

Good News

January 2023



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

So, we welcome the New Year this month. It is now 2023. And, I don't know about you, but this go-around, this transition from one year to the next, is very much welcomed. For whatever the reason, this past year was very emotional, at least for me. Maybe, it has been the senseless war in Ukraine that has touched me too deeply. Maybe it has been the never-ending mass shootings in the news. Maybe it has been the grief and pain I have witnessed among our church members, who have suffered various losses. I don't know, but this past year was particularly trying.

Perhaps, one blessing I have experienced from all the trials of this past year is the sense in myself of moving from sympathy to empathy. What's the difference, right? Well, as I understand it, sympathy is more the sense of feeling FOR another person. Sympathy is borderline pity. In this respect, feeling sympathy FOR someone can be patronizing, almost condescending. We have to be careful when we feel FOR another person that we don't make the person feel "belittled." Empathy, on the other hand, is more the sense of feeling WITH another person. Empathy refers to the ability to take part in another person's feelings, to feel right alongside them. So, in short the difference between sympathy and empathy is the difference between feeling FOR someone (I feel for you) and feeling WITH someone (I hurt with you).

This past year, I have felt that I have hurt a lot more WITH others and the world. Many times my grief and pain has spilled over into tears as the pain in my own life was touched by the pain of other people. It has been as if the vision of all the pain out there in the world came into much clearer focus for me. And, at times, I wished I could have turned off all the pain, because it has just been so much.

Now, in general, I don't think of myself as a depressive character. Sure, I get down sometimes. But, I like to think of myself as one who tries to see the sunny side of life. I am a Christian after all. But, none of us can bury our heads in the sands, when we recognize all the heartache and sadness around us. We have to cry, we have to console each other, and we have to turn to God.

As we know, with the coming of the New Year, many people make New Year's resolutions. Some decide to be healthier. Some decide to refrain from bad habits. Some decide to do something to improve their life. But, I want to suggest a New Year's resolution for all of us, which is this. Wherever and whenever we can, I suggest we do what we can to refrain from adding to the pain in the world. That we would refrain from being "ugly" toward other people. That we would refrain from speaking negatively of others. That we would refrain from being cruel toward others. That we would refrain from prejudice, hate, and spite. I recognize that it may be too much to suggest that we be proactive so as to be more generous, kind and caring to all people. So, I am merely suggesting we don't inject additional pain into the world.

When God sent his Son into the world, God was responding to the grief and pain in the world. God was not trying to add to the world's pain, but instead was seeking a way to alleviate it. It is remarkable, though, that even with the gift of God's grace in His Son Jesus Christ the world's pain was exacerbated, such that people rose up in animosity and hate toward Jesus and crucified him. What is wrong with our species, anyway?

This year, and in the years to come, let us not add to the pain. Let us be graceful. Let us be, in our persons, sites of solace and healing. Let us be light and not darkness. Let us be peace and not turmoil. Here is to wishing and hoping for a less painful New Year.

In Christ, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

The Lessons for January 2023

January 1 — Name of Jesus

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalms 8

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:15-21

January 8 — Baptism of Our Lord

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalms 29

Acts 10:34-43

Matthew 3:13-17

January 15 — Epiphany 2

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalms 40:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

John 1:29-42

January 22 — Epiphany 3

Isaiah 9:1-4

Psalms 27:1, 4-9

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Matthew 4:12-23

January 29 — Epiphany 4

Micah 6:1-8

Psalms 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Matthew 5:1-12



Annual Congregational 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 29th, with a

snow date of February 5th. A quorum of 30

voting members is needed to conduct this meeting, so please make every effort to attend. Thank you.

Reminder to all committee chairs: Please get your annual reports to the office no later than **Wednesday, January 18th**. Submission via email is preferred. Thank you.



Thank You

Pastor Joel, Mitchell, 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 Social Ministry Committee would like to thank the church members for their generous contributions for The Salvation Army collection. The gifts were delivered to the Salvation Army by Nadine Martin. The volunteers at the drop off site were very appreciative of the donations.

Thank you for our cooperation of our generous congregation.



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

Lately, I have been thinking again about the power of words. It is a bit of an occupational hazard. After all, I work with words all the time in my calling. I have to write sermons. I have to interact with people. I have to teach Bible studies. So, most of what I do day-in and day-out involves words. And, over the years, I have become ever more convinced that words really do shape reality around us.

We can think of the Prologue to John's Gospel, and it pretty much says the same thing. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. And all things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being." Words shape our reality. Words force themselves upon us. Words influence our thinking. Words make us who we are - the words we choose to use, and the words we choose not to use. Even the places where we go, whereby we hear certain words and ideas - this, too, impacts us. Words are swirling around us, shaping us, and our reality.

