

# VIEW FROM THE LAKE

Abiding Peace Lutheran Church

## Choosing Joy

Some of you will remember a workshop led by Diana Perez for our community several years ago on LAUGHTER. I was reminded of that workshop this week because I was working with my son on identifying activities that he could use for stress release, and I suggested laughing. He looked at me with an expression halfway between confusion and ridicule and said, "Yeah. Laughing's great, but I can't just MAKE myself laugh for no reason!"

This is what I always thought as well, but Diana taught me differently. Her workshop was a practical workshop. She had us *practice* laughing. Some of it involved instruction, or doing slightly ridiculous things to loosen us up, but it was also about just DECIDING to laugh. If my memory serves me right, she started us out by just having us walk about looking each other in the eye and intentionally laughing together. As simple as that. I think most of us were skeptical to begin with, but then we discovered it worked! Very soon the whole Narthex was full of giggles and chortles and even a few full belly laughs.

That experience taught me a number of things about laughter, things that I think also apply to the deeper emotional foundation of joy.

1. **Most adults feel like we need permission to let loose and just enjoy existing.** Our lives are so full of responsibilities and tasks and stressors that never take a break. It feels frivolous to take time for simple laughter that has no purpose beyond joy. So, we told make that time and space for ourselves unless we are encouraged to do so.

2. **When we do allow ourselves that frivolity, it is easy to see why it matters.**

Laughter and joy release more than just stress. They release brain chemicals that change our thought patterns and perspectives. They allow us to see more possibilities and open ourselves to other people with more trust.

3. **Sharing joy is a key component to its effectiveness.**

I have tried to duplicate the intentional laughter from that workshop on my own, but it's never quite as effective. There is a reinforcement loop that happens with shared laughter, and there is also a sense of safety that is created in a laughter-filled space. We get to let down our guard and discover that other people like us that way, they like sharing our joy.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that whenever life is difficult, we can just choose joy. Pain is real. Anxiety is often well-founded. Loneliness is a growing scourge in our society even for those who share space and time with other people. And mental illnesses are just as serious as cancer or heart disease. They need qualified treatment, not toxic positivity.

AND, we can probably all benefit from making a little more space for intentional joy in our lives. Maybe we cannot just "make ourselves laugh for no reason," but we can look for more reasons to laugh. And especially we can look for opportunities to laugh with other people. Joy is contagious, and it is healing, and it is so, so needed.

**Worship: 10:00 AM**  
**Online/ In-person**

May 2025 newsletter deadline: 4/27  
Any news/ photos can be sent to Erin  
aplcbuddlake@gmail.com

## Our Mission and Purpose:

Abiding Peace Lutheran Church makes Christ known by welcoming all people to a supporting and accepting place to grow in faith and community and to serve the lord as people created by god, saved by Christ and nurtured by the holy spirit. we are a reconciling in Christ congregation, committed to the full inclusion and celebration of people of all sexualities, genders, and gender expressions, and to the work of racial equity.

Phone: 973-691-9393 Website: [www.abidingpeacechurch.org](http://www.abidingpeacechurch.org)

# COUNCIL & MINISTRY

## Food Pantry Needs for April

- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Soups
- Juice
- Hot dogs & buns
- Frozen meatballs
- Mashed Potato mix
- Crackers
- Gluten free pastas

## Our Staff

Pastor:  
Serena Rice  
pastorserena@optimum.net  
c: 908-458-3940

Music Director:  
Ben Schroeder  
benmschroeder@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:  
Erin Porter  
aplcbuddlake@gmail.com

## Officers

Presidents Shelli Skeels & Heather Nilsen  
Vice President Aaron Hyndmann  
Secretary Jackie King-Palermo  
Treasurer George Pawlo

## Council Members

Christine Resciniti Jackie King-Palermo  
Ken Schwier Maria Jerez-Kearney  
Shelli Skeels Charlie Palermo  
Sibylle Schroeder Aaron Hyndman  
Heather Nilsen

## Ministry Leaders

Arts & Crafts Sibylle Schroeder  
Christian Ed. & Youth Heather Nilsen  
Evangelism Aaron Hyndman  
Fellowship Demetria Laird  
Finance George Pawlo  
Financial Secretary Nita Persson  
Messengers Dancers Mary Kasakove  
Mutual Ministry Heather Nilsen  
Property Vacant  
Social Ministry Sibylle Schroeder  
Seniors Sibylle Schroeder  
Stewardship Nick Senior  
Worship & Music Mary Kasakove

## Pastor's April Hours

### Mar 31 – Apr 6

- Thursday, 4/3: 10:00am-9:00pm
- Sunday, 4/6: 9:00am-1:00pm

### Apr 7 – Apr 13

- Wednesday, 4/9: 10:00am-12:00pm – off-site meeting
- Thursday, 4/10: 12:00pm-9:00pm
- Sunday, 4/13: 9:00am-1:00pm

