

Good News

January 2021



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Most everyone is glad that the year 2020 is over. It was a difficult year in so many ways. And we can only hope that 2021 will be an improvement. Hopefully, we will be able to rid ourselves of face masks. Hopefully, we will be able to gather with other people like we once did. Hopefully, we will be able to say goodbye to social distancing, quarantining, and the like.

To be sure, we have high hopes for 2021. We long to travel again. We long for our children to be able to return to a regular school schedule. We long to worship again, to sing again, to resume communion like we had done it in the past.

What is the first thing you will do when the pandemic is officially declared “over”? Maybe book a trip to see family and friends. Maybe go outside and burn your mask. Maybe throw a post-COVID 19 party.

I was thinking about the story of Noah the other day. And, I was thinking that Noah and his family were cooped up in the ark for 150 days. That’s five months. Now, of course, the pandemic has lasted longer than that. Even so, we have been able to venture outside some, whether it is to the grocery store, or to a doctor’s appointment, or even to go for a walk around our neighborhood. We haven’t had to stay inside all the time. But Noah and his family didn’t have the option to get away from the ark. I guess they could have gone for a swim. But, really, where were they going to go, if they left the ark? The entire earth was covered by water. And, I can only imagine how Noah and the members of his family were getting on each other’s nerves. Probably, we have all been short with our loved ones during this pandemic, because cabin fever has gotten the better of us.

And so, yes, I was thinking about Noah the other day. And, I was thinking about the first thing Noah did when he left the ark, which was to offer sacrifice to God. Noah and his family worshipped God. And, I think that is quite telling for us. When this pandemic is finally over, when we are finally able to resume a normal life, will our world come together to worship God? Will we pause to give thanks for the blessings of God? Will we recognize the goodness of our Creator, who has led us through the pandemic by His grace? I certainly hope so.

Indeed, what will the global celebration look like when we have finally put this virus behind us? I was not born to see what the celebration looked like at the end of World War II. However, there is a scene in the movie *It’s A Wonderful Life* that has always captured my imagination. The scene shows people streaming to church and the commentary says, “On V-E (Victory in Europe) Day, like everybody else, he (George Bailey) wept and prayed. On V-J (Victory in Japan) Day he wept and prayed again.” People actually celebrated the end of the horrors of World War II by coming to church. It was as if the world had been given a new lease on life with the defeat of Nazi Germany and Imperialistic Japan. It was as if the pall had been removed from the world. It was a sort of global resurrection. And it required celebration, and people prayed and wept. On V-C (Victory over Coronavirus) Day will we see it like our forebears saw the end World War II?

So, sisters and brothers, here’s to hoping that 2021 is an improvement over the year 2020. Here’s to hoping 2021 will be a year of celebration. Here’s to hoping that we will stream to church and we will pray and weep, and pray and weep some more.

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

The Lessons for January 2021

January 3 — Christmas 2

Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:1-18

January 10 — Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 17 — Epiphany 2

Samuel 3:1-20
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 24 — Epiphany 3

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

January 31 — Epiphany 4

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28



Thank You

Pastor Joel and Barb would like to thank you all for the generous staff gift, personal gifts & holiday greeting cards. Your thoughtfulness is so greatly appreciated.



The Youth Group and Social Ministry Committee would like to thank the church members for their generous donations to The Salvation Army Christmas Collection. Our members donated many items that filled the trunk of the car and the back seat. It is always amazing to see how our church members do so much for our community in need. Thank you for making this project very successful.

Congregation Meeting

Per our By-Laws and Constitution a Congregational Meeting is scheduled for January. This meeting will be held after our worship service on January 24th, with a snow date of January 31st. As of now, with our church doing only “live streaming” worship services there is a great possibility that this meeting may have to be held via Zoom. In order to meet our quorum of 30 people we are asking those that have Zoom capabilities to let the office know if you will be “attending” that morning. You may let us know by calling (717-545-9992) or by email (ossec@comcast.net). Thank you. **Reminder to all committee chairs:** Please get your annual reports to the office no later than Sunday, January 17th. Submission via email is preferred. Thank you.



Parish Staff

Joel D. Petruschke, pastor
Barbara Johnson, administrative assistant

Good News is a monthly publication of **The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour**, 420 North Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109, 717-545-9992, ossec@comcast.net. **Deadline** for submission is the third Monday prior to publication month.

If you do not have email or internet access, your addressed copy of *Good News* will be available in your church mailbox the first weekend of each month.