When we slow down and think about it, how words come into being is actually quite mysterious. Words are generated in our minds, and they are conveyed to our tongues, and they become reality when we speak. Or words flow from our minds, to our hands, and we write them in text messages, or in word processing programs. It is really quite mysterious.

But maybe most mysterious of all are the words that come from God to us. Of course, we have the Bible which is God's Word that has been passed down to us from generations long ago. But, even as mysterious is the Church where we hear God's Word conveyed to us today. Luther said that the Church is the mouthpiece of God. The Church is the mundhaus ("mouthhouse" in German), so said Luther. We go to church and maybe the most important human sense we take with us to church is our sense of hearing.

And if we are talking about how words shape us, and impact us, and create our reality, then there really is no better place for us to go than to church. For in church we hear things like "You are forgiven your sins. You need not dwell in guilt and shame." We hear things like "You are loved by God forever, that God will never forsake you." We hear things like "You are precious. You are valued. You are a gift of God's own making." We hear things like "God cherishes you so much that God has gone to the grave and back for you, FOR YOU. This is my body FOR YOU. This is my blood shed FOR YOU." Who would not want to hear these things? Who would not be changed by these words. So why would we ever not be running to church?

But unfortunately, we choose to put ourselves in places and situations where the words we hear may not be to our good. So often, the words that stream our way do not uplift our being. But, our good and gracious God is constantly directing good words toward us, like some atmospheric river. And all we need to do is step into the stream and bask in it. That is worship, that is the power of words to shape us and so then shape the world. My prayer is that you would hear good words today and everyday, and that your reality is constantly uplifting.

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

January 1st marks the New Year on the secular calendar. But on the Church calendar, January 1st is the Festival of the Name of Jesus. Jesus is given his name on the eighth day after his birth, January 1st. And so this is an opportune time to speak about the stewardship of our names.

What do I mean by the stewardship of our names? Well, it could be argued that the single most important possession we have in life is our good name. And so, we need to protect our name. We need to be a good steward of our name. Indeed, our name follows us around wherever we go. If you doubt me, just think about the reputations that are attached to persons like Bernie Madoff, Benedict Arnold, and Bonnie Parker. Think about the reputations that are attached to Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Theresa, and Nelson Mandela. Wherever we go, there is our name.

Having a good name almost shields us from reproach. A teacher in school, for instance, is more likely to look past good students when trying to ascertain who it was that perpetrated mischief when the teacher's back was turned. Meanwhile, the less than exemplary students will most likely be accused. Yes, having a good name has its benefits.

And Martin Luther noted that it is not enough to protect our own names, but we should also seek to protect our neighbors' names, too. The Eighth Commandment states, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." Luther interprets this commandment in this way, "We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, or lie about our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain his actions in the kindest way." Wow, right? We should explain (or interpret) our neighbor's actions in the kindest way possible. How many of us actually do that?

More often than not, we are all too ready to gossip about our neighbor. More often than not, we are all too ready to demean our neighbor, or to malign our neighbor, or to drag our neighbor's name through the mud. Why do we do that? Does it make us look better? Not really, when someone tells you some piece of juicy gossip about someone else, it should make us stop and pause such that we wonder what that person is saying about us to others. No, telling gossip reflects negatively on the one telling gossip.

But most importantly, here's the problem with gossip-mongering. Once gossip it out there, it is next to impossible to retract. There's a story about a tongue-wagging woman who had spread gossip about a neighbor. In a few days, everyone in the town knew about the gossip. But then, the woman discovered later that her information about her neighbor was false, and as a result, the woman felt terribly guilty for having spread it. So, the woman went to her clergyman to ask what she could do to repair the damage. Her clergyman told her to wait until a windy day, and then climb to the top of clock tower with a pillow, and then rip the pillow open and shake out the feathers into the wind. And then the clergyman directed the woman to go and collect all the feathers. The woman replied, "But that is impossible." And the clergyman said, "Just so is the gossip you have falsely spread about your neighbor."

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 January 8th.** 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!



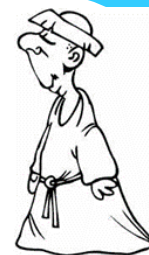
WE ARE SO EXCITED TO HAVE GOTTEN STARTED! OUR CHILDREN ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR CONGREGATION.

Dear Padre,

This month, of course, we observe the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. And I have always wondered, "Is Martin Luther King, Jr. named after Martin Luther?"

Signed, "Wondering"

Dear "Wondering,"



Why yes, Martin Luther King, Jr., was indeed named after Martin Luther. Well, technically, he was named after his father, Martin Luther King, Sr., but his dad was named after Martin Luther and so, by the "transitive property" (If A equals B, and B equals C, then A equals C), Martin Luther King, Jr., was named after Martin Luther.

