



# LENT

## The Ambassador

### LENT/EASTER 2025

St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church, 1746 S. Clinton Ave., Trenton, NJ 08610  
[www.stbartlutheran.net](http://www.stbartlutheran.net) (609) 393-6060 (office)

JOIN US FOR  
**ASH WEDNESDAY**



March 5, 7:30PM



*Easter Sunday Worship*

*April 20<sup>th</sup> 11:00AM*

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from the Pastor's desk

## *Beloved People of God,*

Our communities are bracing for nationwide raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Planned raids are happening in major cities where the Department of Justice has sped up immigration arrests and harassment of our siblings.

Mindful of the biblical call and our strong Lutheran history of welcoming the stranger, our faith community strives to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have implemented changes for the safety of our neighbors in our feeding ministries. We have also postponed outreach events until the country finds some stability. However we will stand with the marginalized and those on the fringes as this IS the gospel call. We will always be a welcoming church.

February often finds us in the heart of winter, when the nights still stretch long and the days, though growing ever so slightly longer, are often cloaked in clouds and cold. It can feel like the season itself mirrors some of the darker moments we experience in our personal lives or the world around us. For many, the lingering shadows of winter nights can echo a sense of longing, loneliness, or even weariness.

Yet, in this season, we are reminded of the promise that shines brighter than any darkness we face: Jesus is the light of the world. In John 8:12, Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." This promise is not seasonal. It isn't diminished by the winter nights or by the challenges we face in our lives. It is a constant truth that shines steadily, inviting us to draw near to its warmth and hope. The light of Jesus not only dispels the darkness around us but also the darkness within us. When the weight of the world—with its pain, injustice, or uncertainty—feels overwhelming, we can take heart in knowing that Jesus' light cannot be overcome. His light leads us, comforts us, and empowers us to reflect His love in a world in need.

This February, as we move closer to Lent, let us pause to consider the power of light in the midst of darkness. Think of a single candle flickering in a dark room. Though small, its glow changes the space, giving vision and direction. In the same way, we are called to carry the light of Christ into the world. It may feel like a small flame, but its power to transform is immense.

I am on personal leave until April 1<sup>st</sup> and Pastor Jim Egan is filling in. You are in good hands and I have faith that you all will continue to shine Christ's light in these times!

In Christ

Pastor Erich

**Please call or email the office whenever you are in need of pastoral care or are aware of others who may be in need - Church office, 609-393-6060. officestbartlutheran@gmail.com**

This includes:

- if you want to talk,
- emergencies,
- sickness,
- hospital
- times of crisis when things are out of control or down times,
- times of decision when you are not sure of what to do,
- when someone is near death,
- when there has been a birth,
- when contemplating marriage.

## Vision Statement

*"The Little Church with a BIG heart"*

## STATEMENT FROM PASTOR

1. **We stand with our LGBTQIA+ siblings**, and we decry the recent actions that seek to erase our transgender siblings and contradicts our understanding of full diversity of God's creation.
2. **We stand with our immigrant siblings**, and we decry the recent actions that seek to demonize and criminalize those who have come to this country in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. We recognize that the immigration system is broken, and we call for reforms that are just, humane, and compassionate.
3. **We stand with our siblings of all colors and backgrounds**, and we decry the recent executive orders that seek to remove Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives from public life. We reaffirm our commitment to our Authentic Diversity Strategy and pledge to continue our work to combat White supremacy culture.
4. **We stand with our partners in the Lutheran Services of America network, particularly Lutheran Social Services and Global Refuge**, who have recently been falsely accused of improperly using government funds. We applaud their work of providing needed, life-giving services to millions of people over many decades, and we pledge our continued support.
5. **We stand with all the public servants who have worked to provide support and guidance to those in need** in this country and around the world, and we decry recent efforts to dismantle the many ways in which our government has worked in partnership with public and private agencies to respond to human needs. While there may be significant room for improvement in how we organize our resources to meet human needs, we stand opposed to efforts to discontinue this work, recognizing that the poor and marginalized will pay the highest cost for such efforts.

