

# Good News

## October 2018



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It's time to celebrate! We have paid off the mortgage. In the mid-1960s our congregation left our former building at Capital and Herr Streets in Harrisburg. We relocated to our present site at 420 North Progress Avenue, and the church we know and love as "Our Saviour" was built. Ever since the erection of Our Saviour, the congregation has carried a debt. In the 1980s, the congregation decided to expand the church, adding the fellowship hall and youth room, while also increasing the size of the narthex. During the years, the congregation has faithfully and incrementally paid down the mortgage. And then, in 2017, the congregation received a substantial bequest from a former member that was designated for "paying off the mortgage." The bequest served to erase a major portion of the debt, but it was not until this past month that the congregation finally made the last payment. And so, now, it is time to celebrate.

We are planning a mortgage burning event on October 28<sup>th</sup>, which is Reformation Sunday. This day seemed like a fitting time to burn the mortgage, since we think all the more about Martin Luther on Reformation Sunday, and Luther had the habit of burning things. On December 10, 1520, Martin Luther burned all the books of the Canon Law outside the gates of Wittenberg, along with the Papal bull, *Exsurge Domine*, which had pronounced him a heretic. More details about the celebration on October 28<sup>th</sup> will be forthcoming.

What does this mean that the congregation will no longer carry a mortgage? Well, it will mean a cost avoidance for the congregation of over \$19,000 per year. Being out from under a mortgage might then free up financial resources for new ministries within our congregation. Kind of like the resurrection image associated with the phoenix; out of the fire and ashes rises new life. So we do look ahead to how this blessing might infuse new life into our congregation's mission.

But aside from looking forward, I do think it is also important for us to pause and to look back into the past. We need to remember this milestone is not just our achievement, which we celebrate now in the present. No, this mortgage burning is the legacy of the many people who have come before us—people who had a vision to build a new church and people who had the vision to expand the church. Yes, it is true we have been certainly blessed by a very gracious bequest. Yet, in addition to the abundant generosity of this particular family, we give thanks to the many members of the congregation who have faithfully contributed to the church over the years. These many families and individuals have provided from their financial resources, so as to sustain the budget of our church, which has included the monthly mortgage payments. So, yes, this celebration is not just ours, but belongs as well to the many saints who rejoice with us, many who are even now part of another church, the Church Triumphant.

Vision and faith and generosity—these are the things that make this mortgage burning celebration possible. These are the things that have brought us to this milestone. And, we give thanks to God for providing these most blessed gifts. And, we ask God to continue to provide our congregation the vision, faith, and generosity needed to reach our next milestone, and the one after that, and the one after that still. Vision, faith, and generosity are what propel a congregation forward. So, let's celebrate the good gifts of God.

In Christ, Pastor Joel Petruschke



## The Lessons for October 2018

**October 7 — Pentecost 20**

Genesis 2:18-24

Psalm 8

Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

Mark 10:2-16

**October 14 — Pentecost 21**

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

Psalm 90:12-17

Hebrews 4:12-16

Mark 10:17-31

**October 21 — Pentecost 22**

Isaiah 53:4-12

Psalm 91:9-16

Hebrews 5:1-10

Mark 10:35-45

**October 28 — Reformation**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 46

Romans 3:19-28

John 8:31-36

## Upcoming HAYI Events for September

The October Faith Formation Meeting will be on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm @Zion Lutheran Church, 100 W. Main St., Hummelstown.

On Mondays throughout October (with the exception of Columbus Day, October 8<sup>th</sup>) we will gather at Trinity Lutheran in Steelton (221 S. 2nd St.) to put together graft kits for Caitlin's Smiles from 6-7pm!

On Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, join us again for worship at Little Amps Coffee Shop in Harrisburg (1836 Green St.). All youth are welcome, so feel free to bring a friend as we worship to the beautiful music of Holden Evening Prayer and share a potluck meal together.

## Our New Council Members for 2018-2019

At our congregational meeting in September Andrea Faber, Anneke Fleming & Arno Miller have agreed to become council members. We thank them, and all our current council members, for their willingness to serve Our Saviour.

## 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

For the last couple years in October, we have conducted healing services on the Sunday nearest October 18<sup>th</sup>. We have done so because October 18<sup>th</sup> is the Festival of St. Luke, who in the Bible is known as “the beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14). **This year we will be conducting healing services on October 21<sup>st</sup> at both the 8:30 and 10:45 am services.**

During the healing services we will include the laying on of hands, at which time people can come forward to receive a blessing for healing. This practice of laying hands on a person goes back to a tradition in the Bible: “As the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him (Jesus); and he laid his hands on each of them and cured them” (Luke 4:40). As Jesus laid his hands on people to bring healing, so do we continue this practice. The power of touch can be an incredible agent of healing.

