

Good News

May 2021



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Star Wars Day is May 4th. Why? Because there is pun contained in the name of the day. 'May the Fourth be with you' is a play on the words "May the Force be with you." Characters in the *Stars Wars* franchise regularly say these words in parting, "May the Force be with you." It is similar to wishing someone "Farewell and God's speed." It is also similar to the greeting Christians exchange, "The Lord be with you." In fact, there is joke that says, "You may just be Lutheran if you find yourself watching a *Star Wars* movie and when a character says, 'May the Force be with you,' you blurt out in response, 'And also with you.'"

Now if you don't know, the Force referenced in *Star Wars* is a mysterious energy field created by life that binds the galaxy together. Harnessing the power of the Force gives an individual extraordinary abilities, such as levitating objects, tricking minds, and seeing things before they happen. In this way, I kind of liken the Force to the power of the Holy Spirit. Only Christians who harness the power of the Holy Spirit don't levitate objects and trick the minds of unsuspecting persons.

This month, on May 23, the Church observes the Festival of Pentecost. On that date, the Church celebrates the power of the Holy Spirit, which comes to reside with the Church. What does the Spirit do? The Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies, so says Martin Luther. The Spirit calls to our spirits, and moves us to gather. And in our gathering, the Spirit feeds us with the word of God so as to understand God's will. And the Spirit then sets us apart, sanctifies us, to do God's will in the world. The Spirit is also responsible for equipping the people of God to do the will of God. The Spirit bestows upon the people of God gifts, like teaching, healing, serving, preaching, charity, and more. Thus, the Spirit empowers God's people to embody God's love in the world. So talk about a force! The Christian Church is the very force of God's love in the world. But again it is the Spirit that activates the Christian Church to be that force of God's love in the world.

It is interesting to note that in *Star Wars* there are those who put no stock in the Force. They see the Force as part of an archaic religion that has long since died out. But, boy are they wrong, as demonstrated over and over again in the *Star Wars* movies.

In a similar vein, there are those who see the Holy Spirit as part of some religion that has outlived its relevance. There are those who think the Holy Spirit is a lot of hocus pocus and nothing more. But, they are wrong. When the power of the Spirit takes root in God's people and unleashes the incredible force that is God's love, well then, watch out. Because just as the good guys in *Star Wars* are able to undo the evil empire in the universe through the working of the Force, so too, can the power of the Holy Spirit active in the hearts of Christians undo the power of the devil. All we need to do is harness that power of the Spirit and embody God's love in Jesus Christ. So, as we come to celebrate Pentecost on May 23rd, allowed me to be the first to say to you, "May the Lord be with you. May God's Holy Spirit empower you. May you feel the Spirit working in your life that force, whereby you embody God's love in his Son Jesus Christ."

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*



The Lessons for May 2021

May 2 — Easter 5

Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8

May 9 — Easter 6

Acts 10:44-48

Psalm 98

1 John 5:1-6

John 15:9-17

May 16 — Easter 7

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm 1

1 John 5:9-13

John 17:6-19

May 23 — Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:22-27

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

May 30 — Holy Trinity

Isaiah 6:1-8

Psalm 29

Romans 8:12-17

John 3:1-17



Parish Staff

Joel D. Petruschke, pastor

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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

We recently updated the Prayer List. And when I say “we,” I mean me, Pastor Joel, with much help from our secretary, Barb. As such is the case, I take full responsibility with any errors on the list. The Prayer List was becoming a bit unwieldy, as you may know. We have had names on the list that we weren’t even sure who they were. And, we had had names on the list who probably could have come off a long time ago.

We are asking for folks to please review the list, and let us know if there are persons who should not have been removed from the list, or others that can come off the list. Again, if there were any oversights, I sincerely apologize.

So, we would like to try a new system with the Prayer List.

