



SPRUCE RUN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION CHURCH

Advent 2024 Vol. 70, No. 4

From the Pastor's Pen



Fun Fact about a 250-year-old congregation

Wait, when were we founded?

One of the interesting things to notice when reading through our history is there is a consistent hiccup when our founding is described; the documents say things like: "Founded in 1774 and definitely by 1775." And "A time encompassing 1774 and 1775." I imagine it is a situation of "Well, when did a couple of families meeting up monthly, praying, and reading scripture, become a church?" Was it the first-time Mr. Fritts and another guy read scripture aloud together, or the first time all thirteen founders were present, or when Muhlenberg and his cohort back East realized this was happening, or what?

Continued on page 5...

A Message from the Council President

Salutations!

Fall is in full swing, and we have Jingle Bell Junction and the kick-off to our 250 th Anniversary Celebration happening! We continue to hold game nights, Pub Theology, Bible study, and other events. Food Pantry distributions continue, and we are collecting for VIBE and the Shoebox initiative, etc...

We are looking forward to the Advent season, and planning for next year. We will be planning for our Annual Congregational Meeting, which will be held on January 26 th, 2025, with a snow date of 2/2/25 – Please mark your calendars!! We will be working on next year's budget and doing some strategic long-term planning in preparation for that meeting. We also will be giving a big shout out and hearty thank you to Sonia Cordova and Erik Henriksen, whose terms on Council are coming to a close.

Please, if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, reach out to a Council Member!

I look forward to seeing you at Spruce Run Lutheran!

Brad Cox,
Council President

Díd you know...



WELCA has an active prayer chain? If you should have a prayer request, please contact Karen Smith or Sara Armbrecht. We do ask for updates as we continue to pray.

News from Our Committees & Interest Groups

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

We had great distributions this summer. It was not real hot and it didn't rain on us! Families with children were very pleased to be given additional Shop Rite gift cards (which the pantry was able to purchase with a grant) to supplement school lunches. Not only did our own Erik Henriksen provide us with fresh tomatoes, peppers and garlic, but he introduced the volunteers and our clients to paw paws, which he grew in his yard. We all learned something new. It's a very different fruit.

Karen and Gail have been attending Norwescap classes to learn the new automated process for ordering our monthly requests. This process will be going live with our November order.

Looking forward to the fall, the pantry is making lists and packing bags for the Thanksgiving and Christmas distributions and continue to support the veterans with the VIBE program that supplies veterans with bags of non-perishable food for their new beginning. Please watch for updates on the popular Reverse Advent Calendar food drive.

Thank you to all the volunteers and people that support us.

Gail, Karen, Janet and Sue

Tuesday Quilters

We have have been very busy making many wonderful things to sell at Jingle Bell Junction. Be sure to stop by to and get some items for you and for gifts!

We meet each Tuesday from 9 am to 12 noon. Join us for a rewarding time of service and fellowship. No experience is needed!

Altar Guild

November 24th is Christ the King Sunday.

December 1st – Advent begins. We will also be kicking off the 250th Anniversay celebration with a pot-luck luncheon.

December 24th - Christmas Eve we plan to have one service at 7pm.

Our next Worship and Music Committee meeting is Sunday, November 17th after church.

Judi Mansilla Worship & Music Altar Guild

Jingle Bell Junction is coming on Nov. 23!

It's that time of year, let's jingle all the way to Jingle Bell Junction on Saturday from 9am to 3pm. We ask that you get your recipes out and bake some cookies and other goodies to bring for the event. Make lots, we always sell out quickly! Items can be dropped off on Friday during the day or between 8:30 and 9am on Saturday.

We plan to deck the halls for Saturday. If you can help us decorate, please come to the church on Friday night at 7pm.

To commemorate our 250th Anniversary, we will be selling luminaries and special ornaments, as well as special teapots. We have lots to offer; have lunch with us, browse the many crafts, buy some baked goods and have a good time!

Friday, Nov. 22: Set-up at 7pm

Saturday, Nov. 23: Jingle Bell Junction from 9am-3pm

Handbell Choir Performance at 10:30am

Clean-up at 3:30

Any questions, please call Sara at 908-319-5055.