About Worship

“Inside out”—that may be the best way to describe what worship has been for the past several months. To turn something inside out means to make something disorganized while one is trying to find something. For instance, we might say that we turned our closet inside out while we were trying to find our shoes. Turning something inside out can also mean to change something completely. After winning the lottery, one’s life might be turned inside out.

Worship has changed a lot since the pandemic. We have had to learn how to conduct in-person worship while following pandemic protocols. And we have had to learn to go “virtual.” And, yes, it may seem a little chaotic at times as we try to find a new worship groove. Questions have emerged in light of the outbreak. How should we do the music for worship, since we shouldn’t be singing? How do we do communion, when we can’t come to the altar railing? So, yes, to say that worship has been turned inside out is an understatement.

But with respect to worship, I would like to talk about “inside out” in another way. I would like for us to take this phrase literally. We have moved worship from inside the church sanctuary to the world outside. We have transported worship so that it now comes to many of us in our homes via our computers. And, again, I can’t thank Herb enough for all his good work to make this happen.

When we stop to think about the transition from worship in church to worship in our home, from inside out and outside in, we can’t help but be amazed at this. Maybe this will prove to be a very good thing in the long run. Maybe greater accessibility to worship will improve our spiritual lives. Indeed, I would hope that we might also extend Bible Study into people’s homes. I would hope that we might also figure out ways for us as church members to visit with our shut-ins more regularly via Zoom. I would hope that we might make this virtual technology work more and more to our advantage, to God’s advantage, that the good news of the gospel can impact more lives in their homes. That after all has always been the challenge, that is to impact one’s faith in one’s home.

You see, it is one thing to come to church and experience the power of God. It is another thing altogether to take that power of God with us such that it impacts us in our personal lives at home. Martin Luther struggled with this same challenge: “How do we bring faith into people’s homes?” And when he discovered that families struggled with the basics of the faith, he wrote a little booklet called *The Small Catechism* so that it might be a resource families could use at home. Today, instead of the printed word in a booklet that is distributed, we have computers that allow for God to invade our homes through worship, Bible Study, Zoom meetings, and so on.

Now, don’t get me wrong, we still need to embrace the opportunities to gather together in-person as God’s people, whenever and however we can. But, in addition to gathering in-person, we now have the great blessing of virtually coming into people’s homes and nurturing the faith of those who live there. Thanks be to God.

A Word on Stewardship

The vaccine against COVID-19 is rolling out. Some people are worried about getting vaccinated. Some people fear that the process to produce this vaccine has been rushed along. Some people are anxious that the vaccine could be harmful to human health. Now, I am no scientist. I am no medical doctor. But, my father-in-law is a retired biology professor. In particular, he was a geneticist. He is an extremely intelligent man who continues to take an active interest in the world of science. And in a recent Zoom conversation with Kathy's family, he was telling us that he and his wife, who are in their 80s, are ready to get the vaccine as soon as it is ready. They have no qualms about taking it. In fact, they were planning to contact their family doctor to see what they need to do to get on the list to receive their vaccination. For me, that is proof enough that there is nothing to worry about with respect to the vaccine. Yes, there have been some reports about allergies to the vaccine, but apparently that is nothing out of the ordinary with any vaccine.

I don't understand exactly how a vaccine works. I get it that a vaccine produces an immune response from our bodies such as to produce antibodies. These antibodies help our bodies to respond to the antigens on the virus so then if we are exposed, our immune system aggressively attacks the virus before it can spread and cause us to become sick. It is amazing to me that scientists have the wherewithal to be able to understand this process, and create molecules to inject into our bodies, and so then trigger our immune system. That is mindboggling. And then, once enough people are immunized, herd immunity is created, so then, even those who haven't been vaccinated yet will benefit, because the amount of virus out there in the world is drastically diminished.

It is almost like there are two worlds. There is the world that is our body with its many cells, and there is the world that is the human family with its many individual persons. Tending to the one also tends to the other. When we get vaccinated we are benefitting our body, but we are also benefitting the human family as we work towards herd immunity. Stewardship is not just about taking care of the self in this case. It is also about taking care of our neighbors. I can't tell you what to do with regards to getting the vaccination. Each of us needs to make up his or her own mind. I just thought it might be helpful to share with you my perspective.

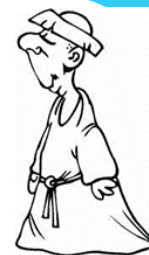
Manna Food Pantry

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.



