

Good News

December 2014



Newsletter of The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour
420 North Progress Avenue
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

First and foremost, on behalf of my family and me, I want to take a moment in this article to thank you for your numerous cards, gracious gifts, and many blessings we received during the holidays. It was very thoughtful of you to remember us. We continue to feel the love of God from this community of faith in amazing and abundant ways. Thank you.

As we begin a new year, I thought it might be good to assess the state of our church. Just as the President of the United States each year gives a State of the Union Address, as outlined in the Constitution, it is appropriate for us to consider how we are doing as a church. And so, some questions come to mind, "Where have we been? Where are we going? How will we get there?"

In the past couple of years the leadership of our congregation has been focused on two important and large endeavors. One was the well-being of our physical plant. And, to that end we spent much time tending to repairs and renovations. There was painting that needed to be done. There were lights, HVAC units, and a hot water heater that needed replaced. There were storage space issues that needed to be addressed. And, many hands pitched in and many dollars donated, and our church building is the better for it. And, again, thank you to everyone who helped.

The other large endeavor that has occupied our leadership's time was tending to our finances. In particular, council spent much time working through the budget this past year, particularly addressing the expense side of the budget. Council worked diligently

to cut costs. Council also worked to increase income through rentals. And, council worked to keep the congregation informed of our financial situation (including weekly reports in the bulletin, and monthly reports in the newsletter). As I write this letter, our treasurer is optimistic that we will be in the black at the end of the year. This is wonderful news, and again a big thank you goes to everyone for their effort. Keep up the good work; may we continue this trend in subsequent years.

And so, where are we going? And, how do we get there? There are three endeavors, I would like us to continue to work on as a congregation. These will serve to strengthen our work as a church. The first is the ongoing stewardship map project entitled "Where We Live is How We Give." The project is meant to help better connect our membership, especially reaching out to our members who are unable to regularly join us for worship. The map will help us see who lives near whom and thus help us connect members to shut-ins, to in-actives, to visitors, etc.

The second of the three endeavors we need to focus on is our committee structure. Over the years it has been more and more difficult to sustain committees, because it is difficult to find willing persons to serve as committee chairs as well as persons to serve as members long-term. We have been able to cobble together programs and events when they come up on the calendar, but it has not always been efficient, and not without quite a bit of stress.

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Dear Sisters & Brothers—continued from front page

Finally, we need to focus on our social ministry. We do a lot as a church: Family Promise, Second Sunday Food Offering, Giving Tree, Souper Bowl event, and so on. There are also a lot of social ministry opportunities that fall to the wayside, because we don't have a structure to respond. So, in light of that reality, we have tapped someone within our congregation to serve as a social ministry chair. In the new year, we plan to get a social ministry committee up and running in the life of the church under which umbrella much of our present social ministry work can be included, and which new opportunities can be considered.

Sisters and brothers, this is where we have been and this is where I see us going, at least in the immediate future. Our church leadership continues to gather information from you, the members of Our Saviour, as to the vision for our future. Thank you for all you continue to do in the life of the church, and may God bless you and bless us in the New Year.

In Christ,

Pastor Joel Petruschke

The Lessons for January 2015

January 4—Christmas 2

What now, now that the holidays are over?

I Peter 1:1-25

II Peter 1:3-15, 3:1-18

Psalm 16

January 11—Baptism of our Lord

Walking in the Light and Love of God,
Walking Wet because Baptism

I John 1:1-2:11; 2:29-3:24; 4:7-21

Psalm 23

January 18—2 Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

January 25—Second Sunday after the Epiphany (VISION—SEEING)

Revelation 1:1-20, 4:1-5:14

Psalm 30

Parish Staff

Joel D. Petruschke, pastor
Margaret Quintanar, director of music
Janet R. Ditmer, secretary
David Shadel, sexton

Good News is a monthly publication of **The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour**, 420 North Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109, 717-545-9992, ossec@comcast.net.

Pastor: Joel D. Petruschke, **Secretary:** Janet R. Ditmer. **Deadline** for submission is the third Monday prior to publication month.

If you do not have email or internet access, your addressed copy of Good News will be available in your church mailbox the first weekend of each month.

