your friends, family, neighbors, and anyone else looking for a fun, free day.

**How Do I Get There?** (1 ½ hour drive, 93 mile via I-79)

Follow I-79 S to US-422 E/New Castle Rd, exit 99. Merge onto US-422 E.

Turn right onto Dick Rd. (about 8 mile, right at the old 84-Lumber Store)

Turn right onto Lutherlyn Ln (about 1-1/2 mile)

### The Schedule

11:00am – Join Us for Worship in the Amphitheater

Noon-3:30pm – FREE Lunch served in the Dining Hall

Noon-4:00pm – TONS of ACTIVITIES!! (detailed schedule will be available)

4:00-4:30pm – Closing Campfire at Lower Lake

CAMP LUTHERLYN, PO Box 355 Prospect, PA 16052 [www.lutherlyn.com](http://www.lutherlyn.com)

Phone (724) 865-2161 Fax (724) 865-9794 E-mail [email@lutherlyn.com](mailto:email@lutherlyn.com)



### Upcoming Classes at Lutherlyn

**Apr 9 - Pottery & Blacksmith**

**Apr 22-23 - Quilting, Pottery & Blacksmith**

**May 13-14 - Pottery & Blacksmith**

**Jun 4 - Pottery & Blacksmith**

### Register for Classes Online

Learn More About the Woodland Center for Arts & Crafts

[www.lutherlyn.com](http://www.lutherlyn.com)

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### ***Musical Notes***

The Adult Choir and Boy's Choir were an awesome addition to our Lenten, Holy Week and Easter services. Thanks so much!

No Adult Choir practice in April. In preparation for Pentecost and Trinity Sundays, practice will resume on Wed. May 4th at 7:40 PM.

*Edwina Gesler*

### ***For ALL volunteers of our Children/Youth Ministries***

**D**o you help out with SCS, VBS, or with any of our other Children/Youth Ministry activities? Please read this article. By July 1, 2016 all volunteers interacting with children must provide copies of their Report of Criminal History from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) and their Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services (Child Abuse) form to be filed in the church office. If you have these approved forms because of your participation with another volunteer organi-

zation, please bring your originals to the church office to be copied and filed. These forms must be updated every 36 months. Note: Fees for child abuse clearances and criminal background checks required by the Child Protective Services Law are waived for volunteers working with children. Guidelines with additional information may be found at [www.nwpaelca.org](http://www.nwpaelca.org) near the bottom of the Home page, or please speak with any council member. Thank you for caring about this matter.

### ***How will we change the world?***

**T**here are many ways that we, as individuals, or congregations, or communities, can boldly participate in changing the world. On March 9 during our Lenten Soup Supper/Table Talk time, Ryan Ebner, our local ELCA Regional Gift Planner, helped us to explore some of the various possibilities. His presentation meshed well with the theme for that evening's discussion: Extravagant Giving. Ryan Ebner's task is to offer gift planning resources to ELCA members and congregations in order to help create a gift plan to support ministries (for which we are passionate) that will work for today and

last into the future. He would like to meet with you to start a conversation. It is interesting to note that Ryan participated in our preschool program (at a much younger age!), and that he graduated from high school and served on staff at Lutherlyn with Jonali Homberg Derry. In fact, Ryan was hired as Lutherlyn's Development Director for four years. Congratulations to Ryan Ebner in his new position with the ELCA - and if YOU would like to talk or meet with him, his contact information is cell: 814-823-3285, or [ryan.ebner@elca.org](mailto:ryan.ebner@elca.org).

### ***Let's all "Throw in the Towel"***

**T**he Outreach Committee's new campaign "Throw in the Towel" encourages members to donate gently used (or new) towels and wash clothes etc. in the box in the back of the church for newly arrived immigrants.



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## ***Highmark 5k Walk to benefit KAFP***

The Highmark 5k Walk, to be held Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2016, will earn funds to assist the Kearsarge Area Food Pantry. Our own Bob Hicks will be doing the 5k walk. Every penny donated sponsoring Bob is applied to the food pantry bills from Second Harvest Food Bank. A sponsor sheet is

on the table under the mailboxes with an envelope for the money (the money will then be locked up in the office). Any questions can be directed to Bob Hicks, Bill Overmoyer or Mary Christie.



## ***Call Committee and MSP***

Thank you to these Abiding Hope members who have agreed to serve on the Call Committee: Judi Pacileo, Missy Smith, John Holmberg, Teresa Penn, Marsha Santabene, and Ken Smith. In the ELCA, each bishop is responsible for the way the Call Process is managed within their respective territory. Our Call Committee will be communicating with the office of Bishop Ralph Jones as we move forward in calling a new pastor. Related to this task, the Abiding

Hope Ministry Site Profile (MSP) was posted online on 2/4/16. This posting allows rostered leaders to search for ministry openings, to read a basic snapshot of information about each opening, and to learn the appropriate contact person for each call process. If you would like to read the Abiding Hope MSP, as prepared by our ad hoc Transition Team, it is posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.



