

# Good News

September 2020



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

*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,*

I usually look forward to when September rolls around. I love the transition from summer into autumn. The fall schedule is getting back into swing. Kids are going back to school. And the cooler weather is approaching, and the leaves will soon be changing color.

But this September will be different. Many kids will be doing their studies at home. Many fall activities have been cancelled, including our beloved GermanFest event. With things being so different, can we even look forward to cooler temperatures? Will the leaves even change color this year? I am pretty sure they will.

I am still looking forward to September. As a church community, we are moving forward even in the midst of this pandemic. We are planning to restart indoor worship on September 6<sup>th</sup>. And we are resuming Bible Study, but it will probably be via Zoom for a while. And, we are working towards getting our committees up and running again. The pandemic can't keep us down.

So much of life we live by our schedules. So much of life is about routine. We have our datebooks. We have our family calendars. We schedule and plan our every move. September rolls around and we think we know exactly what it will entail. The month has been scheduled. It is there on the calendar. And then a pandemic comes along. And if there is one thing that this pandemic has taught us, it is that as much as we think we have control over our everyday lives, the truth is that we ultimately live day by day trusting in God's grace. Oh, how this pandemic has reminded us all of God's grace!

Perhaps, we should devote a month to grace, and I propose September. Why not? We have Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We have Black History Month. I did some research on September and apparently this month is also known as Self-Improvement Month, Classical Music Month, and National Sewing Month, among other things. It is also National Courtesy Month, and that kind of gets at what I am proposing by calling September National Grace Month. September should be the month in which we celebrate grace.

It is only by the grace of God that we awake every morning and embrace the new day. It is only by the grace of God that we have the air we breathe, the food and beverage we consume, the clothes we wear, and the family and friends we love. It is only by the grace of God that we can think with our minds, do with our hands, and walk with our feet. It is only by the grace of God that we can navigate each day as it comes, not knowing exactly what tomorrow may bring. It is only by the grace of God that we have any semblance of good order when everything is out of order. It is only by the grace of God that day by day we can trust that all is well.

Yes, I look forward to September. Everyone is making plans and that is God's grace at work in human society. And even if those plans go awry, and they probably will, we humans are good at making contingency plans, and that, too, is God's grace at work in human society. To be sure, day by day we can trust in God's grace, because God's grace is at work all around us, through us, and in us. God's plan for us is being implemented in the many people who plan and plan some more. Ultimately, though, God's plan is revealed in his Son who has conquered sin and death. Thanks be to God.

"For surely I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29:11.

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

### The Lessons for September 2020

**September 6** — Pentecost 14  
Ezekiel 33:7-11  
Psalm 119:33-40  
Romans 13:8-14  
Matthew 18:15-20

**September 13** — Pentecost 15  
Genesis 50:1-21  
Psalm 103:1-13  
Romans 14:1-12  
Matthew 18:21-32

**September 20** — Pentecost 16  
Jonah 3:10 - 4:11  
Psalm 145:1-8  
Philippians 1:21-30  
Matthew 20:1-16

**September 27** — Pentecost 17  
Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32  
Psalm 25:1-9  
Philippians 2:1-13  
Matthew 21:23-32

### Thank you!

We would like to extend a **BIG** thank-you to all the members of our Covid-19 Task Force: Arno Miller, Phoebe Drake, Hope Bowling, Brad Neil, Marcia Schreffler, Pastor Joel and Carol Ranck, chair. They have worked many, many hours in preparing Our Saviour to begin in-person worship in September. We appreciate all their hard work to make our in-person worship as safe as possible during this time.



### 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

This month's article "About Worship" is provided by the COVID-19 Task Force.

# INDOOR, IN PERSON SERVICE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2020 9:00 A.M.



## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT ? HOW SHOULD I DECIDE?

### GOOD NEWS INDEED

The COVID Task Force, Pastor, and Council have been busy putting a plan together so that we can "re-enter" our wonderful church building to have an indoor, in person worship service.

Will it be different than before the COVID Pandemic? Yes

Will some things be the same? Yes

Will it be safe? Yes

Here's what you need to know and do.