About Worship

I love describing the Epiphany season, which begins on January 6, as though a light bulb goes on in our heads. Epiphany is the season of light, so it makes sense. The season is focused on shining a light on who exactly this Jesus is who has been born to us at Christmas. And so, we have stories including the baptism of our Lord, the call of Philip and Nathanael, the Transfiguration of our Lord, and so on, all of which are meant to provide insight regarding who Jesus is. These stories are supposed to make us have an epiphany, such that we say, "Oh, that is who Jesus is!"

I wonder what light bulbs go on in our heads during worship. Maybe, some of us have a light bulb go on in our heads and we say to ourselves, "Did I lock the front door before we left for church?" or "Did I turn off the oven?" or "Did I ... " Yes, we have the "Oh ... " moments.

But, all those questions aside, what are the epiphanies you have when you are in worship? Maybe, during the Absolution and Confession it suddenly dawns on you that yes, indeed, God really does forgive me of my sins. Or, maybe during Holy Communion it hits you out of blue that yes, to be sure, God is truly present here with his people in this Holy Sacrament. Or, maybe, it unexpectedly occurs to you that while you are singing a hymn that there are countless others in the world singing God's praises along with you, while they worship. And furthermore, that all our voices are joined with the heavenly chorus. Or, maybe it crosses your mind as you worship with your brothers and sisters in

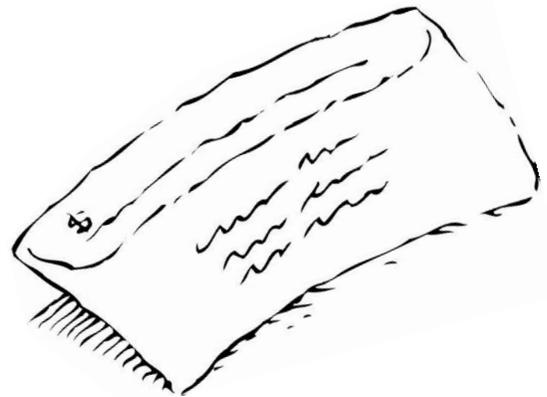
Christ, that one day, and a day not so far distant, we will be worshipping together in the Church Triumphant, and we will see God face to face. Or, maybe as you hear the Word of God read from Scripture, that it strikes you as it never did before, that these words offer a glimpse into the very mind and will of God.

Yes, there are all sorts of epiphanies that may happen in worship. The point is that hopefully we can be open to seeing those epiphanies and thus broaden our faith perspective, and subsequently deepen our worship experience. I pray the light that emanates forth from this season would shine brightly in your life and give you greater insight into Jesus and thus God.

2015 Giving Envelopes

The 2015 giving envelopes were distributed via church mailbox. It is very important to note that the envelopes are newly alphabetized, which means you may have a different number for 2015. Again, it is very important to begin using the 2015 envelopes as soon as the new year begins on Thursday, January 1, 2015. This will make the transition from the old to new envelope numbers and old to new year easier for the counters and for the recording of your gifts. Accuracy is our aim and your help is appreciated.

If you did not receive envelopes, please contact Jan (717-545-9992 or ossec@comcast.net).



A Word on Stewardship

Following the holidays, reality sets in. Come the weeks after the holidays, and we realize just how much we have indulged when we step on the scale and when we open our credit card statements. We look back and think to ourselves, “I probably should have reconsidered just how many calories I was consuming. And, I probably should have reconsidered my spending habits.” When reality sets in after the holidays, we are left with nothing to do but play “catch up.” We have to begin our exercise and diet routine to shed those extra pounds. And, we have to begin paying off the balance on our credit cards. If we have disciplined ourselves, however, we may have managed to have the pitfalls of the holidays.

As the holidays roll around each year, the most difficult thing for me is managing my time. Every year I feel that I am behind the eight ball, that I am trying to keep my head above water, that I don’t have enough time to get everything done. And this feeling really detracts from my appreciation of the season of Advent and Christmas. Maybe you feel the same.

When Martin Luther felt overwhelmed by what he had to accomplish in the course of the day, he had a little trick he used to help him. He said that on those really busy days, he would pray twice as long. Now, that seems like a “catch-22.” If we pray twice as long, well then we are going to have even less time to accomplish all that is required of us.

But, I wonder if Luther’s trick was not so much a means to ask God for help to give him strength that me might get everything done or even a means to help him efficiently organize his day (although, both may have been a part of his prayer), as much as it

was as a means to help him understand what was truly vital for him to do on those busy days.

