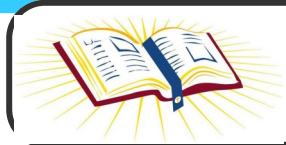


Good News

January 2024



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Happy New Year! Another year has rolled around. It is amazing to think that it is now 2024. Can you believe it? Yes, 2024. And just to give you some perspective on the passing of time, here are some anniversaries/milestones noted for this upcoming year. Facebook is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. And it has been 15th years since Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th President of these United States. It was 80 years ago this year that Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy. And my favorite movie of all time, *The Shawshank Redemption*, is celebrating the 30th Anniversary of its release this year.

Now, time is all a matter of perspective. Some of us may be thinking, "It has been ALREADY 30 years since that movie *The Shawshank Redemption* was released." And some of us may be thinking, "It has been ONLY 80 years ago that Allied troops stormed the Normandy beaches." Time moves slow and time moves fast. It is all a matter of perspective.

Like the rings in the trunk of a tree, we all have another ring around our torsos. We are all a year older. And we might each be thinking, "My Goodness, this year I will turn (blank) years old." Or, some may be thinking, "Yippee! This year I will turn (blank) years old." It is all a matter of perspective.

Personally, this year I will be 52. In "Leap Years," I will be 13. I enter my teenage years this year. It is all a matter of perspective.

When I think about time as a matter of perspective, I think about our Lord Jesus Christ. And this year marks yet another year in which we are a year further out from the time of Jesus' ministry here on earth. This year marks yet another year since Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection. And yet, Jesus has not returned as he promised he would. If we use 29 A.D. as the year when Jesus ascended back to heaven, then a whopping 1995 years have passed and still we have not witnessed the Second Coming.

But again, it is all a matter of perspective. For on the other hand, with the passing of another year, we are now one year closer to the time when Jesus will return, whenever that year may be. We are one year closer to the inbreaking of God's Kingdom in all its glory. We are one year closer to the New Creation. We are one year closer to the reign of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Thanks be to God.

But how do we get excited about a date and time like that of Christ's return, when we do not know when that great event will take place? It is like telling someone that we will be celebrating their birthday, but then we never give that person a date and time for the celebration. The person keeps asking, "When are we going to celebrate my birthday?" And we keep telling them, "We will celebrate for sure, I just don't have a date yet." And so, what happens? Over time we become unenthused, complacent, and disinterested, maybe even impatient and upset.

But it is all a matter of perspective. Because "Chronos" time and "Kairos" time are a bit different. "Chronos" time is the ticking off of seconds, minutes, days, months, and years. And this lapse of time without the Second Coming coming to fruition, can indeed make us agitated. But "Kairos" time is God's time, that is when God intersects with "Chronos" time. "Kairos" time is always going on, because Christ has entered into history, and the Spirit of Christ continues to live and breathe and move in the body of Christ, which is the Church. "Kairos" time is always going on, even while we wait for Jesus' Second Coming. In short, we, the Church, are that new perspective for the world, as we, the Church, reveal the presence of God in the world through the Gospel we proclaim. God continually comes to the world through the Church, even as we await the Second Coming of Christ.

So, I hope you have a blessed New Year. And even if another year has rolled around, God's time is at present empowering us to give witness to God's love to a world in need. Thanks be to God.

Happy New Year, *Pastor Joel Petruschke*

Lessons for January 2024

January 7 - Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5

Psalms 29

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

January 14 - Epiphany 2

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

January 21 - Epiphany 3

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalms 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

January 28 - Epiphany 4

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalms 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28



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.



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 21st, with a snow date of January 28th. 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 for 2023 to the office no later than **Friday, January 12th**. Submission via email is preferred. Thank you.

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 Sunday of each 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

What does “worship” mean to people today? For many people it means nothing. Many people have given up any and all affiliation with institutionalized religion. And so they don’t worship. But what does worship mean to you, you who are reading this article, you who come to worship at Our Saviour?