Council Meeting Highlights

July 16, 2024

- George Creasy, Treasurer and Paul Henriksen,
 Financial Secretary joined the meeting to provide an in-depth review of the standard reports.
- "Bushels of Fun" at Growa-Row in Pittstown will take place in August.
- October 6 th is World Communion Sunday.
- Pastor will ask the Faithful Journey team to lead worship October 20th while he is on vacation.
- George Creasy replaced the spotlights in the sanctuary with LED bulbs.
- Estimates will be obtained from contractor, Gary Droppa, for miscellaneous repairs at the church.
- Repair to the church chimney (bindings) is still needed.
- VBS is underway –
 15 children are attending.
- A deposit has been placed with Hawk Pointe for a 250 the celebration in 2025.
- The new directory is ready for distribution.

August 13, 2024

- Two baptisms took place
- Rosario Joseph Perricone on July 21 (Judi Mansilla's grandson)
- Andrew Martin Wiseman on August 4 (a Lebanon Township family)
- The next outdoor ecumenical service at Lebanon Township Memorial Park will be July 28.
- MSI Plumbing & Home Renovation will do a presentation on home maintenance at SRLC. Date to be determined.
- Installation of the dishwasher in the lounge is complete.
- The faucet in the lounge & the fan in the upstairs women's bathroom have been repaired.
- Estimates from contractor, Gary Droppa for miscellaneous repairs at the church are pending.
- A laptop computer is available and will be set up to present drone footage of the church & cemetery to the congregation.
- Lebanon Township Fall Fest is September 21. Volunteers are needed.
- Rally Day is targeted for September 8.

- Jeff Smith agreed to help present stewardship Temple Talks.
- Worship, including choir, will return to 10:00 am beginning September 1.
- Resuming a no contact "Sharing the Peace" was discussed.
- Monthly worship at Rolling Hills continues. More members are encouraged to attend.
- Confirmation will be October 17, Reformation Sunday.
- There will be an ecumenical Thanksgiving service November 26.
- First Sunday in Advent –
 December 1
 - o This will be the kickoff to the 250th anniversary.
 - o Bishop Bartholomew will be in attendance.
 - o A potluck luncheon will follow worship.
- Christmas Eve there will be only one worship service at 7:00 pm.
- Donations to the roof appeal to date equal \$7200.
- NJ Office of Homeland Security is offering a seminar on safety for houses of worship.

Continued on page 4...

Council Meeting Highlights Continued from page 3

- Jeff Smith agreed to continue acting as Benefits & Contracts coordinator.
- SRLC kitchen passed the Department of Health retail food inspection.

September 10, 2024

- Laura Mortensen resigned from council.
- An application for a Fund for Mission grant will be submitted to establish an emergency food pantry and to provide holiday & special event signage.
- Lutheran Social Ministries thanked SRLC for donations to the back-to-school backpack collection.
- Outlets & breakers in the Fellowship Hall have been repaired.
- The parsonage roof required an emergency repair. The overall roof has reached its life expectancy. Estimates will be obtained to replace the roof.
- Lebanon Township Fall Fest is September 21. Volunteers are needed for the tables.
- MSI Plumbing & Home Renovation will do a presentation on home maintenance at SRLC September 23.

- Sunday School will remain the same and be presented during the service. Mike Ressel has offered to teach.
- Temple Talks will begin this month.
- Luminaries will be sold at Jingle Bell Junction.
 Proceeds to support 250th celebration events.
- Having an outdoor acrylic sign identifying those interred in God's Acre cemetery & their location is being investigated.
- The large oak tree in the lower parking is officially included on the list of Biggest Trees in New Jersey presentation will be offered during Carriage House Learning this month.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President:

Vice President:
Secretary:
Secretary:
Financial Secretary:
Rosemarie (Posie) Adickes
Gene Armbrecht

Judi Mansilla Sue O'Brien Kathryn (Katie) Ressel Gail Vajda

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Michael Ressel

Seventh Grade (Confirmation I) George Creasy & Rob Ossi

Eighth Grade (Confirmation II)

Pastor Chris Halverson

STAFF

Pastor: Chris Halverson
Music Director: Candice Peare
Handbell Director: Qingyang (Kelly) Ye
Secretary: Karen Smith
Sextons: Rosemarie Adickes
Sara Armbrecht

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & LIAISON

Fellowship & Outreach

Gail Vajda & Sue O'Brien

Youth

Katie Ressel

Building Discernment

Erik Henriksen & Brad Cox

Holistic Stewardship

Rosemarie Adickes

Worship and Music

Judi Mansilla & Matt Gaydick

Altar Guild

Judi Mansilla

North Hunterdon Food Pantry

Gail Vajda

Tuesday Quilters

Rose-Marie Green

Family Promise

Wendy DiNapoli

FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

Jane Creasy & Karen Smith

WEBSITE

Mark Creasy & Karen Smith

From the Pastor's Pen

Continued from page 1

This discrepancy, tension, ambiguity, I don't know what to call it, is one of the reasons we're celebrating from December to December, so our celebrations too encompass multiple years, touching 2024 but fully seated in the year of our Lord 2025.

