

Good News

February 2023



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This month begins our “war” with sin. Actually, we are always at “war” with sin. We acknowledge as much at the beginning of worship every Sunday during the Order of Confession and Forgiveness. But this month we are even more cognizant of the fact that we are at “war” with sin, because this month begins the season of Lent. Yes, Ash Wednesday is February 22nd, and so then begins our 40-day journey of Lent.

Lent is that time of year when we enter an intentional period of repentance. We fast, we pray, we give alms (practice generosity), all in the effort to cleanse ourselves of sin. Yes, Lent is about our personal “war” with sin. But Lent also reminds us of our collective “war” with sin. For, to be sure, humanity has been battling sin throughout human history.

At present, I have been reading a book entitled *The Handy History Answer Book* (1999, Visible Ink Press). And there is a specific chapter entitled “Wars, Overthrows, and Revolutions.” And I was reminded in this book of just how much our human history has been punctuated by violence and war. There, of course, was World War I and II. There was the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. There was the Spanish-American War, the Mexican War, the War of 1812. There was the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Persian Gulf War. There were the Boer Wars. There were the Napoleonic wars. There was the Sino-Japanese War. So on and so forth. Our human history has been an unfortunate narrative of ongoing unrest and violence. And even now, our world is watching a horrific war in Eastern Europe unfold, as Russia and Ukraine do battle.

I think about our human history and I am reminded of Primo Levi’s theory that when one group of people looks upon another group of people as “the other” to the point where that first group of people sees that other group as a threat, well, that is when bad things happen, like violence and war. And unfortunately, this has been hardwired into humanity for eons, all the way back to the time when human beings existed in disparate groups of hunter-gatherers, and the mindset was that we destroy “the other” group first and ask questions later, because it was about survival. So, this mindset is hardwired into our very being.

But the good news is that we can undo that hardwiring in our human psyche. We can undo that mindset. If epigenetics has taught us anything it is the fact that we can actually change our genes and pass those changes down from one generation to the next. We can undo this human instinct to see another group as “the other,” and see them then in a new light, as “us” together.

So, for me, Lent and really all of our spiritual lives is about this. It is about changing our mindset. We are at “war” with sin, and the process of reconciliation with one another and with God is what we are to be about as people of faith. It may take a long time to get there, because sin has been so hardwired into us, and with each new war it only reinforces that “us versus them” mindset. But, I do believe we can get there, and I do believe this is why the Lenten journey and the faith journey as a whole is so important. The journey we make together in love is the process of disentangling the sin that grips us and all people.

So, I hope your Lenten journey is a blessing to your life this year. I hope you continue to work to be reconciled to God and to those in your life with whom you may be estranged. And we look to the day when the peace of God which surpasses all understanding encompasses all of human life and creation. Thanks be to God.

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

The Lessons for February 2023

February 5 — Epiphany 5

Isaiah 58:1-12
 Psalm 112:1-10
 1 Corinthians 2:1-16
 Matthew 5:13-20

February 12 — Epiphany 6

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
 Psalm 119:1-8
 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
 Matthew 5:21-37

February 19 — Transfiguration

Exodus 24:12-18
 Psalm 2
 2 Peter 1:16-21
 Matthew 17:1-9

February 22 — Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
 Psalm 51:1-17
 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 26 — Lent 1

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
 Psalm 32
 Romans 5:12-19
 Matthew 4:1-11



Ash Wednesday

We will be holding our Ash Wednesday worship service on February 22nd beginning at 7pm. Please join us as we begin our Lenten journey.



Special Congregational Meeting

We will be having a special congregational meeting on Sunday, February 12th immediately following our morning worship. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the "Letter of Agreement for Interim Ministry" that was handed out to all those who attended our congregational meeting on Sunday, January 29th. At this meeting we also will be discussing a change in worship time & voting on that change. As a reminder, we need a quorum of **30 voting members** to conduct this meeting, so please make every effort to attend. If you have any questions, please speak to Pastor Joel or any council member.



