

Good News

October 2020



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This month, of course, we celebrate Halloween. And I suspect that popular costumes this year will be “A Frontline Worker with PPE” and “A Bandit Complete with Mask,” among others. Halloween will be different this year. I imagine people aren’t going to be opening their doors to trick-or-treaters. Instead, folks will probably leave a basket of treats outside for children to take a sweet as they make their rounds through the neighborhood.

October 31th is also Reformation Day. And the Lutheran Church’s celebration of this festival will also no doubt be different. We won’t be able to sing one of the church’s favorite hymns, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” Of course, we can still wear red to mark the day. And we will still celebrate the message of the day. We need all the more to celebrate the message of Reformation this year.

Reformation Sunday is about freedom. It is about being set free from the bondage to sin and death through the power of Christ’s death and resurrection. Reformation is about freedom. It is about being set free from “works righteousness.” It is about being set free from our own efforts to make ourselves right with God. This is what Reformation was about. This is what Martin Luther was all about—freedom. Reformation Sunday is about freedom. And that message of Reformation will still be proclaimed this year.

Freedom is something our society is struggling with right now. We are struggling to understand freedom in light of a pandemic. People don’t want to feel compelled to wear a mask. People don’t want to feel compelled to get a vaccination. People want their freedom. But we must always remember that the expression of one person’s freedom can impact another person. For instance, the apostle Paul taught early Christians to be mindful of how they used their freedom in Christ. Christians were free to eat the food sacrificed to pagan gods, because Christians did not worship those pagan gods. Christians were free to eat such food, EXCEPT when it caused a brother or sister in Christ to stumble. Other Christians, who were young in the faith, may not understand a Christian’s actions of eating pagan sacrifices. They might suppose that it is okay to worship pagan gods and still be a Christian. And so, Paul warned Christians that even though they were free, they need to be mindful of their actions so as not to cause others to stumble.

We need to use our freedom wisely in light of this pandemic. We need to be careful such that our actions don’t inadvertently get others sick. We need to be careful such that our actions are respectful of others. The Reformation is about freedom, and freedom is not about being freed *from* any and all constraints, but freedom is about the power to constrain ourselves for the sake of others. We should see ourselves as truly free, UNTIL our freedom butts up against another person. And then freedom must be seen in relationship.

That is the trick about freedom. And that is the trick about living during a pandemic in a world that is a global family where all people are closely connected with one another. Freedom asks, “How do I live for the other, not for the self?” This is after all what Jesus did, isn’t it? Jesus did not live for himself, but lived and died for all people. And yet Jesus was completely free, such that he was resurrected. Nothing constrained him, not even death itself. He was free, but his freedom was defined by relationship.

Halloween will be different this year. Reformation Sunday will be different this year. But the freedom we have in Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. However, how we express that freedom in relationship with others changes as the situation changes. This year we live in a pandemic, and freedom then means we must be extra vigilant in caring for one another.

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

The Lessons for October 2020

October 4 — Pentecost 18

Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 80:7-15
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46

October 11 — Pentecost 19

Isaiah 25:1-9
Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

October 18 — Pentecost 20

Isaiah 45:1-7
Psalm 96:1-13
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22

October 25 — Reformation Sunday

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 46
Romans 3:19-28
John 8:31-36

Our New Council Members for 2020 - 2021

At our congregational meeting in September Jared Copeland, Mike Metzger, Jeanette Logan, and Penny Zimmerman have agreed to become council members and all were elected to their 1st 2 year term. We thank them, and all our current council members, for their willingness to serve Our Saviour. **Thank you** also to Andrea Faber, Herb Logan, Kathy Sheetz, and John Zimmerman for their faithful years of service as their council terms have come to an end.



A Thank You

Thank you for all the prayers, cards, and well wishes during my surgery and recuperation.
Linda Schreier



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

For many years now we have had a “Pet Blessing” on the first Sunday in October. The reason we do so is because St. Francis of Assisi is remembered on October 4th, and so it is most appropriate to honor St. Francis, who loved animals, by having the Pet Blessing close to the day of his commemoration. This year the first Sunday in October actually falls on October 4th. And so, I hope you will bring your pets to the Pet Blessing on October 4th at 3:00pm. We will gather at the church pavilion. Please note, we will still follow social distancing guidelines and we will wear masks, which will include the animals. Our pets will need to maintain proper social distancing, but I think that they can go without wearing masks.

