

# Good News

November 2018



Newsletter of The Evangelical Lutheran  
Church of Our Saviour  
420 North Progress Avenue

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

All Saints' Sunday is November 4<sup>th</sup> this year. It is on this Sunday that we remember our church members who have died since last All Saints' Sunday. In thinking about the festival of All Saints this year, my spirit is particularly overcome. All Saints' Sunday is difficult every year, but more so this year it seems. Here is the list of those church members we remember this year and their dates of death:

Anna Weirich	November 12, 2017	Charles Shuler	May 1, 2018
Miriam McIntyre	December 7, 2017	Mike Cadena	June 29, 2018
Elaine Kepler	December 18, 2017	Andrew Kunz	July 22, 2018
Jean Seneca	December 24, 2017	James Griffith	September 13, 2018
Ira Evans	March 18, 2018	Judith Aker	October 13, 2018

We have loved and cherished each one of these persons. They were each a gift that God shared with us in our pilgrimage here on earth. Because they were loved, our hearts grieve.

In our Christian faith, however, we are reminded that we are not without hope. In Christ Jesus, by the power of his death and resurrection, we take comfort in knowing that one day we will be gathered with all the saints in the presence of God. And it will be a glorious reunion. Still the sadness we feel today can seem to overshadow the hope we have for tomorrow.

However, maybe the sadness that follows us is a good thing. The sadness reminds us of love. The sadness reminds of God's goodness to us his people in having blessed us with dear friends and family. All the more the sadness should remind us as well of what God accomplished for us on the cross, such that God defeated the foe who has wrought sin and death in all our lives. Maybe the sadness then is meant to be a welcomed sojourner with us in life. Maybe we are to allow for sadness to accompany us, whereby we then might come to appreciate everything around us with clearer eyes, and conclude by giving thanks to God.

I am not saying that God creates grief so as to persuade us to acknowledge God and his goodness. I am not saying that at all. I don't believe God would desire any of his people to suffer heartache. And yet, good things can come from ill. God can most certainly turn the foe's worst schemes into a blessing. Sadness can slowly transform into the very peace of God. And that is what I hope for each and everyone one of us in our places of grief and sadness.

In each of our moments of grief, let us take a moment to stop and to reflect on why it is we grieve. Let us remember what it is about the person that touched our lives. Let us think about the love we treasured in that person. Let us remember as well that God's love for us in Christ Jesus was strong enough to defeat death, so we do indeed have a most certain and abiding hope. Let us remember these things and in remembering, give thanks to God.

In Christ, Pastor Joel Petruschke



Thank You, LORD!

### The Lessons for November 2018

**November 4** — All Saints Sunday

Isaiah 25:6-9  
Psalm 24  
Revelation 21:1-6a  
John 11:32-44

**November 11** — Pentecost 25

1 Kings 17:8-16  
Psalm 146  
Hebrews 9:24-28  
Mark 12:38-44

**November 18** — Pentecost 26

Daniel 12:1-3  
Psalm 16  
Hebrews 10:11-25  
Mark 13:1-8

**November 25** — Christ the King

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14  
Psalm 93  
Revelation 1:4b-8  
John 18:33-37



### Thank You Notes We Received.

Pastor Petruschke,

Thank you very much for coming down to assist in mom's memorial service. We also wanted to thank the congregation members who were able to attend. I now that my mother was watching from above and that she was very glad you were able to attend. She always felt accepted at your church.

Respectfully,  
Steve Aker & family.



Thank you so very much for all the cards, phone calls, E-mails and flowers from my many friends and family here at Our Saviour. A special thank you to Pastor Joel for all the pastoral visits. Our church family has truly been a blessing in my life and through the knee replacement surgeries and I so appreciated the warm welcome & hugs I received when I was able to attend church again.

Julie Drake

Thank you for all your prayers before during & after my recent surgery and recovery, cards that you sent me with your get well wishes as well as meals many of you made for us afterwards. I love my church family, God Bless you! I truly appreciate all of your thoughts & prayers as well as Pastor Joel's visit & prayer on my day of my surgery. Your thoughtfulness means so much to me!

In Christ's love ~ Lisa Neil

### Parish Staff

Joel D. Petruschke, pastor  
Margaret Quintanar, director of music  
David & Alta Shadel, sextons  
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 remind you that we will be having our annual Thanksgiving Eve Service on November 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm. I don't know how long Our Saviour has been having this service; it was a tradition before I became pastor of the congregation. Indeed, it is a special tradition for our church. Last year, we were even surprised by some special visitors. Bishop Dunlop and his wife showed up quite unexpectedly. I don't know if they will be here again this year. I hope they will.

Now I asked the Bishop how it was that they came to join us for the service. And he said that he and his wife were looking for a place to worship, and Our Saviour was the only Lutheran church in the area offering a service that evening. There may have been other denominations holding services, but with regards to Lutheran churches, we were it. I was much disheartened to hear that.