Now, it is important to know something about healing from our Christian perspective. If one should experience physical healing that does not indicate righteousness, nor should one see illness as an indication of punishment from God. In the healing presence of Christ one will be changed spiritually or physically, or both. And, contrary to society’s understanding of death, Christians see death as a doorway to eternal life and the perfect healing.

On October 21<sup>st</sup> we will also celebrate Holy Communion at each healing service. We remember that the Holy Sacrament is tied specifically to the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus says, “This is my body. This is my blood.” Jesus gave us his body and shed his blood on the cross for all people. And, this sacrificial act of God brings about the forgiveness of our sins. Communion, therefore, is a sign of spiritual healing as well.

Finally, I want to note that the gospel reading for October 21<sup>st</sup> is from Mark 10:35-45. That reading consists of James’ and John’s request to sit at Jesus’ left and right hand when Jesus is glorified. Jesus explains that to be great is to become a servant. Indeed, Jesus explains, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” And so, I would have us think about how sacrificial servanthood might be an agent of healing as well. To be focused on the other, as opposed to ourselves, can go a long way to healing us of our pride, our arrogance, and our destructive longing for greatness.

## Confirmation Classes

The schedule for October & November is as follows:

October 7<sup>th</sup> @St. Peter’s, Highspire

October 21<sup>st</sup> @St. Peter’s, Highspire

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

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

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

## Our Sympathy and Condolences

We lost our brother in Christ, Jim Griffith, who passed away on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Funeral services were held here at Our Saviour with internment at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery on September 18<sup>th</sup>. We extend our sympathy and offer condolences to Jim’s family and friends.



### A Word on Stewardship

As I write this article, Hurricane Florence is about to make landfall. And as the hurricane is getting ever closer to populated areas, mandatory evacuations are being issued, and most people are scattering like ants whose anthill has been destroyed. And, the weathermen and women are having a field day. They live for this kind of stuff. And many-a-casual conversation eventually turns to the approaching storm.

But all of this excitement got me thinking about our sense of “control,” and how really tenuous our control over anything really is, especially the weather. And even though we like to create the illusion that we have control, it would seem that we really don’t. One of the reasons we watch the weather forecast is because the forecast seems to provide a measure of control. Weathermen and women make their predictions, and show us neat weather models, and update their predictions again and again, but they really don’t know exactly what is going to happen. A better trick would be re-directing the storm altogether, so those people in the line of the storm wouldn’t have to scatter in the first place.

In the ancient world, at the time when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, there was great religious upheaval. It had been believed by our ancestors of the faith that Jerusalem could not be destroyed, because in the Temple was where God made his home. But, nonetheless, the city and Temple were destroyed, and the inhabitants were exiled to Babylon. And, to get some semblance of control back, the prophets, namely Jeremiah, chalked up the devastation to God’s wrath which was directed at God’s sinful people. God used the enemy of God’s people to make his point. Try figuring that out! But that is how Jeremiah described the disaster, in order to give God’s people back some sense that God was still in control.

As people of faith, how are we to cope with the sense that life is beyond our control? Storms happen. Diagnoses happen. Accidents happen. Changes and chances in life happen. Can we in fact speak of stewarding our life in the face of uncertainty? Well the answer is yes. The truth is we do it all the time, whether it is buying insurance, or putting some extra money away just in case, or giving ourselves a little extra time traveling from point A to point B. And, it is not that we lack faith when we make contingency plans, but that we are being realistic.

The other question we have to ask then is who is in control? If we aren’t in control, then who is? If disasters (whether natural or manmade) happen, who is in control? Is God out there, but is indifferent? Is God out there, but is powerless in the face of such disasters?

I would answer “No!” I tend to see it like this, that God has given us a great amount of control to change the world for the better, but we often fall short. And, it is not that God is indifferent or powerless, or even wielding the devastation himself (as the prophets suggest). No, but God has blessed us with the ability to track storms, although not perfectly. And God has given us brains to prepare for unforeseen circumstances.

If God chose to control every single aspect of life, where would we be as human beings. Part of what make us truly human is our freedom. So God limits God’s self that we might be fully human. And in the face of what seems truly beyond anyone’s control, namely death, God limited himself (the Bible says “emptied” himself [see Philippians 2:7]) became human and died on the cross for our sake. God does have control ultimately, and at the same time empowers us with freedom (gives us some control) to be authentically human and to direct our lives. And, this then is what we might describe as “stewardship of control.”

### ***Following the Presentation by Advōz, Your Feedback Is Requested.***

Following our congregational meeting last week, the congregation council is soliciting feedback as to where the congregation would like to go from here with respect to the various options outlined by Advōz in the document provided at the meeting. We are requesting two things: 1) that members share what they feel are the most pressing needs from that menu of options (see Recommended Steps Forward on the document) and 2) whether you are willing to participate. Please respond to the church office by Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. If you need a copy of the document they are available in the church narthex or we can email you an copy upon request. Thank you.