Yes, I have to write Christmas cards, purchase and wrap gifts, clean up the house for guests, and so on, but you know what, I really need to sit down with my family and watch that Christmas special that is on television right now, and then I will get to those other things later. That is just one example.

And, this prayer trick, I believe, works not just for managing our time, but also for managing our diets and our pocketbooks. If we take some extra time in prayer to consider how we need to discipline our lives, well then we will be more conscious to manage those aspects of our lives. It might even necessitate our taking a moment of prayer before we go to this party or that open house and ask for God’s presence in that moment to guide us in our food choices. It may be that we take a moment in prayer before we go to the mall or online to shop and ask for God’s presence in that moment to guide our shopping choices.

Now, of course, I realize that we are coming out of the holidays and this information may have been more helpful prior to the holidays. But, as we begin this new year, this prayer trick of Luther’s may serve as our New Year’s Resolution. And, in that way, we begin to develop it into a habit, such that, by the time we come around to holidays next year, we will have become an old pro at managing our life choices.

So, let us take up Luther’s routine of praying twice as long, or twice as frequently, however it may be to serve your life and the challenges in your life.



Dear Padre,

Now that we are in the process of concluding our journey through the New Testament and the Bible as a whole, what might be said in summary about God's Word?

Signed,

Give It to Me in Brief

Dear Give It to Me in Brief,

In short, the Bible is about the relationship between God and Creation, humans included. The Bible explains in the story of Adam and Eve that because of their disobedience (eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil) sin entered the world. And, the whole rest of the Bible is about how God works to restore that right

relationship by dealing with sin. And so God tries to remove sin with a flood (the Noah's Ark story), and God tries to deal with sin by giving God's people the Ten Commandments, and finally God deals with sin by sending his Son to die on the cross.

What does all this mean for us? What is our part to play in this faith drama? The apostle Paul sums it up best in Galatians 5:13-15: For you were called to freedom (that is, freedom from sin through Christ's sacrifice) ... only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law (that is, the will of God) is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

It is as simple as that. This is what the Bible is about in a few sentences. In an even briefer summation, Martin Luther said that the gospel is summed up in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life."

Thanks for your question.

Signed,

Padre



Prayer Requests

Glen Johnson, Bill Granfors, Galen Twigg, Ada Heberle, Naida Huber (neighbor of Candy Evans), Robin Ames, Diane Lehrman, Patti Haller (friend of Linda Freed), Mildred Brown (sister-in-law of Anneke & Dan Fleming), Meg Chiarella (neighbor of Candy Evans), Julie Drake, Andrea Faber, Marvin Brown Sr. (brother of Dan Fleming), Greg Reichenbach (friend of Diane Lehrman), Betty Nickle, Lista Eger (sister of Miriam McIntyre), Ronald Kunz, Dan Lynch & family (friends of the Digons), Dottie Kop-

penhaver, Mary Louise Shuler, Jaime Barr, Ken Freed, Eleanor Buss, Ira Evans, Chuck Yocum, The Rev. Pete Kuebler, Deborah Wolf, Mike Cadena, Marian Tosheff, Erica Brockmann (friend of Janet Ruocco & Linda Schreier), Doris Savage, Sally Twigg (mother of Karen Hoch), June Reinbold (mother of Jeanette Logan), Vernel Brown (relative of Flemings), Pat DiScorio, Janet Ruocco, Karl Johnson, Stacy Leonard (friend of Karen Hoch), Giselle Valle, Bernie Coates, Elizabeth Neidich, Karen Hoch & Trinity Mummert, David Buck, Robert Barge, Betty Baker, Anna Weirich, Shannon Clawson, Sylvia Zorek, Lisa Kessler family, Sara Schreffler, Marie Mateo (mother of Carol Ranck), Pat Neidich, Bob Sternberger, Eva Prichard, Shirley Logan, Lori Fulmer, Tom & Wendy Snyder, Anthony Martin (brother of Otis Martin), Chris McIntyre Family, & Bishop Dunlop. Pray for missionaries, especially Tonya Starnier in Mongolia & Treina Montgomery in Jerusalem. Pray for our military, especially George Schreffler, III & Ian Bowling.



Thank you!