Any interesting stories about former ministers?

Well, our first pastor was Pastor Graff. He served for over 40 years, though the last ten overlapped with our second minister, Pastor Hazelius.

We had one pastor who left and came back; in fact, his story is a sort of family affair. For 45 years of a 70-year period in the life of the congregation, a relative or in-law of Pastor Travers was minister of Spruce Run!

Finally, there is an interesting story of Spruce Run attempting to put their pastor on trial for being disloyal to the country! Now, this happened in June of 1863, so in the middle of the Gettysburg Campaign during the US Civil War (or as my one aunt insists on calling it "The War Between the States"). Pastor F. A. Strobel was accused by parishioners of saying something treasonous on June 23, 1863. He was acquitted, with the assistance of the Synod, because:

- 1. The church didn't have the authority to hold a civil trial.
- 2. It was determined what Pastor Strobel had said was misrepresented in both "form and sense." As you might imagine, after facing this trial Pastor Strobel only stayed on as Pastor for another year and a half.

What might our history tell us about today?

Read a certain way, some of our history feels fairly contemporary. It feels like the truism from Ecclesiastes, "There is nothing new under the sun," is front and center.

Immigration and how to manage refugees is decidedly the topic of the day in our time and, interestingly enough, our congregation was founded by refugees fleeing political and religious persecution in Rheinbach Germany between the years 1702 and 1756. I am in the beginning stages of figuring out the particulars of this persecution, but there seems to be quite a few options at the time: Rheinbach was known for its witch trials, it was the site of a successful Roman Catholic counterreformation by the Jesuits, and both the 7 Years War as well as the Wars of

Continued on page 9...



Please reach out to Sara or Denise if you would like to

purchase ShopRite gift cards. Remember this is a very easy way to financially support our church.



Our year-long celebration of 250 years of ministry will begin on December 1, 2024. Bishop Tracie Bartholomew will be with us to kick-off of our celebration. A pot luck luncheon will follow the worship service. There is a sign up sheet in the lounge. A special mailing will be sent out with information about all of the scheduled events. Please place these dates on your calendar and share them with neighbors, family, and friends.

Luminaries and ornaments that will be available for purchase at Jingle Bell Junction. The 250th committee has been hard at work to make this a wonderful year. Stay tuned for more information for future events.

Questions, please contact Gene or Erik.

Continued from page 2

Family Promise

Big news to announce! The Promise Center is now open! The first clients moved in on October 7. The Center has the capacity for four families or 14 people, whichever comes first. Our next hosting is for the week of November 24th. We will be responsible to provide grocery items for breakfast and lunch, based on the family grocery lists, and a hot meal for dinner. There will eventually be an option for some hour shifts in the evenings to spend time with the families, but that has not been started yet. There will be NO overnight shifts as there are hired staff for that role.

The Promise Center is located in the Annex of the Calvary Episcopal Church in Flemington, at 44 Broad Street. There is a SignUpGenius for volunteers to sign up to provide hot meals for dinner. Dinner will need to be dropped at the Center between 5:30-6:30 PM each night. Whoever drops the dinner will not stay to eat or help, they will just drop off the hot meal. The Center has a refrigerator and a microwave, but no stove. We will know the number of people who we are serving a few days before we start our week. We will also utilize a Thrivent Action Team grant to help defray the cost of the groceries.

The Promise Center is a long awaited permanent shelter for women and families. The agency has expanded services and staff and provides the following programs Mental Health, Homeless Prevention, Neighbors in Need Fund, Shelter Services, and Sustainable Housing. To learn more about Family Promise, check out their website: https://familypromisehc.org/

We have waited a long time to be able to offer more hands on support for this valuable outreach, and I hope we have many participants willing to participate. Reach out with any questions.

Blessings, Wendy DiNapoli



Advent 2024 - Page 6

Recipes from the Congregation

Italian Zucchini Soup

1 pound bulk Italian sausage

1 cup chopped onion

2 cups chopped celery

1 medium green pepper, chopped

2-4 tablespoons sugar

2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon dried basil

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

1/2 teaspoon pepper

4 cups diced tomatoes,

undrained

4 cups diced zucchini Grated Parmesan cheese, optional

In a Dutch oven, brown sausage with onion; drain excess fat.