Parish Staff

Rev. Dr. Joel D. Petruschke, pastor
 Barbara Johnson, administrative assistant
 Mitchell Sensenig, organist

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

The preferred color for the day of Ash Wednesday is black. Purple is the alternative. We use purple at Our Saviour, because we don't have black paraments. But the color black is meant to remind us of the ashes that are used on Ash Wednesday. The ashes are a reminder of that to which all things must return. Everything returns to carbon dust. I also equate that image to Black Holes, where everything is consumed by gravity so that nothing is left but mass.

In the church year, Ash Wednesday is the most solemn of all days, even more solemn than Good Friday where the mood is one of subdued rejoicing in the victory won on the cross. Ash Wednesday is solemn because of the stark consequence of sin. "We are dust and to dust we shall return," pretty much sums up Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday gives us a very, VERY bleak vision to be sure.

But even on Ash Wednesday there is a glimmer of hope. The ashes imposed on our foreheads is made in the sign of a cross. It reminds us of the mark that is put upon Cain after he has risen up and destroyed his brother Abel. After Cain is condemned to exile to wander the earth, God takes mercy on him. Cain bemoans his punishment crying out to God that everyone will want to kill him. Everyone on earth will want revenge upon him for having killed Abel. And so God places a mark on Cain as a sign of protection. Thanks be to God.

Ash Wednesday is like that for us, too. Like Cain, we feel helpless and destitute in light of the consequence of our sinful actions. We feel cut off from God, cut off from every and any help. And then a mark is made on our foreheads like Cain. Ashes are imposed on us in the shape of a cross, and we are reminded that we are not without hope and protection. Even though we die as a consequence of sin, yet we will live. That is the Good News of Ash Wednesday. Yes, Ash Wednesday is a most horrible and solemn day of the church year, when we see vividly the consequence of sin. And yet, there is a glimmer of hope. Thanks be to God.

A similar feeling as that felt on Ash Wednesday, though, is what we experience on Good Friday. On Good Friday, during worship, the power of darkness consumes the sanctuary as every light is turned off and every candle extinguished. Except, the large paschal candle remains lit, and then is recessed out of the sanctuary. That is really the equivalent of Ash Wednesday, when the reminder of ash consumes our being, and yet there is a little light still shining, which is the image of the cross on our foreheads. So, in effect, Ash Wednesday connects very nicely with Good Friday. In short, there is always the hope of God even in the midst the most dire of situations. Thanks be to God.

Manna Food Pantry

Our "2nd Sunday" food collection is still ongoing. During this time of continuous rising food prices & heating costs, 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. There is a list of suggested items now on the table. If you would like to make a monetary donations, please mark your envelopes "Manna Food Pantry" and place it with your regular giving envelope.



A Word on Stewardship

I want to talk about a word that often is associated with stewardship and that word is “growth.” You see, we often associate stewardship with the notion of increasing the number of dollars in the offering plate or increasing the number of people in the pews. We often see stewardship as growing the budget or growing church membership. And although these are very important things when it comes to growth, there is something else that we need to remember. Stewardship is also about the growth of an individual with respect to that person’s relationship with God.

You see, here is the question I think each one of us needs to ask ourselves all along our faith lives: “Am I growing in my relationship with God?” Another way to ask that question is by asking these questions:

- Am I growing in my understanding and knowledge of God?
- Am I growing in my love toward my neighbor?
- Am I growing in my prayer life?
- Am I growing in my sense of gratitude for all the good gifts I enjoy in life?
- Am I growing in my sense of trust in God?
- Am I growing in my peace of mind?
- Am I growing in my service toward others?

And if we cannot answer “yes” to these questions, we need to ask ourselves “why”?

