

## All Saints Lutheran Church Newsletter – April 2026

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Dear Friends,

I read a cute joke recently. It goes like this:

*A man had a habit of grumbling about the meals his wife made when the family ate together. After he was done complaining, he would lead the family in a prayer thanking God for the food. One day after his usual combination complaint-prayer, his little girl asked, "Daddy, does God hear us when we pray?" "Why, of course," he replied. "God hears us every time we pray."*

*She paused on this a moment, and asked, "Does God hear everything we say the rest of the time?"*

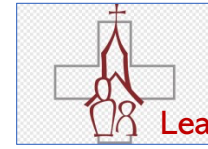
*"Yes, dear, every word," he replied, encouraged that he had inspired his daughter to be curious about spiritual matters. However, his pride was quickly turned to humility... "Then which does God believe?"*

There is nothing quite like a child holding up a mirror for us to look at ourselves. In this joke is a good question to ask ourselves. Do we live the way we say we believe? Do we live our lives reflecting what we believe about God? Or are we, just like this father, only playing lip service to our faith.

As we get ready for Easter and all the celebrations that go with it, maybe it's good if we take a little time to think about our own actions. Do our actions truly show what we believe? If not, maybe it's a good time to take some time to reconnect with God and rediscover what our lives might look like if our actions truly showed what we believe.

God's peace,

*Pastor Serena*



[Lead us, Lord](#)

- Pastor Serena Mollenkopf-Grill, Transition Pastor
- Council President, Ann Spear Mayer
- Council Vice President, Lori Gawlak
- Council Secretary, Barbara Kurasch
- Financial Secretary, Frank Wald
- Treasurer, Christine Jancewicz
- Financial Consultant, Joanne Mauer

Council Members:

- Beth Cheney
- Joan Fabian
- Marc Schwartz
- Linda Spencer
- Beverly Zier





**Thank you to Joanne Mauer for MANY years as All Saints Treasurer. What an amazing job Joanne has served our church over many years.**

The transition to our new Treasurer is proceeding smoothly. Chris Jancewicz is now our approved signature at M&T bank. Letters have been sent allow her access to Wilmington and Certera Funds. Joanne is acting as a consultant until training and transition is completed by the end of May. Frank Wald has finished his training and is now the Financial Secretary.

The members of All Saints Family have prayed for the following people for the last 30 days. Please continue to keep them in your prayers.

- † Family of Shirley Hellenbach
- † Mike
- † Family of Marilyn Rich
- † David Menz
- † Family of Betty O'Donnell
- † Miano family

## Scholarship News

The Tina and Dana Dueringer Scholarship and Memorial Fund have monies available for the 2026-2027 school year.

Recipients shall be active members of All Saints Lutheran Church or related in some way to the ministry of the congregation, complete high school this year and be registered to attend a college or graduate school in a degree program for the next semester.

All interested candidates may pick up an application on the table in the church narthex.



*The Tina and Dana Dueringer Scholarship and Memorial Fund was established by family and friends of Tina and Dana Dueringer as a lasting memorial with the purpose of honoring our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ by assisting young people embarking on a career, with Scholarship aid.*

*Applications must be turned in by  
May 3, 2026*

*Bev Zier, Chairperson*

If you have any interesting tidbits or stories you would like to add to our "Church Buzz" page on our website and Facebook page, give the information to Beth Cheney or email to Beth at [bwc143@verizon.net](mailto:bwc143@verizon.net)

# Council Highlights

## March 2026

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- Pastor Serena will not be in the office on Maundy Thursday and will be gone for two weeks from 19 May-2 June; Pastor Scott from First Lutheran will to cover any pastoral emergencies.
- The annual All Saints financial audit will be conducted on 24 March 2026.
- The transition to our new Treasurer is proceeding smoothly. Chris Jancewicz has assumed many of the responsibilities and Joanne Mauer will act as consultant until training and transition is completed by the end of May.
- A new hot water tank has been installed and the boiler room has been cleared and cleaned.
- Applications for the Dueringer scholarships will go out next month and will be sent to the other SECC churches.
- Unclaimed end-of-year giving statements and offering envelopes will be mailed out.
- The SECC meeting on 19 March at All Saints will be used to package all the donated items for the homeless so they can be delivered.
- Annual committee reports are due to Barbara Kurasch by 1 April 2026.
- Members from all four SECC churches, as well as Transition pastors, met with Rachel Sosebee, Synod Mobility Specialist, on 2 March 2026 at All Saints to discuss coordinating our MSPs and leadership searches.
- Upcoming Council terms were discussed. We will seek to extend the Temporary Policy Modification of April 2024 to allow Ann Mayer, Beth Cheney, and Lori Gawlak to serve another year and Barbara Kurasch will start a second 3-year term. Discussion was held on the crucial need to recruit new Council members and suggestions were compiled. Anyone interested in serving on All Saint's Church Council, please contact Ann Mayer or any Council member.