Is it such that giving thanks in worship is falling to the wayside? Indeed, even our attendance at the Thanksgiving Eve Service has never been great. Over the years, we have averaged about 15 individuals at worship. Not great. But it has meant something to those who attend.

Now I recognize that many families in our society do tend to share that for which they are thankful when they gather around the dinner table on Thanksgiving Day. But it is really not the same thing as giving thanks in worship. To say that for which one is thankful around the dinner table does not necessarily acknowledge the One from whom we have our blessings. A person can say they are thankful for family, friends, and for their work. A person can say they are thankful for their home, good health, and for food on the table. We can say we are thankful for these things among our family and friends, but to offer our thanks in worship is by default to give thanks to God. In short, giving thanks does not necessarily equate with giving thanks to God. And that is why having our Thanksgiving Eve Service at Our Saviour each year is important. It is apparently important enough that even the Bishop and his wife attended.

So, if you have never been to our Thanksgiving Eve Service, or if you have not attended in a while, I encourage you to join us on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. We look forward to having you join us as we offer up to God our praise and thanksgiving. See you in worship.

## Confirmation Classes

The schedule for October & November is as follows:

November 4<sup>th</sup> here, @Our Saviour

November 18<sup>th</sup> here, @Our Saviour

December 9<sup>th</sup> @St. John, Hummelstown

All classes will be held from 2:00 pm—3:30 pm.

## Our Sympathy and Condolences

We lost our sister in Christ, Judy Aker, who passed away on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Funeral services were held in Meyersdale on October 18<sup>th</sup>. A memorial service will be held here at Our Saviour this Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11 am. We extend our sympathy and offer condolences to Judy's family and friends.



### **A Word on Stewardship**

Recently, I preached a sermon about how our focus as God’s people needs to be on one question: “How does what we do or say serve the Gospel of Jesus Christ?” It was a sermon that in part emerged from a conversation that our council president John Zimmerman and I had had. John and I had been talking about the vision we would like to have for our congregation moving forward. We talked about how everything we do should emerge from our calling as God’s people, which is to serve the Gospel. We talked about how even “things,” or even “space,” have a calling. We need to be alert to what we are hearing from various directions, as it relates to serving the Gospel.

So, for instance, the storage space back in the Trinity Room might be calling out to us, saying, “How can I better serve the Gospel?” And John and I discussed the possibility of the church purchasing a shed, so that we could move the stuff in the Trinity Room out into the shed. This then could free up space in the Trinity Room where we could house a Food Pantry or Clothing Closet for people in need. And so, we see how that question-How can I serve the Gospel better? - is answered. We are not plowing ahead with this project, at least not yet. It is just an illustration, and an idea at present.

My point being, it really does behoove us to think about this question more, not just in relation to our church life, but in all facets of life. In our daily living, we need to consider in any given situation, “How does what I am about to do or say serve the Gospel?” And if we can’t come up with a good response to that question, then maybe we really need to reconsider what it is we were about to say or do.

Now, the question that we may have is what does it mean to “serve the Gospel?” To answer that, we might re-word the initial question to ask, “How does what I say or do bring healing? How does what I say or do bring a blessing? How does what I say or do bring hope?” To the contrary, if what we are about to say or do will only bring division or anger, we should probably stop ourselves. In short, we need to examine how we can build up God’s kingdom, which entails forging a beloved community as a church and as a whole human family, as opposed to tearing down.

Friends, this is our calling. This is our Christian work. This is how we are to steer our lives and steer the community of faith. “How does it serve the Gospel?” Let it be a mantra that rings in our hearts and minds.

### **Do you have a favorite hymn?**

Margaret Quintanar is working on the hymns for the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. If you have a favorite hymn, please fill out a hymn request card, and place it in the offering plate. Margaret will try to include everyone's hymns on Sundays when they correspond to the lessons.



### **A Musical Offering for Christmas Eve**

Anyone who would like to offer his or her musical, literary, or artistic talents as a gift to the Christ Child on Christmas Eve during the half hour before each service—to play an instrument or sing an appropriate song, to read a religious Christmas poem or dance to music appropriate for worship, or to make some other kind of artistic offering - should see Margaret Quintanar or call her at 717-448-0295. Please share your talents. The order in which people volunteer will determine their placement in the program.



**Dear Padre,**

I wanted to ask how your studies are going. Can you tell me a little bit about the Th.D. program in which you are enrolled? What are you studying? What do you hope to do with this degree?



Signed, "Interested to Learn More about Your Learning More"

Dear "Interested,"

As I noted in the July/August newsletter, I am enrolled in the Th.D. program at Evangelical Seminary in Myerstown, Pa. They have a number of tracks in the program, including the historical theology track, the organizational theology track, the contextual theology track, and so on. I am in the biblical theology track, which means my focus is on biblical studies.