### **Thank you for your time and attention to this message!**

The COVID Task Force has relied upon recommendations from a variety of resources: our own insurance company's guidance, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) guidance, the Lower Susquehanna Synod and other Synods' guidance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), other clinical centers, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the other resources such as the national associations affiliated with various forms of music. Some of the "precautions" we will be using may seem "weird", "goofy". We would be happy to

explain the rationale for each one. If you need that information, please ask us. Also, the COVID Task Force has been charged with the task to continuously monitor the changing landscape of the pandemic and advise Council of changes that need made.

Our Mission Statement refers to us as a “caring congregation” and we will be “caring” through our efforts to return to the Sanctuary. At this point in the pandemic and with current information, we are able to re-enter the church by implementing specific precautions for the safety of “all who enter here”.

**WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT**

1. Wear a mask



2. Practice “social distancing” of 6 ft.



3. Entry way and exit way thru the narthex (lobby) will be marked with roping for each way
4. Limit the number of people in the Sanctuary to “25”\* (\*we will use Fellowship Hall for “overflow” up to 25)
5. Households (you determine who is in your “household”) seated together
6. Seating will be “social distanced”
7. Seating will be done using the “front to back” method and “back to front” for dismissing each pew

8. Materials like pew pads, Bibles, Hymnals have been removed (please feel free to bring your own)



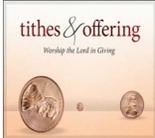
9. Attendance will be done by the Usher(s)
10. No singing
11. Ventilation will be increased by using all ceiling fans and wall units and keeping Sanctuary doors open

12. Hand sanitizing stations in key locations



13. Reminder signs to use proper handwashing, wear a mask, social distance
14. Certain areas of the church will be unavailable for use at this time, e.g. kitchen, youth room, library

**WHAT WILL BE THE SAME?**

1. God’s children worshipping together in His name
2. Service will be approximately 1 hour 
3. Communion will be the same as the outdoor service – you bring your own piece of bread and Pastor will consecrate all during the service 
4. Offerings will be the same as the outdoor service – there will be a box at the entry/exit. Upon request, Special Offering envelopes will be available from an usher 
5. All bathrooms will be open for use
6. Pastoral greetings without shaking hands
7. Staying at home if you are sick 

**WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO CHURCH?**

1. Mask 
2. Bread for your Communion
3. Pen/Pencil
4. Personal Tissues
5. Pocket sized hand sanitizer if you like a certain kind

**HOW DO I DECIDE?**

We understand that each person will make a decision about attending an indoor, in person service. We measure risks and make personal decisions every day. The following are intended to help you with your decision making.

- Do I have a fever or chills, a cough, sore throat, congestion, runny nose?
- Do I have shortness of breath, difficulty breathing?
- Am I overly fatigued, have muscle & body aches that are not “my normal”?
- Am I nauseous, vomiting?
- Do I have other conditions that prevent me from wearing a mask for about an hour?
- I have been advised by my health care provider to stay at home
- At this time, I’m just not comfortable

If you answered “YES”, then you should enjoy the service from the comfort of your home. The service will be available, as it is now, in written form, via email with a link to the service, and via the Church’s website at

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

**WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS?**

Please call a member of the COVID Task Force. We want to hear from you. Our numbers are in the Church directory or available from the Church Office.

Pastor, Carol Ranck (COVID Task Force chair), Hope Bowling (Worship & Music chair), Phoebe Drake (Property Committee chair), Arno Miller (Council member), Brad Neil (Facility Use Manager, Council member), and Marcia Schreffler (Worship & Music).

Peace and prayers, *Carol S. Ranck*

### **A Word on Stewardship**

I want to begin this article by giving a big “Shout Out” to the Covid-19 Task Force that has been working diligently in order to reduce the risk of infection when we re-enter our church building for worship and for other activities. We all want to feel safe when we come back inside the church building. We all want those outside groups who use our facility to feel safe when they schedule their events with us. So this has been the work of the members of the task force. Their work is the stewardship of “the people.”

