

# Good News

January 2018



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is a new year, 2018! I hope you and yours have had a wonderful holiday season. I pray that your Christmas and New Year's celebrations were full of joy. And, allow me to take a moment to thank all of you, the members of the congregation, for all your cards, gifts, and well-wishes to me and to my family. My family and I are greatly touched by your generosity, your kindness, and your love.

Now, as it is the custom at this time of year to make New Year's resolutions, I would like to share with you a couple of resolutions I have made regarding my role as pastor of Our Saviour. I don't know if "resolution" is the right word; I have been speaking of these endeavors as goals.

The first goal is that come this year I plan to visit every member of our congregation. This all-member visitation plan consists of visiting all of the congregation's members, in addition to those visits I make when a member is in the hospital or those members who are homebound. I am now in my 10<sup>th</sup> year as pastor of Our Saviour, and I felt it was important to "check-in" with everyone. I had strived to visit everyone when I first started at Our Saviour, and it is time to do so again. To that end, I ask for your understanding, for I may not always get to every evening committee meeting this year. I anticipate making a significant number of evening visits, when people are home from work. There is only so much time in the evening to devote to church and to my family life. Also, I ask that you, the members, might help me, such that if you would like to be proactive and call to schedule a time for me to visit, that would be great, as that is one less phone call I would need to make. In other words, please look at your calendars, and let me know when might be a good time for me to stop by.

Now, the second goal I have set is to develop our congregation into a genuine place of healing. If the Gospel is about anything, it is about healing. Yes, the Gospel is about spiritual healing, but emotional and relational healing, physical healing, healing of creation, so on and so forth all fall under the focus of the Gospel. We already do many what I would call "healing" ministries. We work with homeless families in the Family Promise program, to help families heal, such that they can find permanent housing and work. We support Manna Food Pantry with our Hanna Hope Garden and 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Food Offering and Souper Bowl Event to help hungry bodies heal by providing nourishment. In the New Year, we are looking to make space available at our church for a Grief Support Group to meet, which will provide healing to individuals who are grieving. And still furthermore, we are going to be researching the needs that are in our immediate area, whereby we can provide additional healing through our efforts as a church. I have convened a task force to help with the research, and we will see where the Spirit leads us. Perhaps, we can provide a medical clinic for folks who are uninsured or underinsured. Perhaps, we can become a collection point for and distribution center of medical equipment for folks in need of such items. Perhaps, we can provide tutoring for those who are illiterate or for whom English is not their primary language. Who knows? But, we do plan to speak with leaders within the school district to learn about what they are witnessing among the students and families. We do plan to speak to community leaders, borough council members and township commissioners, individuals in local law enforcement, and personnel at the Community General Hospital. And, from them, we hope to glean as well what the needs are in our surrounding community.

Our congregation is blessed in that we have space on our campus to do new and exciting ministries, like we have done with the Hanna Hope Garden. We are also a very visible site, with the blessing of a bus stop, whereby people can easily access us. And, let us not forget our most important resource, all of the members of Our Saviour. And, many of our members have experience in the field of healing already, whether as doctors, nurses, volunteers at hospitals, social workers, etc.

Sisters and brothers, it just seems like God is calling us to bigger and better things when it comes to the ministry of healing. Personally, I keep coming back to the apostle Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 5:17-20, which say, "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors of Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." If we substitute the word "healing" for "reconciliation", which is really what the word means, we come to see the full import of this calling Paul says we have from God. We are ambassadors of healing, for that is what Christ is about, as seen most vividly on the cross.

I look forward to this new year with you. I look forward to being able to visit with you. And, as a church, I look forward to working with you towards bringing healing to God's creation and people through our ministry here at Our Saviour. Praise be to God who in Christ is renewing and healing all of us.

In Christ, Pastor Joel Petruschke

## The Lessons for January 2018

**January 7** — Baptism of our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 29

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

**January 14** — Epiphany 2

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

**January 21** — Epiphany 3

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

**January 28** — Epiphany 4

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

## Thank you

We would like to thank you all for the generous gifts & holiday greeting cards. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated this holiday season.