Add the next eight ingredient; cover and simmer one hour.

Stir in zucchini and simmer 10 minutes.

Sprinkle with cheese if desired.

Elaine Kovach

Jackets, Bicycles, and Proportional Giving

When I was over in England doing my Masters in Philosophy, I remember sitting in the St. Edmund's pub (yes, my college ran a pub) drinking a pint, and someone spilled all over my jacket. A fellow student, trying to be helpful, took my jacket and threw it in the trash. I fished my jacket out of the trash and inquired why he just did that. His response was that it was dirty, so he figured I would replace it with a different jacket.

What he didn't seem to appreciate was that it was the only jacket I had in England, and I didn't really have the money to just go out and buy a new one, especially if I could clean the one I had. That was a revelation to him—he was so well off that buying a new jacket because the old one had beer spilled on it, made sense to him.

Fast-forward to the end of my time at Cambridge. I'd stuck around long enough to defend and bind my thesis, I had my plane ticket back to America, and it seemed like everything was in order. Then I realized I hadn't thought about what I'd do with my bicycle. I had a train then a plane to catch—time was tight! So, I gave my bicycle to

a fellow student. It didn't seem like a big deal to me, but it was received as a generous gift by a friend.

Why did I just tell you that story? Because it illustrates a wider point, that the value of things shifts based on perspective. To someone who is well off and has a whole wardrobe just down the road at their parents, a jacket feels like a disposable thing, but to someone far from home having to make it through the school year on student loans and work study, a jacket is precious. Likewise, to a

person on a tight schedule who is about to leave the country, a bicycle is one more thing to deal with, but to someone who is going to be living in the country for at least another year and doesn't have a bike, it's a pretty great thing!

And that's why proportional giving is a useful tool when talking about our stewardship. After all, the other option is to look at a budget, divide it by the number of regularly attending households, and ask that much from each "giving unit". That can be discouraging!

For some of the more well off people, it feels like the church never challenges them to really give. The most astonishing example of this is the woman who gave the money to build the "Crystal Cathedral", one of the most opulent churches in the US. She was a Lutheran. When asked why she didn't give the multi-million-dollar gift to her home church, she replied, "My pastor never challenged me to give."

But for other people who, struggle monetarily, naming a particular figure can be shaming. There are awful stories of elderly people on fixed incomes eating cat food, in order to "give enough" to their church; certainly that is not Gospel!

So, while it isn't perfect, proportional giving levels out some of that bumpiness. The ideal often cited based on some biblical precedents is a tithe—giving 10% of your income away. While that is essentially required of ELCA pastors, that ideal is not where most ELCA lay people land, instead the average ELCA Lutheran gives about 1.8% of their income to the Church.

Have you ever worked out what percentage of your income you give to Spruce Run, or to charity in general? Can you imagine increasing it? What if you increased it by one half percent per year until you reached 10%? Or if you're at 10%,

Continued on page 11...

2024 Reverse Advent Calendar Food Box

The North Hunterdon Food Pantry helps many families each month. Typically, after the holidays, our shelves are almost empty. Please consider finding a box, basket or bag and filling it with the suggested items (or other items) each day as you count the days until Christmas. Your box will be empty when you start, but by Christmas Eve it will be filled and will help our neighbors who might otherwise be hungry or need some of these suggested items.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
Dec 1	Dec 2	Dec 3	Dec 4	Dec 5	Dec 6	Dec 7	
Canned Yams	Tox		Paper Towels, Tissues, Toilet Paper	Canned Fruit	Laundry Soap	Dish Detergent	
Dec 8	Dec 8 Dec 9 Dec 10 Dec 1		Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 14	
Bag of Sugar	Bottle of Shampoo	Coffee &/or Tea	Box of Cereal	Canned Veggies	Container of Salt &/or Pepper	Canned Ravioli	
Dec 15	Dec 16	Dec 17	Dec 18	Dec 19	Dec 20	Dec 21	
Pasta	Chicken Toothbrush Ketchu &/or Tuna Mustar		Condiments: Ketchup, Mustard, Mayo	Instant Potatoes	Applesauce	Can of Baked Beans	
Dec 22 Syrup	Dec 23 Pasta Sauce	Des	24	Donations can be dropped off at Spruce Run Lutheran Church 442 W. Hill Road Glen Gardner, NJ 08826			
44	* *	Sı	Droj Inday, Decemb	p off time er 1 1	s: 11 am - 12 pm		

All donations benefit the North Hunterdon Food Pantry.