It makes it a bit confusing, though, doesn't it? We might allude to "Martin Luther" and some people's minds think of "Martin Luther King, Jr." I know that over the years in Confirmation Class, I have had to clarify for our confirmands between the two. I have had to explain that Martin Luther King, Jr., was a Civil Rights activist who lived in the 1960s, while Martin Luther was a Reformer of the Church, who lived in the 16th century.

But, in truth, when we think about it, they really were not that different. Both individuals were fighting for freedom. They were both responding to injustice in their day. Martin Luther worked to free Christians from the oppression of the medieval Roman Church. He was responding to the injustice he observed, whereby Christians had to buy their forgiveness from sin. In short the Church was fleecing its members. And so, Luther opposed the Church authorities of his day.

Martin Luther King, Jr., of course, worked to free African Americans from oppressive and unjust laws. He worked to change society so that African Americans had equal rights. He opposed the authorities in the U.S. government. Like Martin Luther, he risked his life for something he believed in deeply.

Now, I am a big believer that there is power in names. And I wonder if the name Martin Luther King, Jr., received from his parents had any influence on who he would become, and what he would be about. I have to believe that it did. I have to believe that being named for a man who fought bravely against injustice in the 16th century, empowered Martin Luther King, Jr., in his own fight against injustice. I have to believe that. And thank God then that King's parents named him after Martin Luther. For who knows, maybe the Civil Rights Movement would not have had the same impact, if King had been named something else.

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 Wednesday, November 9, 2022

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

At 6:35 pm the meeting was called to order and Pastor Joel offered a word of prayer.

The minutes from the Council Meeting on Thursday, October 13, 2022 were edited and approved. Pastor Joel accepted the minutes as edited. Dawn seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Jim reviewed the financial reports with Council. He noted that our income is higher this month because there were five Sundays. The market is doing better and the Current Fund Mutuals are up. As far as the deficit is concerned, we are doing better than last year. The Budget Performance was reviewed.

- **Finance Committee Meeting** will be held on Monday, October 17th at 6:00pm. An email was sent to committees asking for budgets for 2023. Jim mentioned that at this point in time not all committees have sent in their budgets. Another email will be sent to committees reminding them to submit their budgets. Next year a reminder email will be sent to committees in September and their expenses from the previous years will be supplied.

An LCD projector and Jim's laptop will be used at the meeting to project all information onto a screen. Pastor Joel agreed to take minutes at this meeting as Jeanette is unable to attend.

The Treasurer's Report was filed for audit.

Secretary's Report: Jeanette will send thank you notes from Council to Andrea Faber and Sandy Moritz for their donation of baked goods and help with setup for the bake sale that was held at the election on November 8, 2022.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council.

Child Protection Policy: No report

Fund Raising: Brad reported that \$675.00 was collected in rentals of the fellowship hall so far this year. He will send thank you notes to the people who rented the facilities.

Mutual Ministry: No report

Property: No report

Scholarship BOT: No report

Social Ministry: No report

Stewardship: There is no formal committee at this time.



Welcome: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council.

Worship and Music: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council.

Finance: A report was submitted and reviewed by Council.

Pastor's Report: Pastor's report was submitted and reviewed by Council. Pastor reminded Council that he will be out of town November 18th through the 25th. A Thanksgiving service will not be held at Our Saviour but there will be a service held at Epiphany Lutheran Church.

Old Business:

- **COVID Task Force:** Brad suggested that we speak with Carol about disbanding the COVID Task Force as he feels there is no need to continue the task force at this time. It was agreed that Brad would speak with Carol about refilling the hand sanitizing stations in the church.
- **Hall Rental Sign:** Brad will ask Herb for help with posting the sign using rebar.
- **Election Day Polling Station bake sale:** The bake sale went well. We sold \$168.00. It was suggested that we consider selling hot food next year.
- **Visioning:** Three meetings were held with a total of 20 people in attendance. It was discussed that Council should look at the results/suggestions given at the meetings and prioritize them. The congregation should be updated on the status of the visioning meetings and visioning forms should be made available for those members who weren't available to attend a meeting.
- **New Christmas tree purchase:** Dawne updated Council that she was able to purchase a 7.5 foot Christmas tree for the Sanctuary. The cost of the tree was \$634.94.
- **Budget for 2023:** Jim will send an agenda to Council. Last year's purchases through October 2022 will be used to determine the budget for 2023.
- **BoxCast:** Discussion ensued about whether or not we should cancel our subscription because the renewal will be up next week. Currently there are very few viewers of the Livestreaming services and it really isn't an expense we should continue to have.

Jeanette made a motion to suspend BoxCast at this time and she will inquire as to whether or not they will honor the discount they promised should we decide to renew our subscription in March of 2023. Pastor Joel seconded the motion. A vote was taken and it was unanimous. The motion carried.