Do you know a member of Abiding Hope who could use a card of encouragement or support? Please communicate with Connie Burgert by putting a note in her church mailbox or emailing her at [cburgert@roadrunner.com](mailto:cburgert@roadrunner.com)

## ***Notes from the Building Committee***

Work continues on God's new house on W. Grandview Blvd. Interior sound proofing insulation is complete; ceiling drywall is also complete and crews continue to work on wall installation. Some decisions on speaker systems have been made with more to come. Kitchen design and cabinets decisions need to be finalized soon. The design of our multiple glass doors into the sanctuary have been made.

Last month the Lord provided for us once again. Mike Peck of Renaud-Peck donated a slightly used 36" stainless steel commercial gas/electric stove and microwave for our new kitchen.

Lots of work left to do and much work for members to do to prepare to move to W. Grandview Blvd. in 4 to 5 short months. For more information on our building progress and an opportunity to ask questions of the Building Committee please plan to attend the April 3rd First Sunday Fellowship Hour at 9:30. God Bless.

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## *A Message From Parish Nurse Jeanne Tropper RN*

**A**pril is designated as "Child Abuse Prevention Month". Unfortunately, child abuse occurs all too frequently as this article will explain. In my association with the homeless population, I have listened to many stories from victims who have experienced personal abuse in one way or another.

Please read this article and remember that victims can not only be the young but our elderly. And it is our responsibility to protect them and to report the abuse.

Please contact me if any concerns/  
comments....thanks, Jeanne

**C**hild Abuse: Injury, or even death, of a child through abuse is frightfully common. Child abuse can result from physical, emotional, or sexual harm; and it can even result from neglect. There are multiple causes, including households that suffer alcoholism, anger issues, and substance abuse.

### ***Definition***

Child abuse is widespread and can occur in any cultural, ethnic, and income group. Child abuse can be physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual. It can also result from neglect. Abuse can result in serious injury to the child and possibly even death.

Studies show that one in four girls and one in eight boys are sexually abused before the age of 18, and that approximately one in 20 children are physically abused each year. Physical abuse involves harming a child by, for example, burning, beating, or breaking their bones. Child sexual abuse is the deliberate exposure of a minor child to sexual activity that the child cannot comprehend or consent to. This means a child is forced or talked into sex or sexual activities by another person. This behavior includes acts such as inappropriate touching of a child's breasts or genitalia, someone exposing their genitalia to a child, fondling, oral-genital contact, genital and anal intercourse, as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, and exposure to pornography.

Child neglect occurs when someone does not provide the necessities of life to a child, either intentionally or with reckless disregard for the child's well-being. This can include physical neglect, such as withholding food, clothing, shelter, or other necessities. Emotional neglect includes withholding love or comfort or affection. Medical neglect occurs when medical care is withheld.

### ***Symptoms***

It's not always easy to recognize when a child has been abused. Children who are abused are often afraid to complain because they are fearful that they will be blamed or that no one will believe them or because the person who abused them is someone they love very much. Parents are often unable to recognize symptoms of abuse because they may not want to face the truth.

If you suspect a child has been sexually abused, the child should be examined as soon as possible by a trained health care professional; it can't be stressed enough that an abused child needs access to special support and treatment as soon as possible. A doctor's exam should not be delayed for any reason. Many signs of injury related to sexual abuse are temporary. Ideally, the exam should occur within 72 hours of the event or discovery. A complete physical exam must always be performed, so that the examiner can look for any signs of physical and sexual abuse. The two forms of abuse may coexist. The longer the abuse continues, the less likely the child will make full recovery.

Watch out for unexplained changes in your child's body or behavior. Conduct a formal examination only if you have reason to suspect your child has been abused. Otherwise, the child may become fearful. Be alert to any of the following changes:

*Signs of Physical Abuse:* Any injury (bruise, burn, fracture, abdominal or head injury) that cannot be explained

*Signs of Sexual Abuse:* Fearful behavior (nightmares, depression, unusual fears, attempts to run away); abdominal pain, bedwetting, uri-

## ***A Message From Parish Nurse Jeanne Tropper RN***

nary tract infection, genital pain or bleeding, sexually transmitted disease; extreme sexual behavior that seems inappropriate for the child's age

*Signs of Emotional Abuse:* Sudden change in self-confidence; headaches or stomachaches with no medical cause; abnormal fears, increased nightmares or attempts to run away

*Signs of Emotional Neglect:* Failure to gain weight (especially in infants), desperately affectionate behavior, voracious appetite and stealing food

### ***Treatments***

If you suspect a child has been abused, contact a pediatrician or a local child protective agency for help. Physicians are legally obligated to report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to authorities. They can also recommend a therapist and provide the necessary information for investigators. Doctors may also testify in court to obtain legal protection for the child or to help criminally prosecute an individual suspected of engaging in child sexual abuse.

Whatever the nature of the abuse, steps should be taken immediately to report the abuse and obtain help. Delaying a report decreases the child's chances for full recovery.