- 1) When names are received for the prayers, they will generally be included on the prayers for Sunday worship for two weeks, unless there are special circumstances, in which case, they may be included for longer.
- 2) After two weeks, the names will continue to appear on a published list of those whom we continue to hold in prayer, much like we do on the back of the bulletin already, only these names will not be spoken every Sunday.
- 3) A similar thing will be done for our shut-ins and military personnel.
- 4) We will still include a general prayer in worship for healing, for our shut-ins, and for our military.
- 5) And we continue to ask that if you place a person on the prayer list, please provide us periodic updates with respect to whether they should remain on the list, or in fact, they can come off. This will help us manage prayer requests more efficiently.

Thank for your understanding and patience on this important matter. And we give thanks to God who hears our prayers and responds according to his will.

An Important Message From the COVID-19 Task Force

The Task Force met on April 7th to discuss the latest statistics, review the current Phase 1 - outdoor Sunday service unless inclement weather, and prepare a recommendation for Council. The recommendation to Council was to continue with Phase 1 based on the high COVID-19 positivity rate & other relevant statistics, information from Bishop Dunlop (Lower Susquehanna Synod), our insurance company, and the characteristics of Our Saviour's membership.

The Task Force has agreed to meet the first Wednesday of the each month so that the status of Phase 1 can be evaluated on a regular basis. The Task Force welcomes any comments from our congregation. You can contact any member of the Task Force (see your church directory for contact information): Pastor, Hope Bowling, Phoebe Drake, Victor Landis, Brad Neil, Marcia Schreffler, and Carol Ranck.

We thank you for your prayers, your patience, your faith, and your commitment to Our Saviour Lutheran Church as we manage through the COVID-19 pandemic. To those of you who have lost family members, friends, and others to the COVID-19 virus, we express our condolences and prayers for your wellness.



A Word on Stewardship

The month of May is usually a time for celebrations. There are graduations. There are weddings. There is Mother's Day. And most of all, there is nature. Indeed, nature is celebrating also. It is celebrating the end of winter, and we see it all around us. The earth is celebrating with flowering plants coming into full bloom. Trees are celebrating by coming into full leaf. The birds are singing. The rabbits are foraging. There is a celebration going on like no other. The month of May may just be the most beautiful of all months. May is really something. God knew what God was doing when God made the month of May. So let's celebrate...

Makes me want to sing that song by Kool & the Gang: "Celebrate good times, come on. Let's celebrate. Celebrate good times, come on. Let's celebrate. There's a party goin' on right here. A celebration to last throughout the years. So bring your good times and your laughter too. We gonna celebrate your party with you."

So yes, there is a celebration going on all around us. And even now we are beginning to emerge, I think, from this pandemic as more and more people get vaccinated. And so there is another reason for celebrating. It may be a little premature to celebrate full force quite yet, but it certainly does feel like life is beginning to improve.

Celebrations are usually accompanied with get-togethers, and with food and drink, and with much rejoicing. Celebrations can be flashy, such that there are colorful balloons and streamers. Celebrations can be loud, such that there is music and boisterous activity. Celebrations can be crowded with the many people we invite. Again nature fills the May-time celebration with colorful flowers, singing birds, and busy creatures.

But, I think, if I had my way, I would choose to have a more quiet celebration. I would choose to celebrate life, for instance, by just lounging in the grass watching the clouds drift by. If I had my way, I would choose to celebrate an important event with just a quiet meal with immediate family. At one time, I may have been into the large, raucous party, but not any more. No, I like the more subdued celebration. That's just me.

But I do believe that it is important to celebrate. There is something to be said for the stewardship of celebration. Celebrations mark milestones. A person completes the requirements for graduation and she or he is now pivoting to a new chapter in life. That needs to be celebrated. Two people fall in love and want to spend their life together. That should be celebrated. Our mothers have given us life. They should be celebrated. When we fail to celebrate, we fail to see the blessings for what they really are. So, I am all for celebrating in whatever way we feel comfortable.

And come the day when we can celebrate the resumption of life post-pandemic, I can only imagine all the rejoicing that will take place. That day is surely coming, when we will be able to get together, and dance and sing, and partake in the abundance of joy. Meanwhile, let us celebrate what we can, how we can, where we can. And let us always remember that celebrating reminds us of the good blessings we have received from God.