Finally, I'm not sure what that will look like, but I pray for God's strength and guidance as we strive to be the church that God and our neighbor need us to become.

**GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER FREE US TO THINK ABOUT OTHER THINGS FAR BEYOND OUR OWN PERSONAL FATE, ABOUT THE ULTIMATE MEANING OF ALL LIFE, SUFFERING, AND EVENTS; AND WE LAY HOLD OF A GREAT HOPE.**

**- DIETRICH BONHOEFFER -**

## The 37th NJ Synod Assembly

June 5 - 7, 2025

Hilton East  
Brunswick  
Hotel -  
3 Tower Center  
Blvd, East  
Brunswick, NJ  
08816





# Key HIGHLIGHTS from 2024:

- 1st Easter Egg Hunt
- Revival Concert
- Community BBQ
- RawTools
- ESL Class
- Trunk or Treat
- Blessing of the Animals
- Toy Drive
- Christmas Eve Candlelight service





## Message from the Pastor in Residence

It's been a while since I wrote a pastor's column for a church newsletter. After 50 years in parish ministry and the last 45 ½ years as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in East Windsor, I penned my final/farewell/retirement column in October 2023. After touring churches in Mercer County and environs, Gay and I began regularly attending St. Bart's in February 2024, which means we've been here a little over a year. We have enjoyed our time at this "Little Church with a Big Heart" and the opportunity to participate in its vital and varied ministries.

Until the end of March, I will remain your "Pastor in Residence" (the title bestowed on me by Bishop Tracie Bartholomew) until Pastor Erich returns from his leave of absence in April. (I began "P-i-R"-ing on February 3.)

Gay and I thank you for the warm welcome we received last February, and I thank you for your support in my recent transition from "retired pastor in a pew" to "PiR". The spirit here is tangible, as evidenced by committed lay leadership, the volunteer office work of Cindy Percak, the musical contributions of Jo-Ann Sciarrotta and Brandon Plantier, your ability to adapt and continue programs on which the surrounding community depends, the ministry partnerships which you foster, and the robust coffee hours and fellowship times after Worship.

No matter when it begins, the Lenten Season always seems to take us by surprise. This year is no exception – with Ash Wednesday arriving "late" on March 5. This means that Easter will arrive 40 days later (not counting Sundays) on April 20. Last year, Ash Wednesday was February 14, and Easter was March 31. What's going on? Thank the Council of Niceae for the differences. In 325 AD it decided that Easter should be a "moveable feast" celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the spring equinox. So, the earliest Easter can be celebrated is March 22 and the latest April 25. (Google this...and astound friends and relatives with your Easter and Ash Wednesday starting dates knowledge. See if you'll be alive the next time Easter falls on March 31 or April 20!)

Consider this fair warning! Don't be surprised by Lent this year!! Be prepared for it by attending our Shrove (google it) Tuesday Pancake Supper on March 4 and Ash Wednesday Service on March 5. And allow our mid-week and Sunday Services during Lent to prepare you to celebrate the good news of Easter with greater joy and more hope than ever. Like no other time in our country, we need Easter people who abound in hope, kindness, generosity, grace, and justice. May your 40-day walk through Lent to Easter lead you to an abundance of abounding.

Peace and Strength for the Journey,  
Pastor Jim Egan (aka PiR)

## WELCOME!

Welcome to our  
new council  
members!!

Jackie & Chris!!





- ❖ Thank you to our dedicated members who have served meals and packed grocery bags for our community in providing thousands of meals and bags of food: **Brandon, Jackie, Jim, Gay, Jamie, Walt, & Barb S.**
- ❖ **Thank you** to ALL of our church partners for helping with the Food Pantry – Abiding Presence, Prince of Peace, and St. Paul’s!