Dear Pastor Joel,

Just want to thank you and the congregation for all of the love and support you gave my mom, me and Dan. All of the prayers, cards and good wishes are greatly appreciated. I know why my mom loved you all so much. I love you all, too. Words cannot express the gratitude we feel.

The memorial celebration was beautiful—perfect. Thanks for providing the luncheon and all of the help that I needed. The whole afternoon was a beautiful tribute to my beautiful and extra special mom—the best mom in the world, as far as I’m concerned. Your kindness and generosity will not be forgotten.

Again, I will say thank you from me, my family and friends and especially from Esther.

Love,
Suzette

Dear Friends,

We want to take the opportunity to thank you for your very generous gift of \$178.37 to the Manna Food Pantry, as we continue serving the hungry in our area.

Generous “boosts” from time to time on the parts of kind-hearted persons such as yourselves, make it possible for us to continue this ministry, and feel encouraged that we are not in this endeavor by ourselves.

Sincerely,
Sarah Kempf, administrator
Manna Food Pantry (Penbrook UCC)

Greetings Pastor Joel,

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you, for your recent contributions to Robe Gifting International. Your support and help in growing the vision to assist others is greatly appreciated. I wish to particularly thank Diane Lehrman who was instrumental in receiving the donation.

We pray that you will continue to help us spread the word to your friends, colleagues and business entities. We need all spiritually minded persons to assist in helping Clergy and Choirs in maintaining “Outward Holiness.”

Please visit our website (www.robegift.org) or our Facebook page (Robe Gifting International). Tell someone “we need robes,” tell someone “we need physical and financial contributions.” RGI will make every donation count.

Peace and blessings,
Michael A. McMullen, Sr., CEO
Robe Gifting International

I would like to extend a heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who participated in the Christmas Eve services for sharing your gift to the Christ Child with the congregation.

Peace,
Margaret Quintanar

*God gives us all a free trip around the sun each year.
Enjoy the ride.*



January

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Lesser festivals are listed in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Birthdays are listed in bold .				1	2	3
				NAME OF JESUS New Year's Day		
4 8:30 am—Word & Sacrament 9:30 am—First Sunday Social 9:30 am—Church School 10:45 am—Word & Sacrament Christmas 2 Deb Flage Anna Mary Wolf	5	6	7 7:00 pm—Choir	8 7:00 pm—Bible Study	9	10
		Epiphany of Our Lord	Shirley Bartell Jeanette Logan	Marian Tosheff		
11 8:30 am—Word & Prayer 9:30 am—Church School 10:45 am—Word & Prayer 1:30-4:30 pm—Private Rental (fellowship hall)	12	13	14 7:00 pm—Choir	15 7:00 pm—Music & Worship	16	17
Baptism of Our Lord Dylan Gullick		Dekan Wietholter	Tiffany Trea	Ruth Ondek	January 16-18 Nawakwa Retreat →	
18 Deadline for February "Good News" 8:30 am—Word & Sacrament 9:30 am—Church School 10:45 am—Word & Sacrament 2 Epiphany Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins Doris Balas	19 <i>Church Office Closed</i> CONFESSION OF PETER (transferred) Martin Luther King Jr Birthday	20	21 7:00 pm—Choir	22 7:00 pm—Bible Study	23	24
25 8:30 am—Word & Prayer 9:30 am—Congregational Meeting 10:45 am—Word & Prayer 3 Epiphany Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ends	26 CONVERSION OF PAUL (transferred)	27 7:00 pm—Altar Guild Lisa Kessler Nicholas Sheleman Shirley Smith	28 7:00 pm—Choir Peter Ingavo	29	30	31 Emily Walker

*What the new year brings to you will depend a great deal
 On what you bring to the new year.
 —Vern McLellan*



Good News

The Evangelical Lutheran
CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR
420 North Progress Avenue
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109

Phone: 717-545-9992
Email: ossec@comcast.net
Web Site: www.oslutheranharrisburg.org

Mission Statement

Our Saviour Lutheran Church, a caring congregation dedicated to the word of Christ, welcomes all people to worship and grow with us as we share His love and salvation with our neighbors, our children and ourselves.

Worship

8:30 am & 10:45 am

Holy Eucharist is celebrated
the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month

Church School

9:30 am

Church Office

2:00-5:00 pm Monday through Thursday

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.