It has been noted that during the coronavirus outbreak pet adoptions have significantly increased. People, it seems, are craving “connection.” And since the outbreak has made it more difficult to connect with family members and friends, people are resorting to pets for that much needed contact. Now, there have been some reports about pets contracting the virus and even possibly spreading the disease. And certainly, one should be aware of this possibility, however remote it might be. For the most part our pets are indoors much of the time, and the likelihood of them contracting and/or spreading the disease is apparently very low. So, thankfully, we don’t have to practice social distancing from our pets at home, unless we know for sure they have contracted the disease or we have ourselves and so then need to protect our animals. And thankfully, we don’t have to put a mask on our pets. Thankfully, we can show affection to our pets without much concern that we will give them the virus, or that they will transmit it to us. Thankfully, we can enjoy the blessing of connection with our pets. And we give thanks to God for their companionship. Without them, this pandemic might be that much more difficult to navigate.

So with all that said, please do join us for the Pet Blessing on Sunday, October 4th. We look forward to seeing you and your furry, feathered, or scaly friends. We will be very mindful to reduce the risk of contact during our gathering such as to keep everyone safe.



A Word on Stewardship

So we have been hearing that colder weather is approaching. After all, it is autumn. It is October. We have been hearing that colder weather is soon upon us, and that means we will be inside more. And with the pandemic still going on, it is going to be a different kind of fall and winter. And there are some survival tips I was reading about that I think are helpful. I would actually couch the survival tips in a different way, such as to call them good stewardship advice.

First, be a good steward of your relationship with yourself. Get your flu shot. Take care of your body through some form of indoor exercise. Make laps around your house if you have to. Reach out to other people. Find someone to talk to if you feel yourself sliding into a funk. Give me a call; I would be glad to talk to you. Find a goal to accomplish over this fall and winter. Maybe the goal has to do with tending to the upkeep of your home. Maybe your goal is to clean out all the stuff you have been storing for no reason. Maybe your goal is to work on your genealogy, or to learn a new language online. Then you can listen to "Leave It to Beaver" in Spanish.

Second, be a good steward of your relationships with others. Help care for others. Check-in on others. Send cards to church members to let them know you are thinking about them. If you are so inclined, run small errands for persons who may have difficulty getting out of the house in cold weather. Call up someone who may be lonely, and watch a TV program or a TV movie over the phone with them. Sing a song to someone over the phone, like Happy Birthday on their special day. The church calendar in the Newsletter lists all our members' birthdays. Or play a board game with someone via Zoom. My personal favorite is Battleship.

Third, be a good steward of your relationship with God. Talk with God. Pray for other persons, for our country, and for our world. Sing hymns to the praise of God. Confess your sins. Ask forgiveness. Make a list noting all the things for which you are thankful. Remind yourself to see the best in other people, especially all of our politicians. Speak well of everyone. Remember the grace of God each and every day, and embody that grace each and every day.

Yes, Friends, cold weather is coming. Enjoying the outdoors is going away. So, let us embrace the inside. Let us be good stewards of the world that is the indoors. Let us care for those important relationships with ourselves, with others, and with God.

Thank You Notes We Received

Pastor Joel and friends at Our Saviour,

Thank you so much for those kinds words. I too am looking forward to the day we can resume hands on ministry together. I do appreciate the continued support from you and your congregation. Despite the pandemic God's people rise up together to serve each other. My prayers are with you as you also navigate these uncharted waters. Thank you for the gift cards and monetary donation. They will definitely help our families. Blessings, Angela, Family Promise



Dear Friends in Christ,

On behalf of the Manna Food Pantry Board, we want to take the opportunity to thank you for the gifts of \$50.00 and \$60.00, as we continue to serve people in need in our area. We are continuing to provide food to all who are in need during this difficult period due to the pandemic. We are still providing food to children every week and have opened our pantry to serve people as needed. More than ever, the need is great. Manna would not be able to help the number of folks we help each month if it weren't for kindhearted friends like you. Again, we thank you. Blessings, Sarah Kempf, Manna Food Pantry

Dear Padre,

In Genesis 1:26, God says, "Let *us* make humankind in our image, according to *our* likeness..." Why does God use the plural here? To whom is God speaking to?