Let's think about camp!

We have received the new camping corp. brochures for the upcoming 2021 summer programs. They are on the table in the Narthex. Camping is not just for children. They offer family camp & elders camp. Pick one up & check out all that is being offered this year!



Jobs are available

In addition to offering summer camping for campers the Lutheran Camping Corp. also offers summer employment for high school & college students such as: counselors, lifeguards, kitchen staff, craft staff and maintenance. More information about these opportunities is available at LutheranCamping.org/employment.

Dear Padre,

As May 4th is Star Wars Day, I was just wondering, are you a *Stars Wars* fan or a *Star Trek* fan?

Signed, Out of this World

Dear "Out of this World,"



Actually, I haven't given it much thought. I like both franchises for different reasons. I like the mission of the starship *Enterprise*, "To explore strange new worlds. To seek out new life and new civilizations. To boldly go where no one has gone before." I like the sense of adventure and discovery contained in those words. On the other hand, the *Star Wars* movies, at least the first three (Episodes IV, V, VI) have always appealed to me, especially the symbolism.

One of those symbols from *Star Wars* that really appeals to me is the image of light. In the franchise, evil is depicted as the "dark side." And so the warning is "Don't give in to the dark side. Don't go over to the dark side." And, I think that is extremely relevant for all of us.

Whenever we allow ourselves to think the worse about someone, we give in to the dark side. If somebody says something and we immediately think ill of that person, such that the intentions behind their words must be evil, then we have gone over to the dark side. If somebody has done something and we are sure that their motives must be bad, then we have cast out the light that is in us.

So in this way, there is an incredible amount of psychology, philosophy, and spirituality in *Star Wars* and it all starts with this notion of the dark side. Now, to be sure, we all struggle with the dark side. We are all sinful; we have light and dark in each of us. But the question is whether we choose to embrace the light or the dark. So, it is the choices we make that define who we are.

The challenge we have from *Star Wars* is to stay in the light. When someone says something or does something, try to understand what is the "good" they want to achieve. If need be, even ask the person, "What good do you want to accomplish by your words or by your actions?" So often, we get angry before we have given another person a chance to explain their vision for good. So that is some of the wisdom I taken from *Star Wars*. Don't go over to the dark side. Don't give in to evil. Stay in the light.

Thanks for your question.

Peace, *Padre*

Manna Food Pantry

Our "2nd Sunday" food collection is still ongoing. During the winter, 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.



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 Wednesday, March 11, 2021

Members Present (Via ZOOM meeting): Pastor Joel Petruschke, Vice President Brad Neil, Treasurer Jim Lubrecht, Secretary Michael Metzger, Penny Zimmerman and Jeanette Logan

Members Absent: Anneke Fleming, Marlee Zimmerman, Jared Copeland and Jessica Burigana

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM. Since the President position is vacant, Pastor Joel led the meeting.

Council Executive Positions: Pastor checked with Council members to see if any were interested in the Council President position. No one volunteered.

Minutes: Minutes from the February Council meeting were reviewed. Upon motion by Penny and seconded by Jeanette, the minutes were approved as distributed.

Treasurer's Report: Jim presented Council with budget performance data comparing February 2021 expenditures to February last year and tracking budget targets. Expenditures for painting were highlighted, and it was noted net income is down since there are no chocolate egg sales. Pastor suggested that the tree expenditure be kept as a separate line under maintenance and expenditures out of the memorial fund for various projects be specifically tracked and identified in the budget. Mike moved that Council approve the budget report and Brad seconded the motion, which was carried.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education - This committee has not met. Confirmation classes continue for Evan and Tyler.

Fundraising - No report.

Mutual Ministry – This committee has not met.

Property - No report. The painting and tree removal projects have been completed and carpet replacement is scheduled for the week after Easter. The painters noted some issues with moisture along the back wall of the sanctuary and particularly in the corner near the PA control panel. Penny asked council to consider using the roofing and dry wall contractors who helped her with similar problems to come in and perform some analysis of the issues before carpet installation begins. Penny will contact contractors and will keep Phoebe in the loop while this problem is being addressed.