You see, so often we get caught up in “numbers” with respect to the church budget and church membership, and so often then we devote so much time and energy to these things, that we fail to care for the spiritual well-being of those in our midst including ourselves. Indeed, the investment we should be making toward the maintenance of the church is the care of our very own souls. And by doing that, I think we do reap benefits in terms of the budget and members. For there is something to be said for the witness of a church whose members who are 100% dialed into the Gospel. That witness is infectious. It will likely increase giving because we are more inclined to give to an institution in which we are fully committed, and it will likely increase membership because others will want to be a part of an organization in which they see the light of God in its members. So growing our relationship with God I do think is key.

And so how do we do that? Well, I am a big believer in the phrase, “If you act enthusiastic, you’ll be enthusiastic.” In other words, if we devote ourselves with at the very least “pretend” passion, over time that “pretend” passion becomes real passion, because it becomes habit, and habit transforms us by its constant practice. So, if we decide to be at worship every week, and if we decide to attend Adult Sunday School and Bible Study regularly, and if we pray each and every day, and if we work on loving and serving our neighbor, well, then I think we will change, not in a day or even a week. But over time, we will notice it, and we and the church community and the world will be the better for it. So, commit yourself to growing in your relationship with God.

Jesus Said, “Let the Little Children Come to Me.”

We have successfully revived Sunday School for the children of Our Saviour. The children have a lesson, complete a craft and enjoyed a snack. As a reminder, children’s Sunday School class will be held on the first Sunday of the month during the service. **The next class will be Sunday, February 5th.** Children will be excused for their lesson after the children’s message. Please share our news with anyone you know who may be interested. We welcome every child to join us and learn!

WE ARE SO EXCITED TO HAVE GOTTEN STARTED! OUR CHILDREN ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR CONGREGATION.



Dear Padre,

What is Santiago de Compostela?

Signed, Interested Individual

Dear Interested Individual,

It is funny you should ask this, because I was reading about this in my preparations to travel to Spain. For you see, Santiago de Compostela is a town in northwestern Spain. Its claim to fame is that it is the site of the shrine of Saint James, who was the brother of Jesus Christ and who was the head of the early church in Jerusalem. That is why he is significant to Christian believers still today.

The shrine of St. James is now in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, which is the culmination of the Way of St. James, a leading Catholic pilgrimage route since the 9th century. Indeed, the Way of St. James has ranked in comparison to the pilgrimages Christians have made over the centuries to Jerusalem where Jesus was crucified and raised, and to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome where Peter is interred, and which is the capitol of Catholicism. Yes, for some time, these three have been the three great holy sites in Christianity. St. Peter's in Rome and the Holy City of Jerusalem are both well-known. But who knew about Santiago de Compostela?

My family and I will not get to Santiago de Compostela during our trip. Hopefully, on a future trip to Spain we will get there. But, I do believe that we will at least cross the Way of Saint James during our travels. And, at the very least, I plan to find a book about the Way of Saint James. So, hopefully, I will have some more information to share when we return.

Thanks for your question.

Signed, *Padre*

1st In Betweeners Event for 2023

This Sunday, February 5th, the In Betweeners will enjoy a Potluck Dinner at the church starting at 4:30 pm and then plan the 2023 events. The group is open to anyone over 21. If you haven't joined us in the past you are welcome to come on February 5th, to see what our group is all about!



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, December 14, 2022

Members Present: Pastor Joel Petruschke, Antonetta Fleming, President, Brad Neil, Vice-President, Jim Lubrecht, Treasurer, Jeanette Logan, Secretary, Steve Barrons and Penny Zimmerman.

Members Absent: Dawne Veet

At 6:38 pm Anneke called the meeting to order.

The minutes from the Council Meeting on 11-9-2022 were edited and approved. Penny made a motion to accept the minutes as edited and Brad seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Jim reviewed the financial reports with Council.

Budget Performance - The current deficit is \$28,586.84 compared to last year at this time when the deficit was \$39,901.37. Jim informed Council that this decrease can be contributed to this year's egg making profits as well as money made from our Germanfest event this year.

Jim explained to Council that November of 2022 was the first month in 2022 that we are in the black.

Mutual Funds - The mutual funds are continuing to grow.

The Treasurer's Report was filed for audit.