Dear Padre,

I understand that in the Jewish tradition Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year, which moves around according to the Jewish calendar. It is one of the Jewish high holy days. Does the Church have any sort of equivalent day to mark the New Year?



Signed, Ringing in the New Year

Dear Ringing the New Year,

New Year's Day actually has a peculiar history. In 153 B.C., the beginning of the month immediately following the winter solstice was accepted by the Roman Empire as the beginning of the year. The date marking then the beginning of the New Year was January 1st. However, before 153 B.C., the New Year fell on March 1st. In the 6th century A.D., March 25th, marked the beginning of the New Year. Why did March 25th serve as the New Year? Because March 25th was the date of the Annunciation, the date when angel Gabriel told Mary she would bear a child, and she conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. The beginning of the New Year corresponded then with the beginning of Jesus' humanity *in utero*. Pope Gregory XIII in the year 1582 changed the calendar again, so that January 1st was restored as New Year's Day, although, the acceptance of January 1st as New Year's Day was slow in coming. England and America did not recognize New Year's Day as January 1st until 1752.

Today, New Year's Day is not a religious holiday. The church doesn't celebrate New Year's per se. However, on January 1st the Church does celebrate the festival called The Name of Jesus. It was on this day, the 8th day after Jesus' birth, that Jesus was circumcised and named. Luke 2:21 says, "After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child, and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb." This was in keeping with the Old Testament law from Genesis 17:12: "As soon as he is eight days old, every one of your males, generation after generation, must be circumcised."

The day parents name their child is a big deal. We name our children typically at the time of birth. Jesus is named, however, on January 1st. Jesus' name means "savior." I don't know if that makes New Year's Day a holy day, except to say that on January 1st God destined the world for salvation, because Jesus is designated as "savior," and in antiquity the name of a child was understood as marking his destiny. Jesus' destiny as savior is humanity's destiny. So, I guess, if we look at it in this way, January 1st is a big deal for Christians. Our salvation is foretold in the naming of Mary's child as "Jesus" (savior).

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, November 11, 2020**

Members Present: Pastor Joel Petruschke, Vice President Brad Neil, Treasurer Jim Lubrecht, Secretary Michael Metzger, Anneke Fleming, Arno Miller, Penny Zimmerman, Marlee Zimmerman, Jared Copeland, Jeanette Logan, Herb Logan and Jessica Burigana.

Members Absent: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM. Since the President position is vacant, Pastor Joel led the meeting. After the call to Order, Herb Logan made two presentations to Council:

- 1) In order to enable worshipers in the overflow area to view the service occurring in the sanctuary, and to eliminate the use of personal equipment for recording and making Our Saviour services available on the internet, Herb created a proposal for live streaming of worship services both on the internet and into the overflow worship space. One-time costs for the live streaming set up within the sanctuary were estimated at under \$2K (camera and mount, BoxCast live streaming hardware, miscellaneous cabling). Reoccurring costs were estimated at \$100 monthly for BoxCast subscription and hosting, and a \$10 a monthly increase for Comcast bandwidth upgrade, total \$1320 annual cost. One-time cost for equipment needed to receive, cast, and view services in the overflow worship area were estimated at under \$1K (Large TV, stand, sound bar). A laptop and Wi-Fi network extender have been donated for this project.
- 2) Herb solicited a quote from Sky's the Limit Tree Service for removal and grinding down the stumps of two dead pine trees in the front of the church property and removal of a sumac tree growing among the pines in the lower/back area of the church property without stump grinding. Total estimate \$1175.00

Herb then excused himself from the meeting.

Minutes: Minutes from the October Council meeting were reviewed. Upon motion by Arno and seconded by Jeannette, the minutes were approved as distributed.

Council Executive Positions: Position of President remains vacant.

Treasurer's Report: Jim presented his 2021 budget proposal. Points of discussion included proposed changes to Pastor Joel and Barb's compensation, reduction in fundraising budgets because of COVID-19, an \$800 obligation in Scholarship payouts, non-payment of Synod HAYI obligation pending receipt of a bill for last year, an increase for Sewer, Water & Trash under Maintenance owing to the new Storm Water levy, and reduction in budget for Worship and Music supplies. Council deferred action on the budget until all requested adjustments are made and until the expenditures involved in Herb's proposals are considered.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education - No report. Next meeting is in January.

Fundraising - No report. Pastor Joel will initiate a conversation about egg making.

Mutual Ministry – No report.