Welcome - This committee has not met.

Worship and Music – This committee has not met.

Child Protection Policy - This committee has not met.

Scholarship BOT – This committee has not met. Pastor Joel requested a meeting with the Scholarship Board concerning moving money out of the account for investment. Also, Jim reminded Council that an \$800.00 scholarship payment is due to be paid to Max Reilly.

Social Ministry - This committee has not met.

Stewardship - This committee has not met.

Pastor's Report - Pastor reviewed his report with Council, focusing on near term scheduled events as well as our COVID 19 response:

- Mid-week Lenten Prayer Services at Good Shepherd—March 17th and 24th
- Spring Assembly via ZOOM—March 18th at 7:00 PM. This meeting will prepare our voting members Dan and Anneke Fleming for the upcoming 2021 Synod meeting.
- Maundy Thursday-April 1st at 7:00 PM
- Good Friday-April 2nd at 7:00 PM
- Easter Vigil April 3rd at 7:00 PM at Good Shepherd
- Easter Sunday-April 4th at 9:00 AM
- Vacation-April 5th-11th
- The COVID-19 Taskforce met on 3/4/21 and recommended to Council that outdoor worship be reinstituted on Easter Sunday using the Phase 1 protocols from last year and that meetings and in-person activities remain suspended. Pastor declared the recommendation of the Taskforce as a motion and Jim seconded the motion, which was carried. Mitchell says he will play outdoors.
- The remainder of Pastor's report was a review of old and new business items which are captured below.

Jeanette moved to accept the Pastor's report and Penny seconded the motion, which was carried.

Old Business:

Sanctuary Painting and Carpeting – Painting is completed. See above regarding possible delay of carpeting installation pending the findings of contractors regarding moisture issues.

Tree Removal – Completed. Thanks to Herb for managing the project.

Technology for Worship – Waiting for an estimate from B&B Integrations.

Little Lending Library – We are waiting for an update from Ann Tyndale, co-president of Altrusa.

COVID 19 Taskforce – See above.

Organist Position – Worship and Music continue to work on finalizing arrangements with Mitchell Sensenig.

Constitutional By-laws – Need to be reviewed.

Renewal of Congregations – This is a Synod project which will gear up in the future.

New Business:

Purchase of a Shed - Brad volunteered to assist Phebe with the shed purchase. Penny will check to see if John has any advice.

Flood Lights at front of church not Working – Phoebe should see about hiring someone to replace the lights.

Miscellaneous tasks for putting the Sanctuary and Fellowship Halls back in Order –

Council agreed on the following: 1) The rest of the Fellowship Hall floor should be waxed, 2) Supplies left over from 2020 candy making should be discarded, 3) One of the donated Smart boards should be installed in the Library.

Items in the Fellowship Hall - We need to do something with the extra items in the Fellowship Hall: A filing cabinet, a lectern, extra Smart board and parts, etc. Pastor asked Herb, Phoebe and John to coordinate disposition and cleanup of the items.

Acknowledgements and Adjournment:

Pastor Joel remembered the passing of Christine Velter and asked for prayers Julie, Toby, Phoebe and their family. He also remembered the passing of Bruce MacMurtrie and asked for prayers for Hope Bowling and her family.

The meeting was ended by reciting the Lord's Prayer and was adjourned at 7:41 PM after approval of a motion from Penny, which was seconded by Brad. The next regular Council meeting will be held via ZOOM on Thursday, April 14, 2021 at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Metzger (Secretary)

OUR SAVIOUR
FINANCIAL REPORT
March 31, 2021

ENVELOPES AND PLATE	\$	41,458.80
FUND RAISING	\$	135.00
FELLOWSHIP HALL RENTAL	\$	-
TOTAL INCOME	\$	41,593.80

EXPENSE	\$	<u>55,196.91</u>
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DEFICIT	\$	<u>(13,603.11)</u>
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PNC ACCOUNTS:

CURRENT FUND	\$	8,265.81
MEMORIAL FUND	\$	81,526.36 *
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	\$	2,574.70
FUND RAISING	\$	655.72

