

Good News

December 2020



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

So, we are now in the holiday season, and as such I ask you, "What do you bring to the table?" Typically, when we gather with family and friends for the holidays, we ask those that are hosting, "Can I bring anything? Can I bring a dessert? Can I bring a side dish? What can I bring?" Some people bring green bean casserole. Some people bring a baked pie or two. Some people bring a nice bottle of wine to share.

But this question "What should I bring?" is a good one all throughout the year. This question is a good one with respect to our attitude, our mindset, our outlook, our demeanor, etc. What am I talking about? I am talking about what we bring to the table when we gather with others whether it is for dinner, or a business meeting, or what have you. Do we bring optimism or do we bring pessimism? Do we bring hope or do we bring cynicism? Do we bring joy or do we bring dread? What do we bring to the table?

In the book *War and Peace*, Leo Tolstoy describes how war in his understanding happens. One side musters their troops. And the other side musters their troops. And one side leads their troops out to the field. And the other side leads their troops out to the field. And one side gets their artillery pieces into position. And the other side gets their artillery pieces into position. So on and so forth. Tolstoy talks about a building up toward battle, almost like some sort of boulder rolling down a hill that gains momentum, and soon the boulder is rolling too fast in order to be stopped. It is out of control. That is how war happens. And this is why diplomacy is so important. It is about what two sides bring to the table before things can get out of hand. Can two sides bring a mindset of good will and peace to the table? If so, there is already the momentum toward peace.

Sisters and brothers, this is how life works. It is all about what mindset we bring to the table. It all about what attitude we carry within ourselves. If we carry a sense of conflict and anger in us, well then it is possible those emotions might lead to bad results. But if we carry peace and good will, then positive things might emerge. It goes for the dinner table, the meeting table, and every other table.

When God sent his Son into the world as a child of Bethlehem, the angels sang, "Peace and good will to all people." God's attitude is peace and good will. When God comes into the world in Jesus Christ, God does not bring wrath and anger to the table. God is not starting a boulder down a hill that will lead to war and destruction. No, God sends the Prince of Peace. God sends a Merciful Savior. God sends a baby, not a warrior, not a destroyer.

What will you bring to the tables that you visit not only in this season of Advent and Christmas, but in every gathering in which you partake this year? I hope peace and good will are the angel messengers that flank the left and right side of your person wherever you go this day and every day. May peace and good will be your commanders whatever the fields you enter.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and singing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

Peace and Good Will to You in the name of the Coming Lord, Amen.

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

The Lessons for December 2020

December 6 — Advent 2

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 13 — Advent 3

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 20 — Advent 4

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

December 24 — Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

December 27 — Christmas 1

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40



Mid-Week Advent Service

Once again this year we will be joining with Good Shephard for our mid-week services. They will be held each Wednesday evening at Good Shepherd beginning at 7pm. As is their tradition the Holden Evening Prayer Service will be softly sung or hummed (whichever you are comfortable with). If you prefer to view the service on line you may do so through their live stream by logging onto FaceBook at Good Shepherd Paxtang or via the link on their website www.goodshepherdpaxtang.com.



Christmas Eve Worship

Please join us for worship on Christmas Eve:

4:00pm - Family Service with Holy Communion

7:00pm - Service with Holy Communion



Christmas Eve Survey - We are taking a survey and would like to have a count, in advance of Christmas Eve, of how many worshipers we can expect to attend our Christmas Eve services. We are asking everyone who plans to attend to either respond (if you have not already done so) either email the church office or call Barb (717-545-9992). We are asking you to provide which service you plan to attend and how many (include your immediate family, extended family &/or friends) will be attending. The purpose of this survey is so we can accommodate everyone. Thank you.

Parish Staff

Joel D. Petruschke, pastor
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

Christmas Eve services are going to be different this year. We will not be able to sing our cherished Christmas carols. In large part, it is the singing that makes Christmas Eve services so beloved. There will be organ music. There will be communion. We are planning to include our candlelight tradition, but no singing. I share this news, so as to prepare us for the evening. The hope...and this is still in the works...the hope is that we may be able to sing "Silent Night."