Sunday, December 8 11 am - 12 pm Sunday, December 15 11 am - 12 pm Sunday, December 22 11 am - 12 pm Sunday, December 29 11 am - 12 pm

From the Pastor's Pen

Continued from page 5

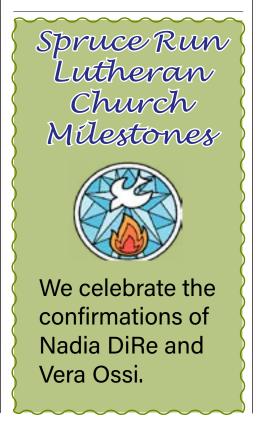
Polish Succession were the chaotic backdrop of people's lives at the time. There was also a peasant rebellion in Germany around the time when one of our founders, Frederich Fritts, left; this rebellion was against, of all things, being forced to grow potatoes.

Or consider the way churches are looking to use their buildings in creative and new ways. That too is maybe not so new. In the past Spruce Run's building was used as the winter home of Woodglen Elementary. We also were once a "Union Church," meaning we and the local Reformed Christians shared a building. When we met in a barn there was an interesting dynamic of townsfolk dancing all Saturday night and then coming back into the same space the next morning for worship. And, I might have just buried the lead, there was a time when we worshipped in a barn in the summers and a log cabin in the winter!

For that matter, it is interesting to see the ways we've historically worked with other Lutheran congregations. In 1861, our congregation was the site of the first convention of the New Jersey Synod (or possibly the Ministerium of NJ), and they met here again 7 years later. We also shared pastors with both Zion Long Valley and Zion Oldwick until the 1830s, and in 1871 we birthed First Lutheran down the road in Glen Gardner.

And, bigger picture, it is a balm and blessing to remember that so many faithful folk, lay and ordained, facing so many different challenges, have ministered to this community for a quarter of a millennium. From humble and harrowing beginnings to being the site of the Synod's founding, from ecumenical building sharing to doubling as a dance hall, God has been faithful.

Thanks be to God. Amen.





First, I would like to thank everyone for all the help and support given this past year. With the high cost of living and the high price of everything we appreciate the generous giving that we have received.

As the year comes to an end, we find that we have a shortage between what we spent for upkeep and repairs and what we have collected. The end of the year is a good time to donate a little extra because it's a good tax write off, and will help close the gap of what we have and what we need.

Also, at the end of the year we are working on setting the budget for the next year. Please fill out a pledge card because it helps with the planning of the budget.

2025 Pledge Card

Again, thank you for all you do to support the church so we can continue to do God's work.

Rosemarie (Posie) Adickes





Jackets, Bicycles, and Proportional Giving

Continued from page 7

what if you gave out of celebration?

I know talking money can be awkward, and a Pastor talking money can be suspicious. So, I just want to leave you with two thoughts before I say too much and get myself in trouble.

- 1. Comparison is the thief of joy—so don't think too hard about what other people are giving, instead try to consider your generosity in light of your total budget—proportional, instead of matching the giving of the person in the pew across from you.
- 2. Whatever you are giving, to Spruce Run and to other good organizations, thank you!

Advent

Prepare your mind and heart for Christmas.

Join us at 10 am in person or online.

December 1 - First Week

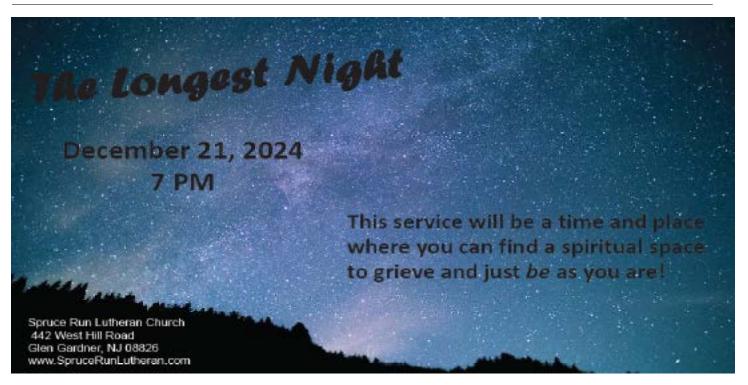
December 8 - Second Week

December 15 - Third Week

December 22 - Fourth Week

Christmas Pageant

Christmas Eve Services
December 24, 2024
7:00 pm Traditional Candlelight





VETERAN'S INITIAL BASIC ESSENTIALS

The North Hunterdon Food Pantry has partnered with Veteran's Haven North to provide veterans who are discharging from the program at Veteran's Haven North with some basic pantry staples and a small supply of non-perishable items.