With regards to the program itself, I will be taking classes for two years, consisting of 3 terms per year. During each term, I am taking two classes. The sixth term in the two-years of study is focused on preparing for "comps," which are comprehensive exams. Doctoral programs typically have comprehensive exams, where the examinations entail knowledge of everything one has learned, thus "comprehensive" exams. If I pass my comps, I am then considered a "doctoral candidate." The last year of the program then is focused on my dissertation.

For my dissertation, I am interested in writing about the apostle Paul's use of the triad (faith, hope, and love) to measure the well-being of a church. In the New Testament, it seems apparent that when Paul was engaging various churches, he seemed to use these three virtues to assess how they were doing. And then he tailors his letters accordingly. My hope is that my dissertation then could serve to help congregations today assess themselves.

As to what I hope to do with this degree, I don't know for sure. Perhaps, I will seek to do some teaching. Perhaps, I will write some articles. As of now, I have no interest in leaving the pastoral ministry. I feel God is still calling me to serve in the church. At the very least, my education can only help to bolster my work as a pastor.

So far, my studies have been going along smoothly. I really do enjoy my classes. There is a lot of reading and a lot of writing, but I find it to be a blessing to engage my mind in an academic setting. My professors and peers have been bombarding me with new ideas and insights. Thanks be to God. There is no doubt about it, to be a better teacher and preacher, one must constantly be learning.

I ask for continued prayers from the congregation for strength as I continue to navigate the doctoral journey, as well as for balance in my family life and pastoral ministry. Our Saviour has been wonderfully understanding as I begin this new chapter of learning. Thank you.

And, thanks for your question.

Signed, Padre

**Poinsettias**

You have the opportunity to order Christmas poinsettias to beautify God's House. This year the cost for the red or white poinsettias is \$10.00 for a 5+ bloom plant. Please look in the bulletins, starting this week, for the order form. If you have any questions, please call Connie Johnson at 717-652-4394. **Remember: Deadline is November 25<sup>th</sup>.**



## Council President Message

Greetings,

I'm blessed to have been elected to lead Our Saviour's church council. I'm a firm believer in transparency and frequent communication. Throughout the next year, I thought about using our newsletter to share with you various updates from council. For this first update, I'm going to provide a glimpse of the vision for council moving forward.

Let's first start with how I view the business end of council. This leadership team is tasked to keep the three F's functioning for not only this year but for many years to come. These are Facility, Financial and Fellowship. We must lead with a balance of all three. If we spend all our time focusing on the facility or building, then we'll lose sight of the Fellowship. Without Fellowship what's the point of a facility. Focus solely on financial matters, while forgetting to plan for the care of facility is also a recipe for long-term disaster. These three focus areas are how we'll update the congregation. Every one of our standing or ad-hoc committees is equally reliant on the foundation of these three tenets. Try to justify how one is more important than the other or how we can function with one and not the other two, it's impossible.

Now the above tells you *how* we'll communicate the business of the church, but it still doesn't tell you the *why*. The *why* is simple; all decisions and direction are rooted in the Word. We choose to invest not only financially but spiritually for the future and benefit of the gospel. If there's not a direct connection to the ministry of our Lord and Savior, then we should really challenge ourselves to question if it's needed or even necessary. I see this holding true in every decision we confront. If we need to decide on how to pay the bills or hire a contractor to plow the parking lot, these are needed to keep the congregation safe when attending a service or event in Fellowship at the church. So, we lead in love and faith from now on. It's a paradigm shift to help us make better decisions for the future of our congregation.

Now, to address some known and tough issues we've encountered over the past 8 months. I'm certain people have experienced hurt, confusion, and possibly loss of trust in each other and maybe even the direction of our congregation. If these feelings have not entered your thoughts or mind, then please continue to maintain that strong faith and love. For those that have and continue to feel one of those terrible emotions, I appeal to you to search deep in your heart and soul to practice grace and love. We cannot successfully continue as a strong and united congregation until we learn to love and forgive one another.

While not trying to minimize the assistance we'll need from Advōz in the coming weeks, as children of God for so many years, we already know what's needed to heal. This isn't something Advōz can teach us. Do you think Advōz will teach us how to love one another better than we already know? We still see value in partnering with Advōz on a few specific points, such as educating our leaders and staff to better manage challenging and difficult situations.

Please recognize that I don't expect Advōz to solve all the issues of our church. It starts with each of us. We can't allow anyone or anything to tear apart our family. However, we must learn to hold each of us accountable for our actions. How do you want to be remembered? I implore each of you, myself included, to think about how our actions and words could be harmful or hurtful. It's never too late to say, "I'm sorry," or "I forgive you."