What we plan to do is conduct our Christmas Eve service in the sanctuary. There will also be additional seating in the Fellowship Hall. We will conduct our service, and then we will make our way to the parking lot. We will social distance, and we will wear our masks. And we will light our candles, and then we will sing "Silent Night" together outside. This carol will conclude our service, at which time people will make their way to their cars to return home. That is the best we will be able to do. Of course, this is all weather permitting. If it is windy, the candlelight will not be possible. If it is obscenely cold or raining, we will forego the singing outside. This is Plan A. Plan B is to do the candlelight service inside, and simply speak the text of "Silent Night." With all this said, you may want to have a small flashlight, or the flashlight on your phone at the ready, so that you will have additional light to see the words of the hymn if we go outside.

Another point about Christmas Eve, you will not have to worry about bringing your own bread for communion, unless you want to do so. We have purchased "communion packages" for worship. Each package contains a wafer and a small cup of grape juice. So we will have those available for Christmas Eve.

We still are welcoming folks who would like to create a recording in advance of a Christmas carol, which could then be played the evening of Christmas Eve. Please contact the Church Office if this is of interest to you. You can sing with your family or with those in your "friend group" with whom you feel comfortable and safe singing. It does not have to be a "harmonious" version of the carol. I only ask that it be "joyous." So do please give some thought to that.

So, again, Christmas Eve will be different this year. But there is one thing that will not change. At the celebration of Christmas, we welcome the greatest gift this world has ever received. We welcome the Christ child. We welcome the gift of salvation. We welcome God's Son who will redeem all creation by his suffering and death. We welcome the promise of hope for a world that is in desperate need of some good news right about now. We hope you will celebrate with us on Christmas Eve. We will understand if you chose not to. Please note that we will still record the service and have it available on our website for you to view at www.oslutheranharrisburg.org God's peace to you and your family, and Merry Christmas.



A Word on Stewardship

As I write this newsletter article, the news is saying, "Don't go home." That has been the advice from the powers-that-be for the Thanksgiving holiday. Actually, they are saying that people should not travel, but the message is still the same. "Don't go home." Some colleges are telling students not to come back if they do leave for the holidays; students can finish their semester on-line.

"Don't go home." Some folks are saying, "You can plan to go home to see your family, but if you do, plan to see them again at New Years for a funeral." That is a rather macabre way of saying it, but the point is well-taken. Thanksgiving and the holidays in general could become a "super-spreader." Limit travel. Be safe. Reduce the spread of the virus.

Will the message indeed be the same throughout the duration of the holidays—don't travel? Will we be warned to stay put for the Christmas holiday as well? It was Bing Crosby who first sang the song, "I'll Be Home for Christmas." No you won't. Not in 2020. Not this year. Not if you know what is good for you. I am sure someone is already working on a version of the song, so as to say, "Don't Go Home for Christmas." Sounds like a spoof title by Weird Al Yankovic, doesn't it? Actually, Bing Crosby's original words are most appropriate, "I'll be home for Christmas, if only in my dreams." This year many will simply be dreaming of being home.

It is a stewardship issue. It is about saving lives. It is about staving off the transmission of this deadly disease. Even as difficult as it seems, we need to be good stewards for the sake of one another. The most difficult part of this disease is that we can't see it. We often don't know if we are even a carrier of the virus. It is an invisible enemy and because it is invisible we can become lulled into a false sense of complacency. It is as if it is not there. But how do we know for sure?

It would be great if the virus was something we could see. Part of the reason testing is so rampant right now, is because with a test, we think we can "see" the virus. We think we know whether we are infected or not. With a test, persons can show a test result to others to say, "I am safe." But who is to say the test is 100% accurate. We hear that testing is not 100%. And who is to say, we don't catch the virus shortly after getting a negative test, and suddenly we are carrier, when we think we are safe. Like I said, this is an invisible enemy, a crafty enemy. No, it is better to be careful, to be good stewards, and to limit our travel. Better to heed the warning, and "Don't go home."

I pray our society can weather the holidays well. That sounds strange, to get through the holidays safely, but this is the reality we face this year. Please take care of yourselves. Please check-in with your loved ones, family and friends, and fellow church members. Please extend "home" virtually, by computer, by phone, by greeting card. I encourage us to love each other even if we can't gather with each other like we would want. And may God bless you and keep you well.