Signed, "I Had Never Noticed This Before"

Dear, "Never Noticed,"

Thanks for your good question. This very question actually appeared on a midterm exam I had in seminary back in 1994. This would have been my first semester at Gettysburg Seminary. Unfortunately, I got the answer wrong.

So what is the answer? Well, maybe God is using the royal "we" here in this verse. You know how royalty will speak of themselves in the plural? So, maybe that is what God is doing. But, there was no royal "we" to speak of when Genesis would have been written. Or, maybe God is communicating to the other persons of the Trinity. Maybe the Father is talking to the Son and the Holy Spirit. But again, there was no concept of a Trinity either, when Genesis would have been written. What is more likely going on is that God is addressing the members of the heavenly court. The plural pronouns may have been a "leftover" from the time of polytheism, when there were demigods alongside the supreme god. So the plural pronouns may have been missed, when they should have been changed.

But one would think that an author who was writing about monotheism would have caught such glaring examples of polytheism. So, I wonder if the writer didn't intentionally leave the plural, or actually write the plural, so as to say something about God. Because notice what God is doing in this verse. God is creating humankind. And as Genesis 1:27 notes, God creates humankind in the image of God, male and female. God creates human beings to be in relationship. And so, perhaps the specific detail about God's image that is being highlighted, is relationship. God is relationship. In which case, it would make sense for God to say "Let *us* create humankind in *our* image," if the image of God is relationship, such that God is not singular, but plural.

But such thinking can really bake our noodle. For how is God monotheistic, but also a plural, also a relationship? That may be the very mystery of God of which we cannot explain. It is the same mystery we talk about as Christians when we mention the Trinity.

I hope this helps answer your question. Thanks again for your asking.

Signed, *Padre*



An Update on Hanna Hope Garden

The watermelon vines and melons are taking over half the garden with each vine reaching 2 to 4 feet and more weeds were removed today around the watermelon plants. Thank you Ellayna for choosing watermelon as one of the veggies – that is the best of the crops so far. The rain over the past few weeks has been a real big help. See the picture below as to how large one of the melons is today that is in Tamara's niece's hands – it took 2 of her hands to hold it, and in the other picture below her nephew and other niece are washing one of the radishes.

Together with Tamara's help and the great work crew she brought with her – her nephew and nieces, the radishes, the kale and what looks like a collard got harvested and washed. A few leaves on the collards turned yellow since my visit this past Wednesday – so it was good that we harvested today (September 5th). We saw the beginnings of the carrots.

Joan, there will be plenty of watermelons to harvest and wash for the Interact students plus some carrots, and hopefully the new Interact students can plant a few veggies in September that are short in growth time and veggies that also like the cooler weather such as the radishes .

The vegetable garden concept (originally potatoes only for first year or two) was brought forth from a member of Pastor Joel's congregation (Our Saviour Lutheran Church) and shared with Pastor Joel and Joan Tracy, Faculty Advisor to the Susquehanna Twp. School Interact (Rotary sponsored school club), and since Joan's Interact students were already volunteering with Manna Food Pantry, Joan brought the idea to Bruce Warshawsky who was the Rotary liaison with the Interact Club. The Interact Garden is a true partnership between church, pantry, our club and Interact with the church donating part of their property to the garden. We were very fortunate when Phase III from Gov. Wolf came into affect in early June this year so that the Interactors could plant a garden and the 18 year old Interactors were the ones who helped plant the garden (Ellayna the Interact Club President and Bobby Chan Vice President/RYLE award recipient) and Rotarian Dan readying the garden for planting by tilling and furrowing. I believe this is the sixth year for harvesting the garden.



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, August 12, 2020**

Members Present: Pastor Joel Petruschke, President John Zimmerman, Treasurer Jim Lubrecht, Secretary Jessica Burigana, Arno Miller, Andrea Faber

Members Absent: Vice- President Herb Logan, Anneke Fleming, Brad Neil, Kathy Sheetz, Marlee Zimmerman

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm. Pastor lead the group in a short devotion and prayer.

Minutes: Minutes from the July meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved as distributed.