### Apr 14 – Apr 20

- Thursday, 4/17: 12:00pm-9:00pm
- Friday, 4/18: 6:30pm-9:00pm
- Saturday, 4/19: 6:30pm-9:00pm
- Sunday, 4/20: 6:30am-12:00pm

### Apr 21 – Apr 27 – Vacation Week

### Apr 28 – May 4

- Tuesday 4/29 – Thursday 5/1: away on retreat, no in-person office hours
- Sunday 5/4: 9:00am-1:00pm

## April Office-Hours:

Pastor Serena will hold office hours on Thursdays in April other than the weeks she is away. As always, check weekly bulletins and Monday e-blast for updates on the times she is scheduled to be in the office and free for drop-ins. In addition to posted hours in the office, Pastor Serena is also available to the congregation by cell phone or e-mail during the week: (908) 458-3940; pastorserena@optimum.net. Her day off is Saturday, so please refrain from sending non-emergency messages or calls on Saturday.



## April Readings

### April 6

Isaiah 43:16-21  
Psalm 126  
Philippians 3:4b-14  
John 12:1-8

### April 13

Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 31:9-16  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Luke 19:28-44

### April 20

Acts 10:34-43  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
1 Corinthians 15:19-26  
Luke 24:1-12

### April 27

Acts 5:27-32  
Psalm 118:14-29  
Revelation 1:4-8  
John 20:19-31

## NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Council met on March 2 for a full meeting. Key discussions and decision below:

- We are struggling with getting volunteers for some needed activities:
  - Sunday School: we have 3 teachers and 2 aids, but would ideally want at least one more of each.
  - Partnership efforts. We most need help with outreaching to professional associations that might be able to direct people in search of space to the church.
- Raid Garden/ eco efforts update.
  - Meeting with grant team to finalize design will happen soon.
  - Need more research to know if we could add a wind turbine to generate electricity in a cost-effective way.
- Council plans
  - Will experiment with holding brief update/decision meetings every other month to reduce time demands of Council.
  - Will be scheduling a Council retreat over the Summer.



## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

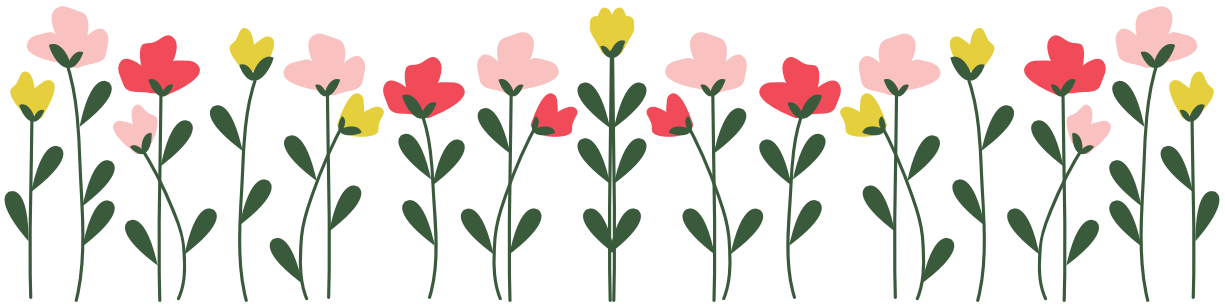
While there are lots of great things happening with our church community and our impact on people's lives, the church has gotten off to a rough start financially in 2025. March giving will close after the newsletter deadline, but as of February the church has a deficit of just over \$7,000. This is mostly due to February giving being very low. We had two Sundays of unsafe driving conditions forcing only online worship, and unfortunately people did not "make up" the giving for these weeks as has often happened in the past. Your church Council will keep an eye on the budget and is continuing to work on finding partners to share our space, which will contribute toward building costs. We will remain hopeful and faithful, but wanted to community to be aware of the current situation.

## FLOWERS FOR EASTER

As we do every year, you are invited to contribute toward the cost of Easter flowers. Donation forms will be available in the weekly bulletin for Sunday services! If you're unable to attend service, but would like to donate for Easter flowers, please reach out to Erin Porter at [aplcbuddlake@gmail.com](mailto:aplcbuddlake@gmail.com)

## PRIDE PARTY PLANNING

As you may remember, the township passed an ordinance in December that prohibits the flying of pride flags on township properties. However, the Mayor and the Recreation Department have offered space at Turkey Brook Park for a Pride event in June. Accordingly, a family-friendly PRIDE PARTY is in the works for Sunday, June 8, from 2:00pm-6:00pm. We have the chance to help Pride Mt Olive make this event a great success and set a precedent for the coming years. Erin and Pastor Serena are already collaborating with Pride Mt Olive's organizer for music, programming, food trucks, etc. If you would like to be involved, either in the planning or on the day of the event, please let Pastor Serena know. Many hands makes light work.