**Keep in Prayer  
Our Homebound Members**  
Bob Farr,  
Carol Black, Billy T.  
Vi Teschke

## Congregational Birthdays

*Apologies for any omission of dates*

### February

- 8- Barbara Schendlinger
- 8- Judy Parish
- 26- Kenneth Appold
- 26- Ashley Kussman
- 27- Zuleyka Concepcion

### March

- 29 - Billy Teasenfitz
- 31- Kris Pinter

### April

- 8 – William Schendlinger Jr.
- 14- Alexis Russo
- 20 – Mary Ann Fues
- 22 – Tracie Bartholomew

### May

- 4- Jacqueline Prekop
- 4 – Sharon Archer
- 25 – Marcia Good

### June

- 15 – Crystal Mura



# Church News

## Worship at St. Bart's

### March

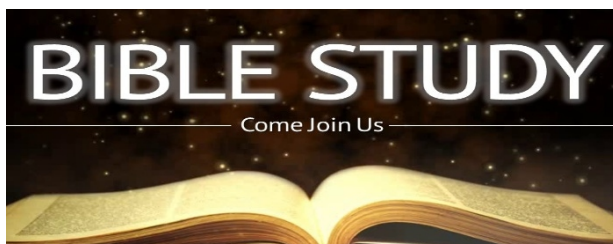
|                    |                               |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 4 <sup>th</sup> -  | Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner | 6PM              |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> -  | Ash Wednesday Service         | 7:30PM           |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> - | Midweek Lenten Dinner/service | 630PM @ PoP      |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> - | Midweek Lenten Dinner/service | 630PM - St Barts |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> - | Midweek Lenten Dinner/service | 630PM- @ PoP     |

### April

|                    |                               |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> -  | Midweek Lenten Dinner/service | 630PM @ St Barts |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> -  | Midweek Lenten Dinner/service | 630PM - POP      |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> - | Palm Sunday                   | 11AM             |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> - | Maundy Thursday               | 7:30PM           |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> - | Good Friday Tenebrae          | 7:30PM           |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> - | Easter Vigil                  | 7:30PM           |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> - | Easter Service                | 11AM             |

- **(PoP) - Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**

177 Princeton Hightstown Rd, Princeton Junction, NJ, United States, New Jersey. Rides can be provided at 6pm leaving from church.



Bible Study @ 9:45AM  
in  
FELLOWSHIP HALL



Mark your  
calendars:

**RAWTOOLS TRENTON**  
Saturday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 11AM

**Spring Cleaning Day**  
Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup> 10AM

**Pentecost**  
Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup> 11AM

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**Donations and  
Tithes Can Be  
Given Online!**

Go to  
[www.stbartlutheran.net](http://www.stbartlutheran.net)  
and click on the  
donate tab!



# COMMUNITY SERVICE POSSIBILITIES



May 17<sup>th</sup>



## MISSION STATEMENT

*Saint Bartholomew Lutheran Church is a community of believers that is rooted in God's unconditional grace and love, striving to share God's light of hope and salvation to scatter the darkness wherever it is found, through word and deed.*

## Fellowship – Small Groups

### Bell Choir

Bell choir practice will resume Feb 16 as long as most of the choir can make it. For now practices after that are scheduled for March 2, 9 and 30. April practices will be April 6, 13 and brief practice on April 20. After playing for the Christmas Eve service, the bell choir took a break. Practices are now starting back up. The bell choir hopes to play during Lent, for the Easter service and then during the Easter season. We are not looking for new ringers at this time.

- Barb Schendlinger





## Enid's Pantry and Food Missions



In the New Year, the food pantry and pop up farm market have been going strong. We continue to serve between 200 to 300 people a week. We have been fortunate to receive produce from Farmers Against Hunger throughout these cold months and look forward to their continued commitment to the St. Bart's community. As always any donations of food and/or monetary are greatly welcome. Thank you to all who donate or serve in keeping these missions alive.

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### Welcome to our new Council President, Chris Rivera!