Secretary's Report: Jeanette informed Council that she sent thank you notes to Andrea Faber and Sandy Moritz for their assistance with the bake sale that was held at the church on Election Day in November, 2022.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education: No Report

Child Protection Policy: No Report

Fund Raising: No Report

Mutual Ministry: No Report

Property: No Report

Scholarship BOT: No Report

Social Ministry: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council

Stewardship: There is no formal committee at this time

Welcome: No Report

Worship and Music: No Report

Finance: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council

Pastor's Report: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council

Our Saviour Employee Contracts: Jim will supply Council with a copy of Pastor Joel and Barb Johnson's current contracts.

Old Business:

Covid Task Force: Brad made a motion to disband the Covid Task Force and Penny seconded the motion. The motion carried. Jeanette will send thank you notes to the members of the committee, (Carol, Hope, Marcia, Brad and Victor) thanking them for their work on this committee.

Church Attendance Statistics: Jim will talk with Barb Johnson about gathering church attendance numbers on a monthly basis.

Property: Steve Barron will be the assistant to Brad on the Property Committee. Brad informed Council that he purchased new bulbs for the 4 lights that haven't been working. Two of the lights are now working and the other two lights should be working soon. He noted that Billy Youngblood has been helping him with the lighting issues and it was determined that a breaker had been tripped. Jeanette will send a note to Billy thanking him for his time and assistance.

Visioning Meeting: Pastor Joel was asked to provide the results of the Visioning Meetings to Council so these results may be prioritized.

Roof Shingles: Brad will call Sheetz Roofing about the missing shingles noting they will be replaced free of charge.

New Business:

Budget for 2023: Jim reviewed each line item of the 2023 budget with Council.

Secretary's Salary: Per a conversation that Pastor Joel had with our secretary Barb, she stated she would prefer more vacation days over a raise in pay. Jim made a motion to give Barb an additional 2 days of paid vacation. Steve seconded the motion. Jeanette amended the motion to give Barb 3 days of paid vacation. Penny seconded the amended motion. The amended motion is 3 days paid vacation for Barb. The motion carried.

Christian Education: Jim informed Council that Christian Education doesn't currently have a budget because the remainder of the Ruth Knerr donation to Christian Education of \$1,519.39 can be used.

Electric Heat and Gas: The budget is now \$8,500.00. up \$500.00.

Heating Contract: There was discussion that perhaps we should switch to a one time per year service call for heat and then the following year there would be a service call for the air conditioning.

Pest Control: There was discussion to have Orkin visit every four months.

Pastor's Salary: Brad made the following motion, "That after prayerful consideration, due to our church's financial instability and the fact that we have gone down to one Sunday service, I move that we are unable to give Pastor a raise at this time due to our uncertain financial future. " Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Scholarships: Jim reviewed the actuarial tables for the scholarships with Council.

Organist Salary: Steve made a motion to keep Mitchell's salary at the current rate. Brad seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Penny made a motion to accept the 2023 Budget as presented by Jim. Brad seconded the motion. The motion carried.

At 10:45 pm the meeting was adjourned.

The next Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeanette Logan, Council Secretary



Egg Making for 2023 Has Started

We are now taking orders for three types of eggs, peanut butter with milk chocolate, butter cream with dark chocolate and coconut with dark chocolate.

The committee met on January 12, 2023 and decided to keep the eggs the same price of \$1.25, per egg. We are always looking for new places to sell our eggs. We must **SELL, SELL, SELL our eggs** to make this project a success!

We welcome a new chairperson this year, Alice Lubrecht. Thanks for your help.

Teams have been organized, but we are still **looking for additional volunteers**. Please contact either Donna, Alice or Nadine if you would like to volunteer. We currently have four teams:

Monday - Team Leader, Nancy Pinko; Thursday - Team Leader, Pastor Joel; Saturday - Team Leader, Nadine Martin; Sunday - Team - Alice Lubrecht. If you are on a team but are unable to be at your team's scheduled egg-making session, please let your team leader know. All volunteers are asked to adhere to the following safety protocols:

Team Leaders are responsible for logging their team's attendance in the attendance log for each egg making session.