**Dear Padre,**

How might we better evangelize other people, and bring newcomers to our church?

Signed, "Wanting to Build Up the Church"

Dear "Church Builder,"



In the gospel of John the invitation to know Jesus is quite simple. The words one uses are, "Come and see" (see John 1: 35-39 and John 1:43-46). For me, this is always reassuring, in that we don't have to know a lot of deep theological stuff to bring someone to Jesus. We don't have to explain how the sacraments work, or explain justification by grace through faith, or explain the Lutheran understanding on law and gospel. Nor do we have to know the Bible inside and out. We just have to share this simple invitation to "come and see."

So maybe, in talking with a person, we can share a little bit about our faith life, namely where we worship and why we worship, and what activities we participate in, like GermanFest, Family Promise, Spiritual Stitches, Inbetweeners, etc. And, after sharing some information about our church, we could ask the other person whether they have a church home or not. And, if not, we can invite them to "come and see" our church for themselves. It is that easy.

We might also offer to take the other person to church. We might offer to sit with them in worship to help them navigate the service. We might also offer to take them to lunch afterwards to talk to them about their experience. We might suggest then that they join us for some of our activities outside of worship. Getting involved in the social activities of the Inbetweeners group would be a great suggestion. Or, maybe they would like to attend our Mother's Day Banquet or Father's Day Breakfast. There is, of course, the Veteran's Day Recognition coming up in November, where we also partake of a meal after the service. This Sunday has also been traditionally called "Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday.

Maybe, instead of these opportunities, they would be more inclined to engage in some service ministry within the church, like egg-making. We can always use extra hands making eggs, and there is such a wonderful comradery as we do so. Or, perhaps, they would be interested in helping out with Family Promise, or would enjoy the company of the knitters in the Spiritual Stitches group, while they themselves work on a shawl or lap robe. In short, there are a number of ways to invite someone to "come and see."

I hope you find these suggestions helpful. Just remember that the best evangelism is relational. In other words, we don't just invite someone to "come and see," and consider our work done. No, instead we invite someone to "come and see," and then we accompany them as they get familiar with the church.

Thanks for your question.

Signed, Padre

**GermanFest Wrap-Up**

GermanFest has come & gone. Attendance was approximately 450 this year. We even had TV coverage for the first time! Overall another successful GermanFest thanks to all the volunteers and attendees. The revenue resulting from our event was \$8,443.44. Looking forward we are considering changing the hours next year to be 11 AM to 4 PM.





### Fellowship Hall Usage Reminder

We would like to remind everyone that all events must have a request form filled out. There are copies of the form in the Narthex in the magazine rack, or see Brad Neil. As our form states it would very much be appreciated if there is a 3-4 weeks advance notice of usage. Brad must sign off on any event that is being held in our church. Thank you very much.





**Sun                  Mon                  Tue                  Wed                  Thu                  Fri                  Sat**

	<b>1</b> 6-7 pm - HAYI's craft project @Trinity, Steelton 6:30 pm - Welcome Committee	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 7 pm - Choir	<b>4</b> 6 pm - Chimes Choir <b>vacation day for Barb</b>	<b>5</b> <b>office closed</b> <b>vacation day for Barb</b>	<b>6</b>
7 - Pentecost 20 8:30 am - Word & Sacrament 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament 1st Sunday Social 12 noon - Spaghetti Fundraiser 2-3:30 pm - Confirmation Class @St. Peter's 3 pm—Pet Blessing	<b>8</b>  <b>Columbus Day office closed</b>	<b>9</b> <b>vacation day for Barb</b>	<b>10</b> 7 pm - Altar Guild 7 pm - Choir 7 pm - Council	<b>11</b> 6 pm - Chimes Choir 7 pm - Bible Study	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
14 - Pentecost 21 8:30 am - Word & Sacrament 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament 6-8 pm - HAYI @Zion, Hummelstown Hosting Family Promise	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7 pm - Choir	<b>18</b> 6 pm - Chimes Choir	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
21 - Pentecost 22 8:30 am - Healing Service 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Healing Service <b>newsletter deadline</b> 2-3:30 pm - Confirmation Class @St. Peter's	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7 pm - Choir	<b>25</b> 6 pm - Chimes Choir 7 pm - Bible Study	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
28 - Reformation 8:30 am - Word & Sacrament 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:45 am - Word & Sacrament mortgage burning event 6-8 pm - HAYI @Little Amps Coffee House, Hbg.	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7 pm - Choir			

*Good News*

The Evangelical Lutheran  
**CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR**  
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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  
Web Site: [www.oslutheranharrisburg.org](http://www.oslutheranharrisburg.org)



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.