### **Lenten Services Schedule**

- † 3/25 at First Blasdell
- † 4/2 Maundy Thursday at All Saints
- † 4/3 Good Friday at First Blasdell
- † Easter Sunday Service – First 9:15 am and All Saints at 11:00 am





## April Birthdays

Sue DeCarlo	4/2
Carol Goodberry	4/3
Emily Lotocki	4/4
Rev. Paul R. Mertzlufft	4/5
Lana Pavlik	4/7
Livia Walbridge	4/8
Leslie Carr	4/9
Miles Marcin	4/9
Madilyn Pavlik	4/13
Raymond Fitch	4/13
Jameson Marcin	4/15
Landon Blette	4/16
Ronald Heintz	4/19
Jonathan Fabian	4/28
Pat Chambers	4/28
Eryn Gawlak	4/30



## April Anniversaries

John & Lois Stutzman  
4/11/1970

Laura & Robert Kaiser  
4/16/1993

### NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for May  
Newsletter is  
**April 15<sup>th</sup>.**

Please have all articles  
in by this time.

Thank You! Send to  
Beth Cheney

@ bwc143@verizon.net

Annual Reports are due by  
April 1, 2026. Please send your  
reports to Barbara Kurasch at  
bkurasch@gmail.com



## SECC Group at WORK!

Thank you to all who donated items for the homeless families in Western New York from All Saints, First Lutheran, Good Shepherd, and Grace Lutheran. We organized three full truck-loads of deliveries to Family Promise, Hearts for the Homeless and Hamburg Family Hotel Helpers. What a difference we make when we work together.



## From Hearts for the Homeless Newsletter: Hunger to Hope - God Rewrites The Story

Behind every meal served at Hearts, there is a story.

Our staff and volunteers hear stories of job loss, illness, addiction, broken relationships, and complicated financial hardship. Many of these conversations happen quietly — during check-in at the pantry, beside the Mobile Soup Kitchen bus, or while selecting clothing from our closet. **What begins as a need for food often becomes something more: a relationship built on trust.**

At Hearts, with your help, people are nourished physically and spiritually. Together, we meet immediate needs with food and clothing, but we also walk alongside our neighbors with something that lasts far longer than a warm meal — hope for eternity.

Rita is one of those neighbors.



Her life has been filled with twists and difficult consequences from past choices. Though she continues to face daily challenges, **she has also experienced the restoring power of God's love.** Over time, through conversations, prayer, and simple faithfulness, we have watched Christ begin to rewrite her story.

Recently, Rita shared how excited she is for Easter Sunday. She plans to attend church and prepare a meal — provided through Hearts Harvest Food Pantry — to celebrate what the cross means in her life today.

**“My life was dark before Jesus found me at the food pantry. He helps me every day and is my friend even though I have nothing to give Him back. He loves me, and I can't be more thankful that you told me about Him.”**

**— Rita, Hearts Harvest Food Pantry Client**

Many who walk through our doors carry regret, shame, or the weight of their past. **At the cross, Jesus paid it all** — for Rita and for each of us — and that truth changes everything. Through relationship ministry, we see lives transformed. Not instantly. Not perfectly. But faithfully.

**This Easter, we are reminded that resurrection is real — and so is restoration.** Your partnership makes this possible. Every meal you help provide creates space for conversation, prayer, and hope. You are not only feeding someone today—you are helping introduce them to the hope of Christ that lasts for eternity. Thank you for your support and Happy Easter!

Check out the new SECC poster on the bulletin board near the calendar. The SECC group shared pictures of each church during the Christmas season.



**"He is Risen Cookies"** - Whatever you choose to call them, I hope you will enjoy this special recipe and begin to include it in your Easter celebration this year. Martha Muck

Easter Story Cookies - To be made the evening before Easter.

You need:

1 cup whole pecans  
1 tsp vinegar  
3 egg whites  
pinch salt  
1 cup sugar  
zipper baggie  
wooden spoon  
waxed paper  
tape  
Bible

Preheat oven to 300 degrees (this is important - don't wait until you're half done with the recipe).

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, the Roman soldiers beat him. Read John 19:1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Ps 34:8 and John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 4:1-3.

Fold in the broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons full unto wax paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matt 27:57-60. Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn oven OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus tomb was sealed. Read Matt 27:65-66.

GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matt. 28:1-9.

## Real Talk with Ryan...

# S-A-T-U-R-D-A-Y, night!

Thirsty Thursdays, TGIF, and a slow Sunday morning



by Ryan Lotocki on March 18, 2026

**THURSDAY:** It all starts with the Thursday thing.

Jesus and the boys were just hanging out when he asked if anyone was hungry or thirsty and wanted to go out for a last supper.

“Last supper? What’s wrong?”

“...I mean regular supper. Everything’s chill. We’re good.”

So they head down Main Street or whatever, and Peter’s like, “Look, man, we aren’t going to find a table for 13 at this hour, it’s slammed.”

And Jesus is like, “Actually, Pete, we need to find a table for 26.”