All volunteers are required to wear a hairnet or hat.

All volunteers must wear a full bib apron or smock to cover street clothes.

All volunteers are required to wash their hands in the hand washing sink prior to starting any egg-making tasks.

All volunteers must wear plastic gloves. Should gloves become soiled, torn, or contaminated, gloves must be discarded and replaced with a new set

No eating or drinking permitted in areas where eggs are being processed.

All touch points within the kitchen and social hall must be sanitized at the conclusion of the egg making session.

Any questions, please call, email, or talk with Co-chairs, Nadine Martin, Alice Lubrecht, and Donna Miller.

Nadine - 717-497-1200 or nadineLmartin@verizon.net

Donna - 717-558-0660 or donloumil@msn.com

Alice - 717-503-8258 or alicelubrecht@gmail.com



**OUR SAVIOUR
FINANCIAL REPORT
through December 31, 2022**

ENVELOPES AND PLATE	\$ 136,294.15
FUND RAISING	\$ 20,744.90
FELLOWSHIP HALL RENTAL	\$ 1,055.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 158,094.05

EXPENSE \$ 190,502.58

DEFICIT \$ (32,408.53)

PNC BANK STATEMENT BALANCES
as of December 31, 2022

CURRENT FUND	\$ 12,288.96
MEMORIAL FUND	\$ 87,474.90 *

THRIVENT ACCOUNTS

	<u>12/31/2022</u>	<u>12/31/2021</u>
CURRENT FUND MUTUALS	\$ 54,588.61	\$ 88,414.80
SCHOLARSHIP MUTUALS	\$ 150,364.10	\$ 185,116.89

* \$61,000 of Memorial Fund is from the Neidich estate.

\$1,519.39 of Memorial Fund is from the Ruth Knerr estate to be used for Christian Ed expenses.

A graphic with the words "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" in a colorful, multi-colored font. The letters are in various colors including red, green, blue, yellow, and purple. The text is arranged in two lines: "HAPPY" on top and "BIRTHDAY" below it.

Aaliyah Armstrong	2/8
Merlin Beachell	2/8
Jonah Petruschke	2/10
Renee Gibson	2/11
Michael Balas	2/13
Arryus Hanton	2/18
Don Hoepfer	2/27
Dottie Koppenhaver	2/27



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

			1	2	3	4
				egg making in AM		egg making in AM
5 - Epiphany 5 9:30 am - Worship with Children's Sunday School 10:45 am - Adult Sunday School egg making 4:30pm - InBetweeners Pot Luck Dinner	6 6pm - Welcome Committee deadline for committee council Reports egg making in AM	7	8 2 pm - Bible Study @ Manor @Oakridge 6:30 pm - Council	9 egg making in AM	10	11 egg making in AM
12 - Epiphany 6 9:30 am - Worship Special Congregational Meeting egg making	13 egg making in AM 6pm - Praise Him Singers Rehearsal	14 - Valentine's Day 	15 6:30pm - Mutual Ministry meets	16 egg making in AM	17	18 egg making in AM
19 - Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:30 am - Worship 10:45 am - Adult Sunday School newsletter deadline egg making	20 - President's Day egg making in AM 	21	22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 7pm - Worship 2 pm - Bible Study @Manor @Oakridge	23 egg making in AM 	24	25 11am - Phoebe Drake's memorial service 10am - visitation
26 - Lent 1 9:30 am - Worship 3:45 pm - Worship @Manor @Oakridge egg making	27 egg making in AM 6pm - Praise Him Singers Rehearsal	28				



The Evangelical Lutheran
CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR
420 North Progress Avenue
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109

Phone: 717-545-9992
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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

9:30 am.

Please join us! We also offer worship via live-stream. The viewing link is available on our website (address below). 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

Web Site: www.oslutheranharrisburg.org



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.