Manna Food Pantry –

Our "2nd Sunday" food collection is still ongoing. During the winter, around the holidays and during this time of the pandemic food pantries are seeing a greater demand of their services. If you would like to make a donation you may bring your items into the church & place them on the table in the Narthex at any time. If you are not comfortable with coming into the church building we would be happy to offer "curbside drop-off" during regular office hours. Just let us know & Pastor or Barb will be happy to come out & get your donation from you. Thank you.



Dear Padre,

For this "Dear Padre" article, I thought I would do something different. Instead of answering a question, I am going to ask some questions. All of these questions have to do with Christmas. See if you know the answer to them.



- 1) What Christian group banned Christmas in Boston from 1659 to 1681?
- 2) Before becoming tied up with Christmas what was Yule?
- 3) What does the French word "Noel" mean in its original Latin?
- 4) What Roman holiday held from December 17th to the 23rd had a large influence on how Christmas was celebrated?
- 5) Among Christians who lived in the East, when was Christmas originally celebrated?
- 6) In what country did the custom of putting up a Christmas tree originate?
- 7) What country is the Poinsettia, with its red and green foliage, native to?
- 8) What old Christmas tradition signals to people passing by that the residents of a house are Christian?
- 9) What is the most popular meal for Christmas in Japan?
- 10) From what country does the tradition of luminaries come?

Answers: 1) Puritans, 2) A holiday in Norse mythology, 3) Birth, 4) Saturnalia, 5) January 6th, 6) Germany, 7) Mexico, 8) Window candles, 9) Fried Chicken from KFC, 10) Spain

What is so wonderful to see is how the traditions of different peoples over a span of time have fed into our celebration of the Christmas holiday. Christmas is really a melting pot of cultural diversity. Thanks be to God.

Signed, *Padre*

Member's Address Changes –

Diane Lehrman
Manor Care Room #302
1700 Market St.
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Anne Wolf
1010 N. Union St.
Apt. #508
Middletown, PA 17057

Council Minutes

Please Note: Council Minutes cannot be included in the newsletter until after Council has approved them.

**Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour
Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting
(Video Conference via Zoom)
Wednesday, October 14, 2020**

Members Present: Pastor Joel Petruschke, Anneke Fleming, Arno Miller, Penny Zimmerman, Marlee Zimmerman, Jeanette Logan, Jared Copeland, Brad Neil and Michael Metzger.

Members Absent: Treasurer Jim Lubrecht, Jessica Burigana

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:35pm. Pastor read an excerpt from Martin Luther and lead the group in prayer. Since both President and Vice President positions were vacant, Pastor Joel led the meeting. Pastor Joel also indicated Council President and all committee meeting chairs will be responsible to record attendees of all meetings conducted in the Social Hall for the purpose of contact tracing in the event of a positive Covid-19 test.

Minutes: Minutes from the September Council meeting were reviewed. Upon Motion by Arno and seconded by Jared, the minutes were approved as distributed. Minutes from the September Congregational meeting were reviewed. Upon Motion by Jeanette and seconded by Brad, the minutes were approved as distributed.

Council Executive Positions: Jim Lubrecht will continue as Treasurer. Brad Neil agreed to serve as Vice President and Mike Metzger agreed to serve as Secretary. This slate was approved after a motion by Jeanette was seconded by Anneke. Position of President remains vacant.

Treasurer's Report: Jim was out of town and did not submit a report. According to Pastor, as of September 19th, there is a ~13K surplus. Also, receipt of a generous bequest from the Neidich estate is in progress. Anneke requested that Jim prepare and send the October Treasurer's report to Council when he returns.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education - No report. A Sunday School meeting was on Sept. 15th and Pastor mentioned there are two children currently preparing for Confirmation.

Fundraising - No report. This Committee is inactive because of Covid-19.

Mutual Ministry – No report, as the activities of this committee are confidential.

Property - No report. Phoebe Drake is Property Committee chair. Penny shared a concern about our dumpster, which appeared to be loaded with at least 8 large bags of pine needles recently. She suggested that it could be locked between the monthly waste removal services to prevent unauthorized use. Pastor Joel said he would monitor the situation. Carpeting and painting projects will be addressed later in the meeting.

Welcome - No report. This committee is inactive because of Covid-19.