Too often I read or hear people remark that they don't come to church because of the hypocrisy in the church itself. How can we preach and demonstrate the mercy and grace of God if we are unable to love one another? Council can't fix what we consider the golden rule. This is for each of us to resolve.

Now, as we seek to lead Our Saviour, with Facility, Financial and Fellowship squarely aligned with the Word, you should expect to see this more and more as we provide updates on the business of the church. If we as council can't see how decisions surrounding the church promote spiritual outreach, growth, or love, then those decisions shouldn't occupy our time. You might not agree with all the council decisions, and I encourage you to seek me or any council member to understand why we decided something, or to express your disapproval of council decisions or actions. This needs to be part of our healing process. Please do not fan the flames of gossip and create more distraction. It is my hope that my words here will serve to help us move forward together. I can't guarantee your grievance or frustration will be acted upon to your complete satisfaction, and this is where my appeal must be heeded - seek to forgive and be forgiven.

We are in a time where there's competing priorities to attend worship on Sunday morning. There's going to be tough decisions ahead of us. Maybe some traditions we have to let go, so as to allow for new ministries which will appeal to a changing world. The way we do ministry is changing because those whom we serve is a dynamic and different group. However, we have to firm up the love in our own house first before we can think about reaching outside. But I don't expect to sit idle and let the opportunities pass us by either. We will heal and grow in spiritual harmony.

In closing, please reflect on the appeal to help us heal quickly and be a champion of mercy. Every day we don't move forward is a day we can't get back. Life is too short, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to lead us through the next year. Please join me and the rest of the council in praying for our Facility, Financials and Fellowship. We have a great journey awaiting us.

I look forward to providing more updates shortly on the exact topics we'll work through in the coming months.

Peace to all of you,  
John Zimmerman  
President, Our Saviour Lutheran Church Council

### ***Our Council Officers for 2018-2019***

President: John Zimmerman  
Vice-President: Herb Logan  
Secretary: Andrea Faber  
Treasurer: Jim Lubrecht



# *The Praise Him Singers*

♪♪♪ Present ♪♪♪

## *Our Fall 2018 Concerts*

### *“Total Praise!”*



**Tuesday, 11/13/2018, 7:00 pm, prelude 6:30pm**  
**Our Saviour Lutheran Church**  
**420 N. Progress Ave, Harrisburg, PA**

**Thursday, 11/15/2018, 7:00 pm, prelude 6:30pm**  
**First Church of God**  
**323 Reno St., New Cumberland, PA**

**Tuesday, 11/20/2018, 7:00 pm, prelude 6:30pm**  
**Charlton United Methodist Church**  
**5920 Jonestown Road, Harrisburg, PA**

OUR SAVIOUR  
FINANCIAL REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

ENVELOPES AND PLATE	\$115,417.01
FUND RAISING	\$27,762.44
FELLOWSHIP HALL RENTAL	<u>\$640.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$143,819.45
EXPENSE	<u>\$184,343.74</u>
DEFICIT	<u>(\$40,524.29)</u>
PNC ACCOUNTS:	
CURRENT FUND	\$13,559.42
MEMORIAL FUND	\$31,272.88
THRIVENT ACCOUNTS	
REGULAR MUTUALS	\$82,220.49
SCHOLARSHIP MUTUALS	\$120,312.41
SANTANDER ACCOUNT	
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	\$3,119.39



# NOVEMBER



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 5:30 pm - Chimes Choir	2	3  11 am - Memorial Service for Judy Aker
4 – All Saints Day 8:30 am - Word & Sacrament 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament 2-3:30 pm - Confirmation Class here @Our Saviour	5  6:00 pm - Welcome Committee	6  7 pm - Bible Study	7  7 pm - Choir	8  5:30 pm - Chimes Choir	9	10
11 - Share the Word, Share the Harvest 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament Luncheon to follow worship HAY! @Messiah Lutheran, Hbg.	12	13  7 pm - Praise Him Singers' Fall Concert with prelude @6:30 pm	14  7 pm - Choir  7 pm - Council	15  5:30 pm - Chimes Choir	16	17
18 - Pentecost 26 8:30 am - Word & Sacrament 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament 2-3:30 pm - Confirmation Class here @Our Saviour <b>newsletter deadline</b>	19	20	21  7 pm - Thanksgiving Eve Worship  <b>vacation day for Barb</b>	22   <b>office closed</b>	23  <b>office closed</b>	24
25 - Christ the King 8:30 am - Word & Sacrament 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament Alter Guild decorating Sanctuary after service	26  <b>vacation day for Barb</b>	27  <b>vacation day for Barb</b>	28  7 pm - Choir	29  5:30 pm - Chimes Choir	30	

Good News

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

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Web Site: [www.oslutheranharrisburg.org](http://www.oslutheranharrisburg.org)



*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)  
Web Site: [www.oslutheranharrisburg.org](http://www.oslutheranharrisburg.org)



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.