Indeed, I would say that the number one priority of any “institution” is to care for the well-being of its members, that goes for the members of a family unit all the way up to the citizens of a country. That is the number one priority of those in authority. Parents want to make sure their children are safe. The President of the United States wants to make sure that the people of this country are safe. And when our children don’t feel safe, there is a problem. And when the citizens of a country don’t feel safe, there is a problem.

We all assume that the President gets regular briefings from his cabinets members. So we assume the Secretary of Defense checks in. We assume the Secretary of Homeland Security checks in. So on and so forth. And, I would hope and pray that the one question that is asked by the President of each of his cabinet members is this, “Are the citizens of the United States safe?” And, the follow up question should be, “How can we make them safer?”

It is all about the stewardship of “the people.” Like I said, the Covid-19 Task Force has been hard at work asking the question of how they can make it safer for our members and for outside groups to re-enter the building. Of course, they can’t eliminate all the risk. So, we all do need to make up our own minds about what risk we are willing to assume when we come back to church. But please understand that the leadership of this church does care about its members. The physical safety of everyone is priority one. In short, the leadership of the church is not being blasé about the pandemic.

And if there are things that you observe as you come back to worship, things which make you feel in any way unsafe, the task force needs to know that. The Covid-19 Task Force will be continually reviewing the protocols for indoor worship. The task force will get together even after indoor worship has resumed to continue to monitor how worship is going. So, if there are things that come to your attention, please bring them to the attention of the task force. Thank you. And thank you, Covid-19 Task Force.



*Dear Padre,*

With all the challenges our world is facing right now, with all the vitriol being expressed by the political commentators, with all the anxiety gripping the human race, the people of this nation, and even our families, to what good news can we cling?

Signed, Needing A Boost



Dear "Needing A Boost,"

You have hit on the million dollar question. What good news is there right now? My answer to your question is this: Love wins. That is actually the title of a book by Rob Bell. Fear doesn't win. Anxiety doesn't win. Hate doesn't win. The coronavirus doesn't win. Racial injustice doesn't win. Political diatribe doesn't win. No, love wins. We should repeat that as our mantra: Love wins, love wins, love wins.

Now, Rob Bell is speaking from a Christian perspective in his book. He is referencing the love of God in Christ Jesus which wins, because Jesus defeats sin and death. God's love wins such that his love for us is victorious over the powers of the devil. But, even more simply put, "love wins."

And so, I would encourage us to align ourselves with God's force of love at work in the world. We should not let ourselves be caught up in the places where fear is promoted. We should not let ourselves be tempted to give ourselves over to the power of hate. We should not let ourselves be lured into divisiveness and animosity. Those places will not win out. Love wins. And if we would choose to be on the side of the victors, we need to be mindful of where we hear "love spoken," of where we witness "love embodied," and of where we observe "love outpoured."

And we ourselves need to be a conduit for God's love. In short, the good news is not something to which we cling. But, the good news is that which we become if we ourselves allow God to reveal his love to the world through us. That is the good news. It is that we are the good news. Love wins. May love win over all of us.

Thanks for your question.

Signed, *Padre*

## 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, June 13, 2020**

**Members Present:** Pastor Joel Petruschke, President John Zimmerman, Vice- President Herb Logan, Treasurer Jim Lubrecht, Secretary Jessica Burigana, Marlee Zimmerman, Brad Neil, Anneke Fleming, Arno Miller

**Members Absent:** Andrea Faber, Kathy Sheetz

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:38pm. Pastor lead the group in a short devotion and prayer.

**Minutes:** The minutes from the regular May council meeting, and a special meeting held in the beginning of June, were to be reviewed and approved. No amendments were offered to the minutes. The minutes were approved as distributed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Report attached and made a part of the record. Jim reviewed the report with the council. Our finances look good, especially since our expenses are down. Anneke made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Pastor Joel. Without objection, the motion carried.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Christian Education** - No report.

**Fundraising** - No report. It was noted that GermanFest has been canceled for this year (September 2020) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Property** - No report. While no report was submitted, a few things were discussed by the council. The Praise Hymn Singers did reach out asking when the church might be open for rentals again. Also, Family Promise has inquired about our annual host week. At this time we are not prepared/ready to host either of these groups.