*How long have you been involved at St. Bart's?*

I have been coming to Saint Bartholomew's since September 2023. I became an official member in May 2024.

*Have you lived in Trenton a long time? What makes it special to you and your family?*

I was born and raised in Trenton. This city is special to me because my father was a career Trenton fireman who gave his life for the city in 2009.

*What do you enjoy most about St. Bart's?*

I enjoy how welcoming Saint Bart's has been to me and my family. We always feel the love when coming to church. I am grateful to have built a great friendship with Pastor Erich as well.

*What makes St. Bart's different from other churches?*

I feel that this church had demonstrated that it truly cares about the community for the people that live here through the many ministries that it provides. I don't have much experiences with other churches, but I have seen many that like to take or judge rather than give back to their community.

*What church projects give you the most satisfaction?*

Enid's Pantry because seeing people relieved that they are bringing home their next meal brings me joy and pride in knowing that I have a small part in that.

*What would you like to see St. Bart's accomplish in the next year?*

I would like to see the church continue to grow and continue to serve the people of the South Ward, not see set-backs or stalling missions due to other peoples' agendas that don't want to see the Lord's work in progress.

*How would you like to see parishioners become more involved with St. Bart's?*

I would like to see people become more active in ministries, expand ministries-maybe we could do a survey of what are the peoples' needs in this community; things that they want to see that aren't being offered other places and work from there.

# Happenings of St Bart's...

## THE BISHOP'S CHALLENGE: Caring for God's Good Creation



In honor of the Bishop's Challenge we started a new plastics recycling project that is underway in conjunction with Prince of Peace! Containers for your deposits are located at the entrance and downstairs.



## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Lutherans have been in the news this week!

# Protect Yourself!

IF YOU HAVE THESE SYMPTOMS....

## YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

IF YOU SERVE PEOPLE IN NEED FIRST AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

IF YOU CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

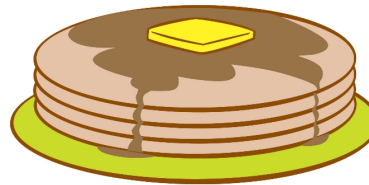
IF YOUR "RELIGIOUS" ACTIVITIES INCLUDE FEEDING HUNGRY PEOPLE, HOUSING THOSE IN NEED, AND SUPPORTING THOSE WHO ARE POWERLESS...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

IF YOU BELIEVE SECOND CHANCES ARE UNLIMITED...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

IF YOU THINK EVERYONE'S STORY MATTERS...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

IF YOU CAN ONLY IMAGINE FOLLOWING A GOD WHO LOVES EVERYONE...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!

IF YOU WANT TO BELONG WITHOUT HAVING TO PRETEND...YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN!



# SHROVE TUESDAY

# A S H WEDNESDAY

March 4<sup>th</sup> 6:00PM

March 5<sup>th</sup> 7:30PM



## Presiding Bishop Eaton Issues Pastoral Message on Executive Orders

January 24, 2025

Dear church,

On Monday, our nation witnessed the peaceful transfer of power central to our democracy, followed by sweeping actions by the incoming Trump administration. Facing such changes, we receive guidance through Martin Luther's words in the Large Catechism.

In the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, where we pray "Give us this day our daily bread," Luther writes about the importance of praying for our leaders, asking God to grant them wisdom and strength. He also speaks to the responsibility of leaders to provide stability, sufficiency and equity, saying, "[I]t would be very proper to place in the coat-of-arms of every pious prince a loaf of bread instead of a lion, or a wreath of rue, or to stamp it upon the coin, to remind both them and their subjects that by their office we have protection and peace, and that without them we could not eat and retain our daily bread."<sup>1</sup>

This past week has been one of rapid and cascading change, from the inauguration of a new president and vice president to the flurry of activity in government orders and regulations. The policies and decisions reflected in this week's executive orders and regulatory changes have the potential to profoundly impact our lives, the well-being of our neighbors and the future of the planet. Therefore, I am concerned about the ways that many of the executive actions have created uncertainty and fear in our communities among neighbors struggling to survive, neighbors struggling to provide for their children, and neighbors struggling to be seen.