And Peter’s like, “Why???”

“Well, I want us to all sit on the same side of the table.”

**FRIDAY:** Good is a relative term.

But as is the right of all humans who roam the Earth, some days suck.

Some days more than suck. Some days, in fact, are the worst days. There are days, just a handful of them, I hope, that years, sometimes decades later, we remember as if it were yesterday. We can still picture the scenes that keep us up some nights. Days that have their own soundtracks with their own voices or sounds that put us into fight or flight, or sometimes freeze mode.

Maybe it's a big moment. A huge loss.

Maybe it's when everything came crashing down at once.

Maybe it's when all the little things snowballed and built up and swept you off your feet.

The worst days of our lives all share some things: There's a level of loss, guilt, pain, betrayal that one doesn't easily forget, nor let go. There isn't much good about those Fridays.

**SATURDAY:** Saturday (the second day), just kinda happens.

**SUNDAY:** He is Risen.

No, I mean really. Like unbelievably really. Like the greatest things that could ever happen, really.

Days that don't count yet make you count your blessings. It's when everything wrong goes right. When everything dark turns light. When, despite the struggles and pains, the remains that rise again remind us again, and again, and again, that in everything, there is a hope that surpasses understanding.

Easter Sunday is a party in and of itself. It's victory over death. It's renewal, new beginnings, it's everything to everyone. Where anyone can overcome the defeat of Fridays.

Shed, for us? Died for who?

So we drink our Thirsty Thursday drink to remind us of that.

To remind us in the lowest of lows that there is a highest of highs awaiting with the most high...

And ideally i'd wrap up there if it weren't for just one tiny little thing I can't let go...

Saturday.

Everybody's waiting for a Saturday night. Whether they realize it or not, because that is life.

We have our Good Fridays. We've experienced our Easter Sundays. But we live our lives on Saturday.

And maybe there's a little bit of beauty in there that often gets overlooked.

Saturday isn't the highest of highs or the lowest of lows. However, it is the in between of the unavoidable. It's the day when nothing seems to be happening, and everything feels unresolved. The day after loss, before hope becomes real.

There have been bad days, and worse days are to come. The promise in Christ is that those days have been redeemed. And all that is admittedly a lot.

This Holy Week, I encourage you not to pass over Saturday. But rather, embrace what it is and live into it. Saturday is the bulk of our lives. It's the God that doesn't keep us in the dark places, but also encourages us to see the miracle in everyday life. It's the Father that doesn't hold us to the highest standard of our greatest achievements on the best of days, and instead extends to us the free gift of Grace.

It's the life we live. A life full of ups and downs. A life where Christ won, but what are we going to do about it? A life with tension and intention, where our faith is constantly tested in silence, waiting, and uncertainty. It's Saturday, surrounded by Grace.

A Saturday worth celebrating.

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THIS MONTH'S  
GRACE MOMENT



For more writings on my explorations of words and life, you can follow me on Substack:

[www.substack.com/@ryanlotocki](http://www.substack.com/@ryanlotocki)

**FINANCE REPORT**

**FEBRUARY 2026**

**BANK BALANCES**

CHECKING ACCOUNT	\$ 10,681.05
SAVINGS ACCOUNT	\$ 6,424.54
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 17,105.59</b>

**MONTHLY  
ACTIVITY**

	ACTUAL	1/12 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
CURRENT RECEIPTS	\$ 12,835.00	\$ 11,826.00	\$ 1,009.00
SPECIAL GIFTS			
CURRENT EXPENDITURES	\$ 16,506.00	\$ 11,826.00	\$ 4,680.00
DIFFERENCE	\$ (3,671.00)	\$ -	\$ (3,671.00)

**YEAR TO DATE**

CURRENT RECEIPTS	\$ 18,994.00	\$ 23,652.00	\$ (4,658.00)
SPECIAL BUDGET GIFTS			
CURRENT EXPENDITURES	\$ 26,658.00	\$ 23,652.00	\$ 3,006.00
DIFFERENCE	\$ (7,664.00)	\$ -	\$ (7,664.00)

**Schedule of Volunteers  
April 2026**

	<b>April 2 Maudy Thursday</b>	<b>April 5 Easter Sunday</b>	<b>April 12</b>	<b>April 19</b>	<b>April 26</b>
Preaching	Rev. Devie Ellis	Rev. Marlene Hyden	Mary Wolf	Ron O'Hara	Rev. Debi Turley
Deacon	Barbara Kurasch	Barbara Kurasch	Beth Cheney	Ron Heintz	Martha Muck
Usher		Chris Jancewicz &	Volunteer		
Reader		Jim Wasmund	Bev Blette	Joan Fabian	Lori Gawlak
Altar Guild	Lori Gawlak	Altar Guild	Gail Hellert	Gail Hellert	Donna Pavel
Cleaning		Bev Blette	Beth Cheney	Joan Fabian	Bev Blette
Counting	Lori Gawlak & Marc Schwartz				
Mowing					



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