**Another Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner for the books! Thank you to our volunteers.**

## Thanks a Bunch!

Thank you to Sue Stirrat, Ray Mueller, Joan Blackburn and Cindy and George Pawlo for helping me around the house, bringing up wood and supplying boxes and newspapers to help me pack up stuff. I am so very grateful and also for everyone's prayers, I know they are helping me so much! - Sibylle

## Senior Meeting Schedule 2024

**April 9** Cherry Blossoms in Newark, or games (TBD, based on weather)

**May 21** Picnic at Turkey Brook Park or Schooley's Mountain

**June 21** Delaware River Railroad Wine Tour

**July 16** Pool Party at the Pawlo's House

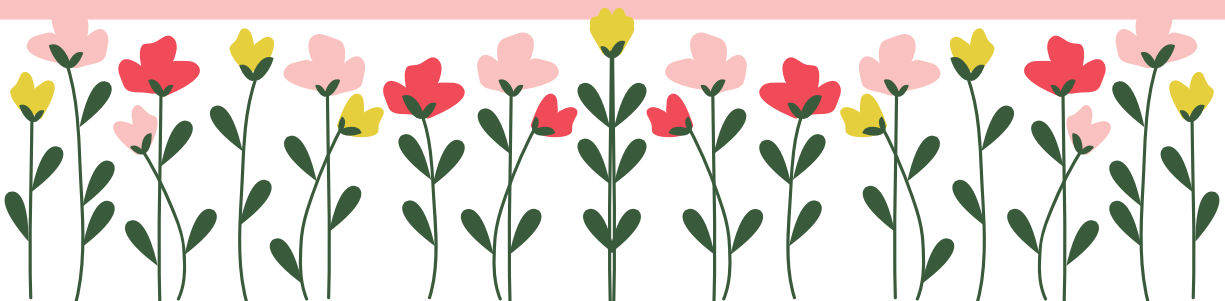
**August 20** Movie

**September 17** Book Review: "Somewhere Beyond the Sea" (Cerulean Chronicles 2) and "Lessons in Chemistry"

**October 15** Halloween Party

**November 19** Christmas/Holiday Party

*\*This schedule is open to changes\**





All smiles at the Senior Ministry Tea Party and Annual Chili Cook-Off!



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES:

4/3 Nancy Ayotte  
 4/5 Anoop Kandikatla  
 4/5 Ray and Mary Beth Mueller  
 4/9 Jan and Patricia Persson  
 4/8 Sue Stirrat  
 4/10 John Cranmer  
 4/10 Demetria Laird  
 4/22 Mary Kasakove  
 4/22 Krista Persson  
 4/25 Doug and Demetria Laird  
 4/26 Jim Tangen  
 4/29 Cindy Pawlo

Did we miss a milestone? Please  
 email Erin  
 (aplcbuddlake@gmail.com) to  
 keep us up to date!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
.	.	<b>4/1</b> Faith Kitchen @ 9:30-12:30	<b>4/2</b> AA @ 6:30pm	<b>4/3</b> Soup Supper @ 6:15pm; Lenten Service @ 7:00pm Choir 7:30	<b>4/4</b>	<b>4/5</b>
<b>4/6</b> Worship 10:00am Sunday School during worship Child Safety Training @ 11 Lenten Forum 11:30	<b>4/7</b> Worship & Music Committee 10:00 am via zoom	<b>4/8</b>	<b>4/9</b> Senior Ministry Event @ 2PM  AA @ 6:30pm	<b>4/10</b> Rain Garden meeting @ 12 Planning interfaith vigil @1:30 Soup Supper 6:15, Lenten Service 7:00 Choir 7:30	<b>4/11</b>	<b>4/12</b> Zumba @ 9:00
<b>4/13</b> Worship 10:00am Palm Sunday Activity Council @ 6:00 via zoom	<b>4/14</b>	<b>4/15</b>	<b>4/16</b> AA @ 6:30pm	<b>4/17</b> Seder Dinner @ 6:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service @ 7:30 PM	<b>4/18</b> Good Friday Service @ 7:30 PM	<b>4/19</b> Zumba @ 9:00 Easter Vigil @ 7:30 PM
<b>4/20</b> <b>Easter!</b> Sunrise Service @ 6:45 am Worship 10:00am	<b>4/21</b>	<b>4/22</b>	<b>4/23</b>	<b>4/24</b> Pride Mt. Olive Meeting @ 7:00 (Senior Center and Online) Choir 7:30	<b>4/25</b>	<b>4/26</b> Zumba @ 9:00
<b>4/27</b> Worship 10:00 AM	<b>4/28</b>	<b>4/29</b>	<b>4/30</b> AA @ 6:30pm			