Now the word “worship” derives from the Old English, a combination of *weorth* (“worth”) and *scipe* (“ship”). “Ship” means a state, quality, or condition, as in *friendship*, *fellowship*, or *relationship*. Thus “worth-ship” (worship) expresses the quality or state or worth found in the object of one’s devotion. God - in His greatness, awesomeness, and wondrous acts—has a worth that deserves our devotion, respect, and adoration.

Another word closely associated with worship is the word “liturgy.” We think of the liturgy as the “order of service,” consisting of prayers, hymns, readings, communion, etc. But, the word “liturgy” comes from the Greek and means “the work of the people.” And so we might say that the work of the people is our expression of devotion, respect, and adoration toward God who is worthy.

Now, with this definition in mind, we can think of all the other things people worship. What are some of those other things people deem worthy of their devotion, respect and adoration? Football comes to mind. It has become something of a religious phenomenon in our culture. And what about the cell phone? We devote endless hours on our phones. We decorate our phones. And we panic if we misplace our phones. What are other things we worship? What are other things we “adore,” or “devote” our lives to?

What exactly happens in worship in church? Or what do we hope to happen in worship? I would sum up that answer with one word: change. If we come out of worship the same person we were when we entered, then something is amiss. Worship is meant to change us, not change God. Sometimes I think we pray, we worship, we devote ourselves to religion, thinking that we can change God and that we can make God work for us. But it is actually quite the opposite. Worship is meant to change us, make us more forgiving because we have been forgiven, make us more loving because God loved us, make us more merciful because God has shown mercy toward us, so on and so forth.

And so this is what worship means, as I see it. Worship means change. And it can be change for the worse, when, for instance, we worship the wrong things, those false gods that present themselves. But worship of the true God changes us for the better. Thanks be to God.

Manna Food Pantry

Our “2nd Sunday” food collection is still ongoing. During this time of continuous rising food & energy prices 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.



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

We have Children’s Sunday School on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month during the service. At each session the children complete a craft and enjoy a snack. **Classes for January will be held on January 7th & 21st!!** 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!



A Word on Stewardship

For this article on stewardship, I thought it most appropriate simply to share the following report, which will serve as a discussion point at the January congregational meeting (January 21, snow date January 28). This question of “part time pastoral services” is an important stewardship issue for the well-being of our congregation.

Progress report on Sept 17, 2023 Congregation motion

At the Congregational meeting on September 17, 2023, John Zimmerman had made a motion that Church Council perform an assessment between now and when we come back in January 2024 for our congregational meeting as to whether or not Our Saviour requires part time pastoral services. This motion was seconded by Hope Bowling.

First step Council took is to discuss the topic of a full-time/part-time pastor at the Finance Committee Meeting on October 19, 2023. Chair Jim Lubrecht informed us that if the congregation would have a half-time pastor, it would save the congregation \$54,900 per year, representing 50% of pastor’s total yearly compensation. FYI --- The compensation includes the following expenses: Parish Professional continued education, Pension, Disability, salary, housing, and social security.

Council President Anneke Fleming, Council Vice President Brad Neil, and Pastor Joel met with the Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Beth Martini, to discuss what a part-time call looks like. She said that there is a range of possibilities. It needs to be noted that a Pastor cannot be called to two different churches. The churches would have to be “yoked” (A **yoked pastor** is a pastor who serves two or more churches at the same time). For Our Saviour to yoke with another congregation to share a called pastor, would necessitate something of a process, which the Church’s Constitution outlines under *C9.05. a.3) *“inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions;”*. The easiest arrangement of a partnership is that of one church purchasing pastoral hours from another church, which is what St. Stephen and Our Saviour are doing right now. The congregation cannot simply decide to move to a part-time call, the Pastor and the congregation must be in mutual agreement. If the Pastor and congregation are not in mutual agreement, then the Church Constitution becomes a resource for further conversation, and the synod would likely get involved.