Property - No report, however there were several discussions about property-related issues. Council discussed the paint colors and finishes being considered for the sanctuary, with members commenting that some colors are inappropriate and will not match the large painting at the back of the sanctuary. Penny suggested that proposed paint colors and finishes be reviewed by Council and should be forwarded to Barb for distribution to Council members. Also, since Herb's proposal for tree removal pertains to property, and since the estimate he presented was very low, Council voted to add \$1200.00 to the Capital Repair budget for this work without soliciting further bids.

Welcome - No report.

Worship and Music – The Worship and Music committee met on 11/9/20 and their report was reviewed by Council. Two Christmas Eve services will be held with cleaning between services and possibly with singing of Silent Night outside. Penny asked if it would be possible to allow more than 25 people in the sanctuary for Christmas Eve services. Pastor Joel said he would request a survey to see if the services could be planned to eliminate use of the overflow area. Since the live streaming proposal presented to Council pertains to worship, Council's action regarding the proposal is included in this section. Anneke moved to accept Herb's proposal for live streaming. This was seconded by Jim. Anneke then moved to amend this to specify that the funds for the subscription and start up hardware be drawn from the Memorial Fund. The amendment was seconded by Jeanette. Both the resolution regarding live streaming and its amendment were approved by Council, there was one abstention on both questions.

Child Protection Policy - This committee has not met.

Scholarship BOT – This committee has not met.

Social Ministry - No report. Salvation Army Christmas Gift Tree is being planned.

Stewardship - No report.

Pastor's Report - Pastor reviewed his report with the Council, highlighting the near-term worship schedule and other events:

Pulpit exchange 11/15 - Pastor Joel announced he will conduct the liturgy and serve communion.

Racial Justice Forum 11/16 @ 6 PM

Bible Study 11/18 @ 1 PM

Thanksgiving Eve Service 11/25 @ 7:00 PM

Advent Begins 11/29

Barb out of office 11/30 – 12/2

Midweek Advent events at Good Shepherd on 12/2, 12/9 and 12/16.

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

Old Business:

Sanctuary Painting - See above

Sanctuary Carpeting Quote – No update.

Little Lending Library – Anneke reported the work is in progress. It will be mounted outside the bus stop.

COVID-19 Task Force Update – CTF met 11/4/20 and completed initial discussion of live streaming, which they strongly recommended to Council. CTF also discussed the Souper Bowl event for 2021. Please see New Business below.

Organist Position – Mitchell will continue for now.

New Business:

Budget – See above

Tree Estimate – See above

Souper Bowl – The “Souper” Bowl is uncertain..

Christmas Project – See above

Other New Business -

Penny Suggested that Pastor Joel ask Barb to generate a new “leader list.”

Council made a decision to use the Youth room as a counting room and to keep the counting supplies in there.

Penny mentioned Staff Gift money is due 12/13 and will be used to buy gift cards.



The meeting was ended by reciting the Lord’s Prayer and was adjourned at 8:50 PM pursuant to a motion made by Arno and seconded by Jared. Without objection, the motion carried.

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Thursday, December 10th at 6:30 PM, in person, in the Social Hall. Schedule change is necessary to avoid conflict with the 12/9 Advent event.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Metzger
Council Secretary

Please Note: All worship times are listed as "Live Stream" as of now until a decision is made to resume in-person Worship.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Happy New Year! office closed	2
3- Christmas 2 9 am - Worship via Live Stream	4 Kathy Baker Deb Flage Ann Wolf	5	6 1 pm - Bible Study via Zoom	7 Jeanette Logan	8	9 Marian Tosheff
10- Baptism of Our Lord 9 am - Worship via Live Stream	11 Committee Reports to Council deadline	12	13 6:30 pm - Council	14 Tiffany Landis Steve Provencher	15 Ruth Ondeck	16
17- Epiphany 2 9 am - Worship via Live Stream Newsletter deadline	18 - Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday  office closed Doris Balas	19	20 1 pm - Bible Study via Zoom	21	22 Jacob Gibson	23
24- Epiphany 3 9 am - Worship via Live Stream Congregational Meeting to follow	25	26	27 Lisa Kessler Nicholas Sheleman	28 Peter Ingavo	29	30
31 - Epiphany 4 Congregational Meeting "snow date" Anniya Armstrong						

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

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

Currently all worships are "Live Streamed" until a decision is made to resume in-person worships. You can view our services on our webpage (see below) each Sunday at 9am.

Church Office

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

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