Donations can be dropped off

11am - noon on the

1* Sunday of each month at
Spruce Run Lutheran Church

442 West Hill Road, Glen Gardner, NJ
or by appointment

DONATE ON-LINE

Note: The North Hunterdon Food Pantry uses Zelly, so that we receive the full amount of your donation. You may make a small suggested donation to Zelly, our third party processor, or you may make that field \$0.00 at check-out.



Contact us: 908-537-4824 x2

nhcfoodpantry@gmail.com

ITEMS NEEDED:

- bag of flour (2 pounds)
- bag of sugar (4 pounds)
- salt & popper shaker set
- vegetable oil (24 ounces)
- cataup
- musterd.
- mayonnalse
- carton of shelf-stable milk
- box of cereal
- box of crackers
- peanut butter
- jelly
- amail container of quick oats
- bag of rice (1 pound)
- amall jar of appleasuce.
- box of apaghetti
- pasta sauce
- 2 cans of soup
- can of chill or stew
- can of tuna or chicken
- can of vestetables
- instant potatoes
- 2 boxes of mac & cheese
- 2 pecks of remon
- paper towel
- toilet paper



November 2024										
Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturda										
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3 Choir Belesarsal Sam Worship 10am Handbell Rebearsal 11am	4	5 Tuesday Quitters Sam - 12pm	6 Publish Theology 7pm The Inn at Gleo Gordner	7	8	9				
10 Choir Belasarsal Sam Worship 10am Handhell Rehearsal 11am	11	12 Tuesday Quilters Sam - 12pm Council Meeting 7pm	13 WELCA – 12pm	14	15	16				
17 Chair Beleveral	18	19	20	21 NH Food Poster	22 Grade Rell	23 Grade Bell				

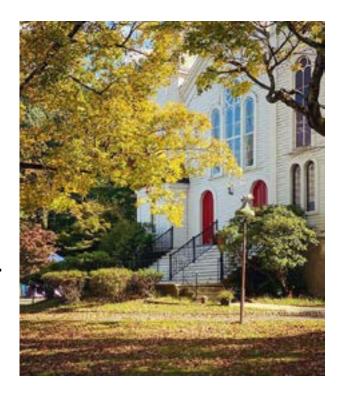
Sam Wurship 10am Handbell Refusarsal 11am		Quitters Sam - 12pm Council Meeting 7pm				
17 Choir Belesesal Sam Worship 10am Handbell Rebesesal 11am	18	19 Tuesday Quilters Sam - 12pm	20	21 NH Food Pastry Distribution 9am-12pm	22 Jingle Bell Junction Set-Up 7 pm	23 Jingle Bell Junction 9-3 Jingle Bell Junction Clean-Up 3:30pm
24 Worship 10am Handbell Rehearsal 11am	25	26 Tuesday Quitters Sam - 12pm Ecomenical Agape Thanksgiving Warship 7pm	27	28	29	30

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Choir Belesesal Sam Worship 10am 250 th Potlack 11am	2	3 Tuesday Quitters Sam - 12pm	4 Publish Theology 7pm The Inn at Gleo Souther	5	6	7
8 Choir Belasarsal Sam Worship 10am Handbell Rehearsal 11am	9	10 Tuesday Quitters Sam - 12pm Cruncil Meeting 7pm	11	12	13 Economical Advent Craft Night Spon High Bridge Reformed Church	14 Hanging of the Greens Sam
15 Choir Belasarsal Sam Worship 10am Handbell Rehearsal 11am	16	17 Tuesday Quitters Sam - 12pm	18 WELCA – 12pm	19 NH Food Pastry Distribution Sam-12pm	20	21 Longest Night Worship 7pm
22 Choir Belesesal Sam Worship 10am Christmas Pageant 10 am Handbell Rebearsal 11am	23	24 Christmas Bre Worship 7pm	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Our Mission

We are a Christian family of faith who celebrates God's grace through worship, fellowship and service. We welcome you to share in our journey to fulfill God's purpose in our community and world.



Spruce Run Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church 442 West Hill Road Lebanon Township Glen Gardner, NJ 08826-3252

www.SpruceRunLutheran.com

"May your unfailing love be with us, LORD, even as we put our hope in you."

Psalm 33:22