**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 reviewed his report and highlighted a few points.

**Pump Organ** - Karen Hollern has offered the church the original pump organ that was used when the congregation was first established. The council discussed the pros and cons of accepting this offer. Pastor will check with Marcia

Schreffler to see what sentimental value the pump organ might hold. Because of the space that is required to store such a large item, perhaps we would just want to keep a few keys from the organ as an artifact. Pastor will do some further research with longtime members of the congregation and report back to the council at a later date.

**New Hall Rental/Availability Sign** - Herb shared that the hall rental sign that was outside the church was destroyed by a storm. The council feels that it is important to have this sign replaced. Herb is researching various options and will provide the council with quotes/prices at the next regular council meeting.

Pastor did ask if there were any logistical issues from our outdoor church service on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The council felt that Pastor Joel does not need to wear a mask during the outdoor services. Because he is so far away from the congregation members, and the challenges that the mask presents while speaking, the council feels a mask is not necessary. Pastor will share this information with the congregation at the beginning of the next outdoor service.

#### **Old Business:**

**SmartBoard/Mats offered by Dawne Veet** - The council had previously discussed this offer and decided to accept. Dawne is still holding these materials for the church.

#### **New Business:**

**Scholarship Program** - The Scholarship Board of Trustees has verified that Hannah Logan and Marlee Zimmerman have met all requirements for the 2019-2020 scholarship year and they have now successfully completed all three years of the scholarship program. A motion was made by Anneke to provide Hannah Logan and Marlee Zimmerman each with a \$2,400 scholarship that will be written to their chosen post high school entity. This motion was seconded by Arno. Without objection, the motion carried. Herb and John abstained from voting. The Scholarship Board of Trustees has also verified that Hannah Zimmerman has met the requirements for the 2019-2020 scholarship year and has successfully completed the first year of the program. A second motion was made by Anneke to verify that Hannah Zimmerman has met the requirements for the first year of the scholarship program and has earned the \$800 for the 2019-2020 scholarship year. This motion was seconded by Arno. Without objection, the motion carried. John abstained from voting.

**COVID-19 Task Force** - A COVID-19 Task Force has been established. All members of the Task Force are in communication and will meet on June 24<sup>th</sup>. They have a number of things to begin reviewing. John provided them with some suggestions and recommended the Task Force develop a matrix for decision making. Council will have the final say with all decisions.

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

The next regular council meeting will be held on July 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. Whether the meeting will take place in person or via Zoom will be determined at a later time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Burigana (Secretary)



**Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour  
Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting  
(Video Conference via Zoom)  
Wednesday, July 8, 2020**

**Members Present:** Pastor Joel Petruschke, President John Zimmerman, Vice-President Herb Logan, Treasurer Jim Lubrecht, Secretary Jessica Burigana, Brad Neil, Anneke Fleming, Arno Miller, Andrea Faber, Marlee Zimmerman

**Members Absent:** Kathy Sheetz

**Guest Member:** Otis Martin

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm. Pastor lead the group in prayer to begin the meeting.

**Minutes:** The minutes from the regular June council meeting were to be reviewed and approved. Amendments were made. Jessica and Marlee were added as those who abstained from the scholarship vote. Arno made a motion to approve the June council minutes with the amendments. Brad seconded this motion. Without objection, the motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Report attached and made a part of the record. Jim reviewed the report with the council. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Jessica. The motion was seconded by Jim. Without objection, the motion carried.

**Committee Reports:**

**Christian Education** - No report.

**Fundraising** - No report. The last of the eggs have finally been sold! Pastor made a motion to cancel GermanFest for this year (September 2020). Brad seconded this motion. Without objection, the motion carried.

**Property** - No report. Herb is still working on gathering information on a new hall rental sign. He hopes to have a motion prepared for next month's meeting.