Worship and Music – Council reviewed the report from the meeting held October 5th and the following items were highlighted: Mitchell Sensenig has agreed to provide organ music during worship starting on Reformation Sunday, October 25th. He will not be serving as Music Director. Pastor Joel said speaking the hymns, or perhaps humming along with the organ music would be permitted, but not singing. Sharing of the Peace was re-introduced into worship in the October 11th service and will consist in turning and showing some gesture or sign of peace without leaving one's pew. Holy Communion and service times will remain the same for now. There will be no procession in upcoming Veteran's Recognition service. Two Christmas Eve services will be held with cleaning between services. We need to consider how to avoid sharing candles between services.

Child Protection Policy - No report. Pastor mentioned he, as well as others who are in contact with children on behalf of the church, need to make sure their background checks are up to date.

Scholarship BOT – There are two young people are in the program at this time. The board continues to support the youth as they fulfill the service requirements during the pandemic.

Social Ministry - No report. Rev. Brown, from the Second Tabernacle Baptist Church, will preach at Our Saviour on November 15th. There will be no Communion that day and Pastor will ask someone to conduct the Liturgy.

Stewardship - No report. This committee is inactive.

Pastor's Report - Pastor reviewed his report with the council, highlighting his Daily Messages and other activities in support of the congregation, the near-term worship schedule, and announcing dates for committee meetings. He reviewed the activities which are on hold and asked Brad to provide an update from the Covid-19 taskforce. Brad said the Church will remain in Phase 3 until January when transition into Phase 4 will be considered. Pastor explained that means no outside groups will be permitted in the church until we move into Phase 4. Penny asked that we discuss ways to put on the Souper bowl at next Council meeting.

Arno made a motion to approve Pastor's report, and all committee reports, which was seconded by Anneke. Without objection, the motion carried.

Old Business:

Sanctuary Carpeting Quote - After discussion of the two carpeting quotes and the priority of painting ahead of carpet replacement, Anneke moved and Arno seconded a motion that council provisionally agreed to accept the quote from Gipe, contingent on them honoring the quote after painting is completed and to ask Phoebe to solicit quotes from painting contractors (Morrow, Daniels, et. al.) to paint the sanctuary. Without objection, the motion carried. Phoebe will be asked to contact Gipe to discuss the carpeting quote, which has already expired.

Facility Lighting Schedule - Phase C of the lighting replacement plan is tabled.

Painting - See above.

COVID-19 Task Force Update – See above.

Worship and Music – See above. Mitchell will start on October 25th.

New Business:

Little Free Library – Council reviewed the material provided concerning having a Little Free Library on Church property. The library will focus on books aimed at children/young people and it was suggested that our ministry

could be advanced by providing (for example) Our Savior bookmarks. Anneke made a motion that we ask Altrusa of South Central of PA to construct a library box with the intension that Church members will provide donated books. Motion was seconded by Jeanette and the motion carried without objection. Penny proposed that Hanna provide a collection box for collecting books for the Library.

Clothing Recycling Program – This project is tabled for further research.

Executive Committee Meeting – Pastor Joel indicated an Executive Committee meeting should be scheduled in order to start work on his Pastoral review and the new budget due in January.

The meeting was ended by reciting the Lord's Prayer and was adjourned at 8:10 pursuant to a motion made by Arno and seconded by Jeannette. Without objection, the motion carried.

The next regular council meeting will be held on November 11th at 6:30pm. The meeting will be held in person in the Social Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Metzger (Secretary)

Salvation Army Christmas Gift Giving

This year we are once again collecting items for the Salvation Army. Instead of taking an angel from the tree, as in years past, items may be selected from the list below. Please place your NEW, unwrapped donation in the drop box beside the Christmas tree in our Narthex. If your donation requires batteries, Salvation Army is asking that you include those batteries with your gift. Thank you.

Please note: If you are not comfortable with coming into the church building we would be happy to offer "curbside drop-off" during regular office hours. Just let us know & Pastor or Barb will be happy to come out & get your donation from you.