Pastor Joel has expressed that he is willing to entertain a part-time call at Our Saviour, but not without him securing another part-time call with another church. In other words, Our Saviour would need to partner with another congregation, so that Pastor Joel would receive compensation as a full-time pastor.

It is evident that at present Our Saviour’s ministry can be supported by a pastor serving on a part-time basis. The congregation has been doing this for the past nine months now and has been adjusting well. Looking at the stability of our church financially and in the future, should we look at the possibility of having a part time pastor? Our Saviour needs to ask what is the future focus of the church? What is the vision of the congregation? And does Our Saviour wish to be in a partnership arrangement with another congregation? And what kind of partnership is Our Saviour willing to entertain. Lots of things to consider!



Dear Padre,

Do you have a good book recommendation for the New Year?

Signed Bibliophile,

Dear Bibliophile,



I just finished a very good book by Eric Metaxas entitled *Martin Luther—The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World*. The book isn't exactly hot-off-the-presses. It was published in 2017. But it is a very readable and enjoyable account of Martin Luther's life and work.

Interestingly enough, the book's Introduction shares the story of an African American pastor from Georgia who made a trip in 1934 to the Holy Land. After this pilgrimage, this same man traveled to Berlin, in order to attend an international conference of Baptist pastors. And it was there, while in Germany, that this man became so impressed by what he learned about Martin Luther the Reformer, that this man changed his name. And he also changed the name of his five-year-old son as well. The man and his son were named Michael King, Sr. and Michael King, Jr., respectively. Now, they would be known as Martin Luther King, Sr., and Martin Luther King, Jr.

This is just one little tidbit of information from this outstanding book. The premise of this book is this: not only did Martin Luther the Reformer change the religious landscape, but he also ushered in the Modern World. Almost every aspect of Modern Life can trace its origins back to Martin Luther, so influential was this man.

So, if I could recommend one book for you to consider reading in the New Year, it would be this one. Thank you for this question.

Signed, *Padre*

Family Promise Host Week

Our Saviour, along with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, will be hosting Family Promise Sunday, evening, January 7 through Sunday morning, January 14, 2024.

Won't you **please** consider providing a meal, driving the van, or sleeping overnight at the Church? sheets are posted in the Narthex.



Other weeks in 2024 that we and Good Shepherd are scheduled to host Family Promise are as follows:

Week of April 7

Week of June 9

Week of November 3

This program can only exist with the help of our volunteers. Your volunteering does make a positive impact for these families!

If you have any questions about the mission of Family Promise or would like more information on volunteering opportunities through Family Promise, please feel free to talk to me.

Thank you.

Nadine Martin

(717) 497-1200 NadineLMartin@verizon.net

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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
Riscardo Vega, Jr.	1/21
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

	<p>1</p> <p>Happy New Year!</p> <p>office closed</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10 am - Bible Study @Our Saviour</p>	
<p>7 - Baptism of Our Lord</p> <p>9 am - Worship w/Children's Sunday School 1st Sunday Social</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Pastor Joel @St. Stephen</p> <p>6 pm - Welcome Committee council committee reports due in office</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6 pm - Altar Guild</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6 pm - Council</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>committee annual reports due in office</p>	<p>13</p>	
		Family		Promise	Host	Week	
<p>14 - Epiphany 2</p> <p>9 am - Worship</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Pastor Joel @St. Stephen</p> <p>office closed</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	
<p>21 - Epiphany 3</p> <p>9 am - Worship w/Children's Sunday School Annual Congregational Meeting newsletter deadline</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Pastor Joel @St. Stephen</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	
<p>28- Epiphany 4</p> <p>9 am - Worship snow date for Congregational Meeting</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Pastor Joel @St. Stephen</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:30 pm - Worship & Music via Zoom</p>				

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
9:00 am.

Please join us!
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.