Pastor Joel, Margaret, Dave, Alta & Barb.



## Parish Staff

Joel D. Petruschke, pastor

Margaret Quintanar, director of music

David Shadel, sexton

Barbara Johnson, administrative assistant

**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. **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

In this article, I want to speak about worship space. Now, obviously, our worship space at church is our sanctuary, where we gather to read scripture, sign hymns, hear the sermon, celebrate the sacraments, and offer prayers. And, there is an unspoken line of demarcation, such that when we move from the narthex into the sanctuary, we understand that we are crossing over from the mundane to the holy, from the ordinary to the sublime. And, thus, there is a change in our conduct and attitude as we cross over the threshold into the sanctuary. In the narthex, we share in casual conversation, and we catch up with one another. In the sanctuary, we turn our attention to God and to worship.

Carving out space in our lives to devote our attention to God is so important for our spiritual lives. And, it is not just in church that we do this. It is important to create worship space each and every day, whether at home or elsewhere. To be sure, if we don't already have a place, we should find a place within our homes to devote to Scripture reading and to prayer. Perhaps, it is at the kitchen table. Maybe it is in our favorite chair in the living room. And, we should keep our Bible and devotional book there near that spot. And, it should be that when it is time to do our daily devotions, we should think of it as though we are going from the "narthex" to the "sanctuary." We should change our conduct and attitude as we move into our devotional time. It should be as though we are going from the mundane to the holy, from the ordinary to the sublime.

Now, I should warn us against carving out space in certain places at home. I would advise against doing your devotions in bed before going to sleep. First of all, when we are lying in bed, our minds are already preparing us for sleep, and so we really can't give our full attention to God. Nor should we do our devotions in our home where we can be easily distracted by the phone, by the television, by members of the family, and so on. It should be a quiet place. And, so maybe the place is not as important as the time of day when we do our devotions, such as early in the morning before people are up and about.

On occasion, I have used my shower time in the morning for focusing on God, simply because it is where I am unavailable for a given time to the rest of the family. Some people use their drive time to and from work as their time with God, such that their car is their worship space. But, personally, I can't give my attention to God effectively while also trying to pay attention to the road. And something else that is helpful in creating space that is worship-full is decorating that area with items that might help us to focus on God, such as a cross or an icon.

Worship space may also consist of our walking time outside. We might plug in our headphones to listen to scripture or other devotional readings, while we walk, and so then create a sound barrier to the outside world. Again, personally, I would be too distracted by what would be going on around me. But, for some, this method of creating space might be just perfect.

As we can see, personal worship space can take various forms in a whole host of places. What is important is to find that space apart. Because what we are really talking about here is "holiness." And "holiness" is in essence just that—space apart from everything else. That is what the word "holy" means, "to be set apart." Our worship time in church on Sunday morning is space apart from that which happens in our lives during the rest of the week. But, we need more worship space than just one hour in the week at church. And, so we need to give ourselves this gift, if we haven't done so already. We need to carve out time in our daily schedule and carve out space in our physical world so we can nurture our relationship with God.

And be assured wherever our worship space is, God will find his way to us. If we just make room for God, God will make room in us for him to enter it.

## A Word on Stewardship

As we are just coming off the season of giving, and many of us have made donations to charitable organizations including the church, I want to share with you the five reasons persons make monetary gifts?

- 1) **Belief:** People give to certain organizations because those donors understand well the mission of the organization and they are enthusiastic about the work that organization performs and the outcomes it seeks to achieve.
- 2) **Connection:** People give to certain organizations because those donors understand that in their giving to those particular organizations their own lives are caught up in something bigger than themselves.
- 3) **Trust:** People give to certain organizations because those donors understand that their money will be used wisely for good purposes.
- 4) **Self-Satisfaction:** People give to certain organizations because those donors feel good about contributing to a worthy cause. They feel their money is well-used, and they feel appreciated as donors.
- 5) **Thanksgiving/Gratitude:** People give to certain organizations because those donors are thankful for how those organizations impact their lives.