THRIVENT ACCOUNTS

	<u>3/31/2021</u>	<u>12/31/2020</u>
REGULAR MUTUALS	\$ 105,813.28	\$ 96,649.44
SCHOLARSHIP MUTUALS	\$ 160,949.35	\$ 146,151.44

* 61,000 OF Memorial Fund is from the Neidich estate

In Loving Memory

Christine Marie Drake Velter passed away in the arms of our Lord on March 10, 2021. We were truly blessed that she lived with her aunt Phoebe Drake. Many thanks to our family, church family, friends and neighbors. We received numerous cards, food, plants and flowers, phone calls, gifts to the memorial fund and especially prayers for our family. Christine is survived by her parents, Toby & Julie Drake, her children Katie and Grant Velter, her sister, Suzanne Drake Reilly, and her brother David Drake. Christine graduated from Central Dauphin High School in 1982.

Our special appreciation to Pastor Joel for his many prayers and measures of comfort.



Thank You Note We Received

I want to Thank my church family for all the beautiful cards and phone calls after Christine's death. As you all know, I was not prepared for this. I miss her terribly but find solace knowing she is home. Again, my thanks and gratitude to my beautiful church family.
Phoebe



FAMILY PROMISE NEWS AND UPDATES

Family Promise has learned to pivot, make changes, but has continued to help homeless children and their families throughout the pandemic. They have been able to acquire several programs which will be very beneficial for the guests. Presently, the guests remain at the Day Center 24 hours a day unless they are working, going to interviews, etc. Host congregations are still being scheduled on a weekly basis.

Current Volunteer Opportunities:

Teaching Classes to Adult Guests: Training and materials are provided to anyone interested in volunteering to do this. You can volunteer as it fits into your schedule, not just during our host week. A list of Day Center rules will be provided to all volunteers so that everyone knows what is expected and rules remain consistent. You are never responsible for the children. Parents will be present whenever you are there.

Day Center Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to be a presence at the Day Center. You may assist guests, interact with children, teach classes (after being trained), and stay overnight. Everyone at the Day Center wears masks, practices social distancing, and follows Covid precautions. Anyone interested in staying overnight will be issued their own new inflatable bed that you will bring and take home with you.




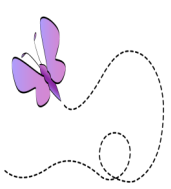
You may volunteer as it fits into your schedule, 4 hrs., 6 to 8 hours, morning, noon, and night. Overnight shift would be 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

This is **not** something that needs to be initiated immediately. You can volunteer at any time whenever you feel comfortable doing so. For additional information contact Nadine Martin (717) 497-1200. Thank you.



Please Note: We have resumed our outdoor worship. Each Sunday worship will begin at 9am weather permitting. In case of inclement weather our service will be live-streamed as before.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Carol Ranck
2— Easter 5 9 am - Outdoor Worship	3	4	5 6:30 pm - Covid Task Force via Zoom	6 Jared Copeland	7 Myles Reilly	8 Lisa Neil
9— Easter 6 9 am - Outdoor Worship 	10 Don DeArmitt	11	12 6:30 pm - Council	13 Margie Munz	14	15
16— Easter 7 9 am - Outdoor Worship Newsletter deadline	17 George Schreffler	18 Christine Schreffler	19	20	21	22
23— Pentecost 9 am - Outdoor Worship Sara Smith	24	25	26	27	28 Barbara Sheetz	29
30 - Holy Trinity Millie Horvath	31 - Memorial Day  office closed Jean Lisse	 				

The Evangelical Lutheran
CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR
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Phone: 717-545-9992
Email: ossec@comcast.net
Web Site: 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

We have resumed our outdoor worships (weather permitting). Our service starts @9am. Please join us! You will still have the option of viewing a taped version of our worship services later that day. The viewing link is always posted on our website (address below).

Church Office

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

Phone: 717-545-9992

Email: ossec@comcast.net

Web Site: www.oslutheranharrisburg.org



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