**Welcome** - No report.

**Worship and Music** - No report.

**Child Protection Policy** - No report. Meeting to be held in August.

**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.

**Task Force Items** - The Task Force provided council with a report to be reviewed regarding the reopening of the church. Herb made a motion to approve the report as submitted. Arno seconded this motion. Without objection, the motion carried.

Possible projects to be worked on: Replacing the inside ceiling lights, getting a quote for carpet replacement in the sanctuary, and trimming the dead trees outside.

Anneke made a motion to approve Pastor's report. The motion was seconded by Andrea. Without objection, the motion carried.

**Old Business:**

**Dawn Veet - donated items (smart boards, carpets, podium, file cabinets, furniture)** - Pastor, Herb, and Brad will do a walk through with Dawn to determine exactly what items will be useful for the church.

**New Business:**

**Otis Martin** - Otis came to council with a recommendation to hold an open conversation with the congregation about some of the current events happening in our world today. The idea is to hold a forum on the church grounds (outside in order to maintain social distancing). The conversation will be broken up into several sessions with set topics. Pastor will serve as an internal facilitator. The congregation members will be reached out to in order to get an idea of how many people would be interested in participating. As of now, the first session is set to be held on 7/21/20 from 6:30pm-8pm.

**Outside Service Input** - With the days/mornings getting warmer, do we need to change the time of our outdoor worship service? It was decided that we will keep times as is.

**New council members (terms expiring in September)** - Expiring terms for council members need to be reviewed. The council will work on gathering a list of congregation members who might be interested in joining council.

**Up Coming September Congregational Meeting** - The council should begin thinking about what topics should be discussed at the meeting.

**Facility Use Request** - Brad shared that Jeanette Logan had reached out and asked to use the outside church facilities as a backup location for Susquehanna High School's swim team banquet. The team already has a location for their banquet. OSL would serve as the backup with the requested date being August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The team would follow all guidelines that have been used during our outside services. Arno made a motion to allow the swim team to use the outside church facilities as a backup location. Andrea seconded the motion. Jim, Pastor, and Anneke voted yes. Brad voted no. John, Herb, Jessica, and Marlee abstained.

At 8:31pm the meeting was adjourned. A motion was made by Anneke and seconded by Jessica. Without objection, the motion carried.

The next regular council meeting will be held on August 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. The meeting will be held via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Burigana (Secretary)



| Sun  | Mon  | Tue  | Wed                             | Thu               | Fri   | Sat                                     |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|
|  |  | 1  | 2<br>6 pm - Covid-19 Task Force | 3                 | 4   | 5<br>Nichole Condran<br>Trinity Mummert |
|  | <br><b>HAPPY LABOR DAY</b>                                      | Wendy Snyder   | Linda Kunz                      |                   | Brad Neil   |   |
| <b>6- Pentecost 14</b><br>9 am - Indoor Worship resumes  | 7<br><br><b>Office closed</b><br>Cameron Capp<br>Connor Ecklund | 8<br>1:30 pm - Bible Study<br>6 pm - Covid-19 Task Force | 9<br>6:30 pm - Council          | 10<br>Maria Kunz  | 11  | 12                                      |
| <b>13 - Pentecost 15</b><br>9 am - Worship   | Tara Beachtel  | 15   | 16                              | 17<br>Irene Nanov | 18  | 19                                      |
| <b>20 - Pentecost 16</b><br>9 am - Outdoor Worship<br>Ann'l Congregational Meeting<br><b>Newsletter deadline</b> | 21   | 22<br>1:30 pm - Bible Study                              | 23<br>Betty Hammell             | 24                | 25<br>Betty Nickle<br>Mary Shuler<br>Hannah Zimmerman                                 | 26<br>Alta Shadel                       |
| <b>27 - Pentecost 17</b><br>9 am - Worship<br>Julie Drake<br>Kameron Rohacek                                     | 28<br>Kris Danner  | 29<br>Kevin Gibson<br>Mindy Grace                        | 30<br>Matthew DeArmitt          |                   |  |   |



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Happy Fall!



*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 resumes September 6th  
starting at 9:00 am.

Holy Eucharist is celebrated  
every Sunday.

*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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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.