So, the question is “how well do we as a church do these things?” Does our church articulate our mission well, and achieve its mission? Does our church engage its members in the mission, so that they feel as though they are part of something bigger than themselves? Does our church create trust in its members, so that they feel we are using their monetary gifts well? Does our church express its appreciation for its members’ generosity? Does our church impact its contributing members’ lives?

If we as a church are not fulfilling these points, then we need to know about it. Please do let our church leadership (pastor, council members, etc.) know about it, and we will do what we can to improve upon it. Thank you.

## Christian Education News

We have three Sunday school classes: one for kids in grades 1-7, one for youth in grades 8-12, and one for adults. Material is available for younger children. For more information, please contact Robin Ames at 717-230-8441 or [rea413@verizon.net](mailto:rea413@verizon.net).



## Nawakwa Retreat

Need a weekend getaway? The annual Nawakwa retreat will be held Friday, January 19, through Sunday, January 21. Please note that this is one week later than in past years. Anyone and everyone is welcome to attend. For more information, or to register for this retreat, please contact Sue Reilly at [maxandmylesmom@msn.com](mailto:maxandmylesmom@msn.com) or Robin Ames at 717-230-8441 or [rea413@verizon.net](mailto:rea413@verizon.net).



**Dear Padre,**

On January 6<sup>th</sup>, the church observes the Epiphany of our Lord. It is the time when the three wise men visited Jesus. Can you tell me anything about those three wise men and the star they followed?

Signed, Wanting more Wisdom about Epiphany



Dear "Wanting more Wisdom,"

The word for wise men in the Bible is magi. They are said to be "from the East" (Matthew 2:1), which could mean Arabia, Mesopotamia, or elsewhere. They are portrayed as astrologers, because they are guided by a star. They are also portrayed as Gentiles, since they do not know the scriptural prophecy concerning the location of the Messiah's birth (Matthew 2:2-6). Popular traditions have portrayed them as three in number, because they bring three gifts. However, we don't know how many magi there were. They were at least two in number, because of the plural form of magi. But, they could have numbered 2,000, for all we know. Because of the prophetic verse in Isaiah 60:3, we think of them as kings, but again, the Gospel of Matthew portrays them as astrologers. Although it is not noted in Scripture, later tradition supplies names for the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

We often wonder about the star that guided the magi. Some suggest that the planets were aligned, such that that was what the magi saw. Others suggest that the movement of the star may have been a bright comet that the magi saw. Who knows? But, there is a *star* prophecy in the book of Numbers, to which the gospel writer Matthew may have been alluding: "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; a star shall come out of Jacob; a scepter shall rise out of Israel..." (Numbers 24:17).

What is fascinating to me is that our ancient ancestors looked up to the sky for understanding about God's plans. There is truth up there in the cosmos. Even now, many centuries later, we look up to the sky in wonder. And, we can see the fingerprint of God, in how perfectly harmonized the solar system is for example that we can predict solar eclipses so accurately, like the one this past summer. We look up to the sky and see truth, in that we can learn so much about our planet and what our future may hold. For example, scientists first understood the effect of greenhouse gases by coming to understand Venus and its thick atmosphere.

Epiphany is a wonderful festival in the life of the church. It is not only powerful in that it is the manifestation of Jesus to the Gentiles, but it also teaches us to see truth around us, most poignantly in the universe around us.

Thanks for your question.

Signed, Padre

### ***Mutual Ministry***

The Mutual Ministry Committee was formed by Pastor Joel when he came to Our Saviour in December 2008 as a way to keep in touch with the needs of the congregation. We plan to meet in January, weather dependent . If you have a suggestion for the Committee or would like further information please contact Diane Lehrman. Thank you

### ***Please Make a Note***

We are changing the January Welcome Committee Meeting date from Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup> to: **Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 6 p.m.** Please mark your calendar!