As a church, we are called to speak up when the government distorts or denies the image of God in each person by endangering access to protection, peace and daily bread. Where harm or inequity occur, we are called by God to respond with love and advocacy.

Luther also writes that in asking for daily bread, we are to pray for our leaders. We should pray that they act wisely and justly, protect all people and not cause harm.

Prayer is not passive; it's an act of hope. Prayer reminds us to ground ourselves in God's promise. We pray for strength, to love unconditionally and to serve one another. As we lift up our petitions, we must also act—advocating for policies that affirm the dignity of every person and standing against actions that demean or exclude.

This church is committed to upholding the humanity of everyone, regardless of who we are or where we come from. We are a church called to love our neighbors and accompany all people in their joys and struggles. We must remain steadfast in this calling. As the ELCA, we will continue to proclaim the radical inclusivity of Christ's love. And we will deepen our local and global partnerships with those working to build a just and compassionate society, especially through our ecumenical and interreligious networks.

I commend to you the social message "[Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy](#)," which states on page 7: "To evaluate how well agencies

of government are doing their proper work of providing for the safety and well-being of those within their borders and/or jurisdiction, Lutherans ask one simple but all-encompassing question: Is the neighbor being served?"

I encourage our congregations to use the resources of the [ELCA Witness in Society Team](#) with advocacy networks on the state and federal level. And get involved with [AMMPARO](#), the ELCA's strategy toward just and humane policies affecting migrants.

As we move forward, let us hold fast to our faith and to one another. Let us be bold in our witness to the gospel, steadfast in our prayers for those in authority and tireless in our efforts to seek justice for all.

May God grant us courage, wisdom and peace in these days.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

<sup>1</sup>The Book of Concord, Kold and Wengert, eds., page 450

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**About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:**

The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with 2.8 million members in more than 8,500 worshiping communities across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of "God's work. Our hands.," the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians and service in the world. The ELCA's roots are in the writings of the German church reformer Martin Luther.

For information contact:

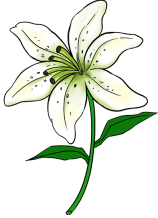
Candice Hill Buchbinder

Public Relations Manager

[Candice.HillBuchbinder@ELCA.org](mailto:Candice.HillBuchbinder@ELCA.org)



## Easter Flowers Lilies & Daffodils



I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ (how many) Lilies in **memory/honor** (circle one) of

\_\_\_\_\_

Cost is \$15.00

Plants may be picked up after the 11AM Easter Day Worship Service

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Return by Sunday **March 30<sup>th</sup>** . Please make checks payable to “St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church”

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I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ (how many) **Daffodils** in **memory/honor** (circle one) of

\_\_\_\_\_

Cost is \$15.00

Plants may be picked up after the 11AM Easter Day Worship Service

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Return by Sunday **March 30<sup>th</sup>** . Please make checks payable to “St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church”

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### I would like to be a donor of (check all that apply) for 2024

- Food Gift Cards \_\_\_\_\_ in memory/honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$20
- Communion Wafers for (month) \_\_\_\_\_ in memory/honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$10/ month
- Eternal Candle for (month) \_\_\_\_\_ in memory/honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$30/ month
- Palms for (Palm Sunday) \_\_\_\_\_ in memory/ honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$25
- Baptism & Confirmation gifts in memory/ in honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$5-\$20 per gift
- Bulletin for (month) \_\_\_\_\_ in memory/ honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$10/ month
- Building Fund in memory/ honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ in memory/ honor of \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Total Donation Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Checks are payable to “St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church”  
and donations are fully tax deductible**





St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church  
1746 S. Clinton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08610

**DATED MATERIAL**