- Sports and fashion teen hoodies - adult sizes Small through XXL
- MP3 players w/earbuds, headphones and other electronic "gadgets"
- Charm bracelets, watches, activity trackers (like FitBits), walkie talkies
- Lego, K'Nex and other types of building sets (girls and boys, *especially* for older boys)
- Footballs, basketballs, soccer balls; Nerf-type sets, Glow-in-the-Dark sports balls
- "Bath and Body" type gift sets for girls (ages 12-16); AXE type sets for boys (ages 12-16)
- Arts and crafts sets (Spirograph, LiteBrite, jewelry/bead making kits, art supply sets, adult coloring books w/colored pencils, sketch pads, etc. - for kids & teens)
- Science & Discovery sets (terrariums, crystal growing, robotics, fossils, slime - for older kids)
- Musical instruments (kid size - ukulele, recorder, drum pad, keyboard)
- Manicure, nail polish sets, or hair care sets (girls, pre-teen and teen)
- Books (for all ages 0-16)
- Action figures/play sets (ex. - Transformers, Avengers, Star Wars, etc. for boys, ages 6-10)
- Fun, colorful socks and slippers
- Baby dolls and Barbie dolls with accessories
- Board and card games (ex. - Chutes & Ladders, Uno Attack, Apples to Apples Jr., etc.)
- Fleece throw blankets and fun throw pillows—girls and boys
- NEW children's and teen's clothing
- Hat, glove, scarf sets; older boys & teen adjustable belts
- Cool flashlights or sunglasses
- Purses, crossbody bags - girls; drawstring bags - boys
- Toddler toys - marked safe for 18 months-2 years—large pieces, sets (farm, beauty, airport, doctor, chef)
- Stocking stuffers - travel games, special candies, balls, silly putty, playdoh, small stuffed animals, crayons/markers/colored pencils, coloring books, bubbles w/wand, lip gloss/balm, hair bows/headbands/barrettes/hair ties, Matchbox/Hot Wheel cars, small individual action figures/characters, coin purses. Kazoos, harmonicas, card games, mini box of Legos, small plastic animals, mini craft kits, baby items (rattles, teething toys, small books)
- *Trending toys for 2020: Hatchimals, Trolls, Unicorns, Fingerlings, Paw Patrol, Baby Yoda, Minecraft, Roblox, Fortnite, Baby Shark, PJ Masks, Ryan's World, Fairies, Glow-in-the-Dark*

Items specifically for teens are greatly needed!

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Ear buds / wireless headphones | • Gloves |
| • Bluetooth speakers | • Phone chargers / battery back-ups / toro bracelets |
| • Sports duffle bags (Nike, Under Armor, etc.) | • Retail gift cards (Target, Amazon, Ulta Beauty, Dick's Sporting, Walmart, Uber, Five & Below |
| • Track phones | • Fast gift cards (Starbucks, Fast Food, Dunkin Donuts, Subway) |
| • Bath & Body soaps/lotions - boys/girls | |
| • Bluetooth beanies boys/girls/ (winter hats) | |



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 1:00 pm - Bible Study Barb out of the office	2 7:00 pm - Mid-Week Advent Service @Good Shepherd Barb out of the office	3 Dana Barr	4	5
6– Advent 2 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation Yolanda Barron	7 6:30 pm - Worship & Music Committee Reports to Council deadline	8	9 7:00 pm - Mid-Week Advent Service @Good Shepherd	10 6:30 pm - Council	11 Savannah Beachtel	12
13– Advent 3 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation	14 6:00 pm - Racial Justice Forum - site TBD Ellavene Rutter	15	16 7:00 pm - Mid-Week Advent Service @Good Shepherd	17	18	19
20– Advent 4 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation Newsletter deadline	21	22 Caleb Guldner	23 7:00 pm - Mid-Week Advent Service @Good Shepherd Katharina Kreischer Alex Parson	24 - Christmas Eve 4 pm - Family Service 7 pm - Christmas Eve Worship office closed	25 - Christmas Day  office closed	26 Alexandra Kessler Margaret Minnich
27– Christmas 1 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation	28	29	30	31 - New Year's Eve 		

Our Saviour would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



The Evangelical Lutheran
CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR
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Phone: 717-545-9992
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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

**Indoor worship has resumed.
Worship is 9:00am and the
Holy Eucharist is celebrated
every Sunday.**

Church Office

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

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Email: ossec@comcast.net
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.