### ***It's Time To Think About Easter Eggs!***

We begin making eggs Wednesday, January 17, 2018. The forms to sign-up for our 'Sweet Teams' are on the table in the Narthex. There will be five 'Sweet Teams' with 10-12 persons needed per team. The teams make eggs Sunday after the 2nd service, Monday mornings, Wednesday mornings and evenings and Saturday mornings. So come and join our 'Sweet Teams' and help make our Easter Egg project for 2018 a rousing success. Again this year, we will be providing written information about our program to anyone interested in selling eggs. Our goal is to exceed the 23,000 eggs we made in 2017. Thank you, Julie Drake, Chair Bunny.





Sun                      Mon                      Tue                      Wed                      Thu                      Fri                      Sat

|  |  |  |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|
|  | <p>1</p> <p><b>Happy New Year!</b></p> <p>office closed</p>  | <p>2</p>   | <p>3</p> <p>7 pm - Adult Choir<br/>Bible Study</p>   | <p>4</p> <p>6 pm - Chimes<br/>Choir<br/>Pastor Kathy Baker<br/>Deb Flage<br/>Ann Wolf</p> | <p>5</p>  | <p>6</p>  |
| <p>7 - Baptism of Our Lord<br/>8:30 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>9:30 am - Sunday School<br/>10:45 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>2 pm - Confirmation Class @Our Saviour<br/>Jeanette Logan</p>                    | <p>8</p>   | <p>9</p> <p>6 pm - Welcome Committee<br/><br/>Marian Tosheff</p> | <p>10</p> <p>7 pm - Adult Choir<br/>7 pm - Council</p>   | <p>11</p> <p>6 pm - Chimes Choir<br/><br/>Dylan Gullick</p>                               | <p>12</p> <p>Dekan Wietholter</p>                                     | <p>13</p>   |
| <p>14 - Epiphany 2<br/>8:30 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>9:30 am - Sunday School<br/>10:45 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>Mutual Ministry after 2<sup>nd</sup> service<br/>Tiffany Landis<br/>Steve Provencher</p> | <p>15</p>  <p>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day<br/>office closed<br/>Ruth Ondeck</p> | <p>16</p>  | <p>17</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making<br/>4 pm - Egg Making<br/><br/>7 pm - Adult Choir<br/>Bible Study</p> | <p>18</p> <p>6 pm - Chimes Choir<br/><br/>Doris Balas<br/>Adrian Borello</p>              | <p>19</p> <p>Nawakwa Family Retreat begins<br/><br/>Rachel Broome</p> | <p>20</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making<br/><br/>Viola Heberle</p>                             |
| <p>21 - Epiphany 3<br/>8:30 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>9:30 am - Sunday School<br/>10:45 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>2 pm - Confirmation Class @Our Saviour<br/>Family Retreat ends</p>                       | <p>22</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making<br/>7 pm - Worship &amp; Music<br/><br/>Jacob Gibson</p>  | <p>23</p>  | <p>24</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making<br/>4 pm - Egg Making<br/><br/>7 pm - Adult Choir</p>                 | <p>25</p> <p>6 pm - Chimes Choir</p>  | <p>26</p>   | <p>27</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making<br/><br/>Lisa Kessler<br/>Nicholas Sheleman</p>        |
| <p>28 - Epiphany 4<br/>8:30 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>9:30 am - Sunday School<br/>10:45 am - Word &amp; Sacrament<br/>Peter Ingavo</p>   | <p>29</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making</p>   | <p>30</p> <p>7 pm - Altar Guild<br/><br/>Emily Walker</p>        | <p>31</p> <p>8 am - Egg Making<br/>4 pm - Egg Making<br/><br/>7 pm - Adult Choir</p>                 |   |   |  |

Good News

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

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*Mission Statement*

Our Saviour Lutheran Church, a caring congregation dedicated to the word of Christ, welcomes all people to worship and to 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  
every Sunday.  
Sunday School  
9:30 am

*Church Office*

9:00 am -12:00 pm Monday through Friday

Phone: 717-545-9992  
Email: [ossec@comcast.net](mailto:ossec@comcast.net)  
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God's work. Our hands.