If he or she has been abused, your child will benefit from the services of a qualified mental health professional. You and other members of the family may be advised to seek counseling so that you'll be able to provide the support and comfort your child

needs. If someone in your family is responsible for the abuse, a mental health professional may be able to treat that person successfully, as well.

If your child has been abused, you may be the only person who can help him or her. Do not delay reporting your suspicions of abuse. Denying the problem will only worsen the situation; allowing the abuse to continue decreases the child's chance for full recovery. In any case of child abuse, the safety of the abused youngster is of primary concern. He or she needs to be in a safe environment free of the potential for continuing abuse.

In most cases, children who are abused or neglected suffer greater emotional than physical damage. A child who has been abused or otherwise severely mistreated may become depressed or develop suicidal, withdrawn, or violent behavior. An older child may use drugs or alcohol, try to run away, or abuse others. The younger the child is and the closer the child's relationship to the abuser, the more serious the emotional damage will be. As adults, they may develop marital and sexual difficulties, depression or suicidal behavior.

### **Sources**

American Psychiatric Association  
National Library of Medicine  
Administration for Children and Families  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
Department of Health and Human Services  
National Institutes of Health

Last reviewed 12/27/2015—Psychology Today

## ***Tune into – Virtual Member Meeting on April 12***

**W**ant to get the inside scoop from Thrivent Financials chief executive officer and chief financial officer? Tune in to the Virtual Member Meeting webcast on April 12 at 8:30 p.m. The online meeting is an opportunity for members to hear what's new from Thrivent's top leaders – and ask

questions. To participate from the comfort of your own home with a computer, tablet or smartphone and an Internet connection, you can register to watch at [Thrivent.com/](http://Thrivent.com/)



**A LOVING FAMILY...LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!**

## Financial Notes for March

| Abiding Hope Lutheran Church Building Fund          |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Northwest Savings Bank Business Insured Money Fund  |                |
| Sale of Property                                    | \$2,300,000.00 |
| Building expenses through March 20, 2016            | \$1,440,326.41 |
| Interest income & credits through February 29, 2016 | \$8,428.76     |
| 10% retainage held final payment                    | \$40,224.53    |
| Balance                                             | \$828,396.98   |
| Abiding Hope Lutheran Church                        |                |
| 2016 Treasurer's Report                             |                |
| Weekly offerings needed to meet budget              | \$2,681.35     |
| Ahead/Behind for year as of 3/20/16                 | -\$6,757.70    |



**First Sunday  
Fellowship Hour**  
~  
**Sunday, April 3rd  
9:30 AM**

Hosted by the  
Kearsarge Area Food  
Pantry

Come and share good  
eats and fellowship.  
Enjoy an update and  
Q & A about our new  
building on  
W. Grandview Blvd.

## "Cooking for Crowds"

A seminar for safe food handling is being offered through the Penn State Extension on Tuesday, April 5, 2016, 6:00 to 9:00pm at the Corry Higher Education Council. For further information or if you would like to participate in the class, please contact Jacque Holmberg, 864-3797. Individual, \$25; Group (up to 4) \$50, (\$5 for extra).

**Registration Deadline: Thursday, March 31.**

## Family Sleepover

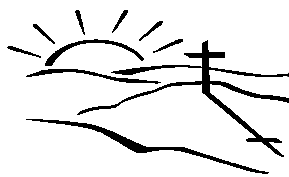
SLEEP OVER at Abiding Hope ~ Fun Friday, April 22nd to Saturday the 23rd. See for kids of all ages (even Moms & Missy Smith for more information or watch Dads) ~ Lots of things to do and good food Parish Notes.

## The Sonlight Puppets To Return to AHLC

SONLIGHT PUPPETS, present their 2016 Puppet Show with music, comedy and a holiday message on Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. The puppet show will be followed by kid-friendly crafts, activities and refreshments. The SONLIGHT PUPPETS, under the direction of Norma Buerk have been delighting audiences for the last twenty-nine years with home-made characters and a fresh, new show each year. If you're a kid, you won't want to miss it. Oh and kids, bring your friends.



**A LOVING FAMILY...LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!**



Abiding Hope  
Lutheran Church

5312 Peach Street  
Erie, PA 16509



**APRIL 2016**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**ABIDING HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
A LOVING FAMILY. . . LIVING THE FAITH,  
SHARING THE HOPE. . .  
OF CHRIST!

**Save The Date!**

Plan to attend the First Sunday Fellowship Hour on  
**May 1st at 9:30 AM** for good eats and an informational update  
and Q & A on our new building's progress.  
Sponsored by Thrivent.



"How Sweet the Sound" returns with a program for kids of all  
ages ~ The Sonlight Puppeteers at AHLIC on  
**Thursday, May 5th at 6:30 PM.**



CAMPBLAST at Lutherlyn ~ It's a Blast!  
**Saturday, May 7th 11AM to 4:30 PM** ~ See John or Jacque  
Holmberg for more information.

Worship Services with  
Holy Communion  
Sunday - 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday School - 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday - 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday - 5:30 p.m.



Rev. David Connor ~ Interim Pastor

Abiding Hope Lutheran Church  
(814)868-8685