Treasurer's Report: Report attached and made a part of the record. Jim reviewed the current financial reports with the group. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancelation of GermanFest, Jim recommended we reduce the amount in fundraising's budget. Jim made an official motion to reduce fundraising's allocations to \$4,000. The motion was seconded by Pastor. Without objection, the motion carried. The 2020 Susquehanna Stormwater Charges letter was also reviewed. More information to come on this. Arno made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Andrea seconded this motion. Without objection, the motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education - No report.

Fundraising - No report.

Property - No report. Phase one of the light replacements throughout the church has been completed. John made a motion to approve the replacement of the lights, in the "B" category of this project, to take place as soon as possible. Andrea seconded this motion. Without objection, the motion carried. Herb has information prepared on quotes for a new hall rental sign. He will share this information at our next meeting.

Welcome - No report.

Worship and Music - No report.

Child Protection Policy - No report.

Social Ministry - No report.

Stewardship - No report.

Pastor's Report - Report attached and made a part of the record. Pastor highlighted a few points from his report. He noted that the Racial Justice Forums have been going well. While attendance has been small, the group has been having good discussions. Also, a small group of church members visited TMI and transported the donated

items to the church. A big thank you to TMI and Dawne Veet.

A motion to approve the Pastor's report was made by Jessica and seconded by John. Without objection, the motion carried.

Old Business:

COVID-19 Task Force Update - The task force has been meeting diligently and provided council with two issues that needed to be discussed/approved ("Issue #1 and Issue #2"). A proposal was put together to purchase a transmitter and TV screen. For now, the council has decided to hold off on purchasing these items. John made a motion that based on the council's discussion, we would not adopt Issue #1 until service survey results are collected and services are evaluated. Then, the council would consider using existing equipment before purchasing any new items. Jim seconded this motion. Without objection, the motion carried. With revised usher guidelines, a motion to approve Issue #2 was made by Jim. This motion was seconded by John. Without objection, the motion carried.

Terms of Council Members - Current council members reviewed their terms. At this time we have at least 2 members who will not be renewing their terms. Also, the positions for president and secretary will be available. Pastor will be reaching out to some congregation members to see if they are interested in serving on council.

New Business:

Congregational Meeting - Sunday, September 20 - John is proposing that we hold a 9am outdoor church service with the congregational meeting taking place immediately following.

Lighting Discussion - Discussed earlier in the meeting. Please see "Property."

At 8:10pm the meeting was adjourned. A motion was made by Jessica and seconded by John. Without objection, the motion carried.

The next regular council meeting will be held on September 9th at 6:30pm. The meeting will be held via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Burigana (Secretary)



**Our Saviour
Financial Report
September 19, 2020**

Envelopes and Plate	\$109,686.51
Fund Raising	\$14,896.50
Fellowship Hall Rental	\$700.00
Small Business Grant	<u>\$21,100.00</u>
Total Income	\$146,383.01

Expenses	<u>\$133,435.14</u>
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Surplus	\$12,947.87
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PNC Accounts:

Current Fund	\$40,779.65
Memorial Fund	\$29,029.90
Christian Education	\$2,524.70
Fund Raising	\$705.72

Thrivent Accounts:

	6/30/20	12/31/2019
Regular Mutuals	\$80,818.38	\$81,271.20
Scholarship Mutuals	\$120,821.93	\$126,957.62





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 - Pentecost 18 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation 3 pm - Pet Blessing 	5	6 1:30 pm - Bible Study Eva Farling	7 6 pm - Covid-19 Task Force Russ Faber	8	9	10
11 - Pentecost 19 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation	12 office closed 6 pm - Racial Justice Forum Richard Flage	13 Tyler Cristaldi	14 Nadine Martin	15	16 Anneke Fleming	17 Stephen Flournoy
18 - Pentecost 20 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation Newsletter deadline	19	20 1:30 pm - Bible Study Hayden Brittelli	21	22 Malane Digon Rick Ecklund	23	24 George Schreffler, III Larry Wilt
25 - Reformation 9 am - Worship 10:15 am - Confirmation 	26	27 Madeline Schreffler Troy Schreffler, Jr.	28 Jim Lubrecht Robert McCann Marcia Schreffler	29	30	31 Ada Heberle Mark Zimmerman

The Evangelical Lutheran
CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR
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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

**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

Phone: 717-545-9992
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.