- **Computer updates:** Barb's laptop is set up. John Zimmerman is working on setting up Pastor Joel's laptop. Barb will contact the copier company to request help with connecting her laptop.
- **Outdoor sign:** Dave called Anneke and informed her that this is not a good time to make the changes to the sign due to the cold temperatures. March or April of 2023 would be a better time to update the sign. Anneke will ask him about fixing the marquee now.

New Business:

- **Music and Worship:** Dawne will research cost effective ways to help lower our costs.

- **Property:**

Heating Units: Brad informed Council that on the roof above the fellowship hall there is a middle heating unit that has a cracked heat exchanger. The heating units are about 20 years old as they were installed in 2003. It will cost \$2,748.00 to repair the unit. A new unit would be \$21,000.00.

Brad made a motion that we repair the heat exchange of the middle unit on the fellowship hall roof per the Acri estimate for \$2,748.00 to be paid out of the Memorial Fund. Steve seconded the motion. Pastor Joel made a motion to amend the motion to have discussion. Jim made a motion to second the amendment. The motion carried.

- **Donation of Hummel Nativity set:** Pastor Joel had a conversation with Ed Seneca and his sister about their desire to donate their Hummel Nativity set to the church. Pastor Joel will thank them for us.
- **Church Attendance statistics:** Anneke believes it is important to let the members of our congregation know how many people have been attending church services. She would like this information to be included in the Congregational Meeting packet.

The Lord's Prayer was said and a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Pastor Joel at 9:39pm and seconded by Jeanette.

Next Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeanette Logan, Council Secretary



Egg Making for 2023

Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex for members to sign up for help with our 2023 egg making. We are looking for volunteers to help and need information on member's availability so we can proceed.

We need your name and phone number, days of the week you are available, time of the day you are available, tasks you are willing to do (mix, weigh and shape, dipping eggs in chocolate, trim eggs, patch eggs with chocolate, wrap eggs and clean up duties). We also need members to sell eggs. If you are not able to sign up on the sheet in the narthex or have any questions, please call or email Donna Miller (donloulmil@msn.com 717-558-0660), Nadine Martin (nadinelmartin@verizon.net 717-540-1288) or Alice Lubrecht (alubes1@comcast.net 717-503-8258).

Also, no experience is needed!! We will train you in any tasks. We hope this can be a successful project for our church. Thank you in advance for your support.

Donna Miller, Nadine Martin, & Alice Lubrecht
Co-Chairs for Egg Project 2023



There will be a 2023 Egg Project Meeting on Thursday, January 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the church. Anyone helping with our egg project this year (or are thinking of helping this year for the 1st time) is invited to attend!

**OUR SAVIOUR
FINANCIAL REPORT
through November 30, 2022**

ENVELOPES AND PLATE	\$ 124,899.15
FUND RAISING	\$ 20,744.90
FELLOWSHIP HALL RENTAL	\$ 955.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 146,599.05

EXPENSE	<u>\$ 175,185.89</u>
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DEFICIT	<u>\$ (28,586.84)</u>
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**PNC BANK STATEMENT BALANCES
AS OF September 30, 2022**

CURRENT FUND	\$ 7,220.15
MEMORIAL FUND	\$ 90,222.16 *

THRIVENT ACCOUNTS

	<u>11/30/2022</u>	<u>10/31/2022</u>
CURRENT FUND MUTUALS	\$ 62,928.42	\$ 59,850.86
SCHOLARSHIP MUTUALS	\$ 159,369.19	\$ 151,273.54

* \$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.





Kathy Baker	1/4
Deb Flage	1/4
Ann Wolf	1/4
Jeanette Logan	1/7
Marian Tosheff	1/9
Tiffany Landis	1/14
Steve Provencher	1/14
Ruth Ondeck	1/15
Doris Balas	1/18
Jacob Gibson	1/22
Lisa Kessler	1/27
Nicholas Sheleman	1/27
Peter Ingavo	1/28
Anniya Armstrong	1/31



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1 - Name of Jesus 9:30 am - Worship 	2 New Year's Day observed - office closed	3	4	5	6	7
8 - Baptism of Our Lord 9:30 am - Worship with Children's Sunday School 10:45 am - Adult Sunday School	9 6pm - Altar Guild deadline for committee council reports	10	11 2 pm - Bible Study @Manor @Oakridge 6:30 pm - Council	12 7pm - Egg Project Meeting	13	14
<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Family Promise Host Week </div>						
15 - Epiphany 2 9:30 am - Worship newsletter deadline	16 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day office closed 	17	18 6:30 pm - Worship & Music via Zoom Committee reports for congregational meeting due in office	19	20	21
22 - Epiphany 3 9:30 am - Worship 3:45 pm - Worship @Manor @Oakridge	23	24	25 2 pm - Bible Study @Manor @Oakridge	26	27	28
29 - Epiphany 4 9:30 am - Worship Annual Congregational Meeting	30	31				

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
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.