

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

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SECRETARY HOURS:

Monday 7:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., Wednesday 7:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. (in-office hours from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.), Thursday 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.



THE MISSION OF NEW JERUSALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH:

*We are a group of people who
gather together in friendship and love
to worship God, to spread God's Word,
and to care for God's people.*



*Listen now for the gospel! Alleluia!
It is God's word that changes us! Alleluia!*

Dear Friends,

In the last weeks we have been singing the words above as our Gospel Acclamation. These words and the catchy tune are so appropriate as we gather to hear words from our Lord.

Gospel. That very word means *good news*. Sometimes the text we read during that special moment in our service is easy to understand and comforting. Other times it might be a challenging, difficult message to hear, or even something we wish Jesus hadn't said. But the text is what it is and because it is included in one of the books the church has labeled as "Good News," we need to listen carefully even as we wonder how God will change us through it.

Change. We often classify changes as good or bad. However, truth be told, all change brings loss, loss of the familiar if nothing else. Moving to a new house, even if desired and looked forward to, brings loss of what was familiar. Growing up, which most little ones look forward to, brings loss of some of the characteristics of the person we used to be. Perhaps, as we grow, we are less trusting, or more aware of the challenges of life. And, of course, the changes brought by death bring many experiences of great loss, even as we affirm the resurrection, as we affirm that God is continuing to care for our loved one in a realm where there is no more hunger, thirst, pain or tears. All change brings some kind of loss.

And yet, all change also brings opportunity, newness. Maybe we didn't seek that newness, maybe we don't like that newness, but there it is. Sometimes it is helpful to remember that, as a radio station puts it, "All music was once new." The things we were familiar and comfortable with were themselves once new. That church building we worship in, in 1917 it was brand spanking new and I'm sure back then some said, "I don't like it." "I miss. . . ." Then there were others who were thrilled that some things were different.

When I left New York to go to college in Indiana, it was tough to leave not only my family, but my friends and familiar places. Yet, going to college was exciting and I certainly grew a lot through that experience. I'm sure you've had similar experiences.

Jesus' disciples hated it when he told them he was going to Jerusalem and would die there. They tried to tell him it didn't have to be that way. They did everything in their power to stop him. But, without the crucifixion, we would not know that peace had been made between God and us, *and* we would not have had the resurrection. If Jesus had not ascended into heaven and sent the Spirit, the disciples probably would never have really picked up the responsibility to share the good news.

We, too, are not happy that our congregation as it currently exists is struggling and facing significant changes. We don't know what those changes will be, but we know they are happening and will continue. The challenge is for us to listen for Jesus' words and the Spirit's guidance and to discern the good news, even as we honor our past, grieve what has been precious and is no longer.

*Come Holy Spirit, root in us God's living word,
that we may show the faithfulness of Christ our Lord*

Discerning good news. One thing that stands out to me is that as we face and talk about our situation, other congregations in our area are becoming honest about what is happening in their midst. Together we are discovering that we are not alone *and* that what is happening is not necessarily our fault, that times have changed. Another piece of the good news for me is that our local congregations are seriously considering how we can work together and even trying out some things. An even bigger hint of good news for me is that we and others are becoming more deliberate in talking about, "what is God really asking of us?" "What does it mean to be church? What makes us different from any other social organization, even social organizations that try to help others?" Later in this newsletter we'll share some of what has been happening between our congregations.

The heart of the good news of Jesus Christ is, of course, that God loves us and chooses to dwell with and in us.

So, listen. Listen and look for good news, even if it is just a whisper of hope or a fleeting glimpse. Listen and don't keep it to yourself. Tell others when you have a sighting or hear a note.

And may the God who blesses us with newness of life, assure you of God's love and presence even as we travel into the unknown.

*Listen now for the gospel! Alleluia!
It is God's word that changes us! Alleluia!*

Pastor Ruth

NEWS & EVENTS

at New Jerusalem and in the community

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

As part of continuing work to discern our future:

- Council members reflected on our joint meeting with the council of St. Paul's, Mertztown, on June 7.
- A survey of church and cemetery property will be done the end of June.
- Local Lutheran pastors will continue to meet to discuss possible ways to support Trinity, Topton, after Pastor Scott Lingenfelter ends his ministry there in August. They are also looking at possible ways to share care for the six congregations in our immediate area (Christ Mertz, Hope, Trinity, St. Paul's, Mertztown, Grace, and New Jerusalem).
- Members of New Jerusalem will work on sorting through our records and developing a timeline of significant events in the life of our congregation.
- On August 6 our congregation will join in worship and a picnic with other area churches. Location: Bowers Park. Time: 10:30 a.m. New Jerusalem will be contributing salads for the picnic.
- Members of the councils of all 6 Lutheran churches in our area will meet for Communion on the Parking Lot on Saturday, August 12, at 5:00 p.m. and then share a picnic and conversation. All members of New Jerusalem are invited to take part.

Our next council meeting will be held on **Monday, July 10 at 7:00 p.m.**

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study is on summer hiatus. We will see you in the fall.

COLORING GROUP

The Coloring Group will be meeting on **Thursday, July 6, at 10:00 a.m.** Everyone is welcome.

PULPIT EXCHANGE

On **Sunday, July 9**, Pastor Ruth and Pastor Scott Lingenfelter will be exchanging pulpits. This means Pastor Ruth will be leading worship and preaching at Trinity, Topton, at 9:00 a.m. and Pastor Scott will be leading worship and preaching at New Jerusalem at our usual time, 10:00 a.m.

COMMUNION ON THE PARKING LOT

Join us on **Saturday, July 8, at 5:00 p.m.** Mark your calendars for other dates that have been scheduled: August 12, September 9, and October 14.

JAMES MEN'S MINISTRY (JMM)

Breakfast gatherings start at 8:00 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month. Their next meeting will be held **Saturday, July 15**, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Topton.

HELPING HARVEST/TOPTON MOBILE MARKET

The Helping Harvest food distribution will take place on **Tuesday, July 18, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Brandywine Heights MS/IS.

AUGUST 2023 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the August newsletter is **Sunday, July 23rd.**

MUSIC FESTIVAL WITH THE MAJESTICS

Mark **Saturday, July 29, from 4:00-8:00 p.m.** on your calendar for an evening of fun and toe tapping, hand clapping music with "The Majestics Band" at Bower's Park. The band will play from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Other congregations will be assisting us with setup and food.

COMMUNITY WORSHIP IN THE PARK

On **Sunday, August 6, at 10:30 a.m.** we will be joining along with folks from 8 area churches for worship and a picnic in Bowers Park. Bring a friend and a lawn chair. In case of rain, the event will be held at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville. We will not be worshipping in our church building on this particular Sunday.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Community Festival featuring The Majestics Band**, Saturday, July 29, from 4:00-8:00 p.m., at Bowers Park
- **Youth Volleyball Tournament**, St. Paul's Mertztown, Saturday, August 5, at 1:00 p.m.
- **Community Outdoor Worship at Bowers Park**, Sunday, August 6, 2023, at 10:30 a.m.



VBS at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville

July 17 through July 21 from 9:00-11:30 a.m.

The theme will be “Stellar – Shine Jesus’ Light.”

Help is needed to guide center work (arts and crafts, music, storytelling, snack pre, attendance, supplies, etc.) Below is a link to a preview video.

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/718884634?h=9b29d896e&byline=false&portrait=false&&title=false>

If you would like to assist in any area, please contact Carla Flemming at carla.flemming64@gmail.com.

VBS at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Mertztown

July 24 through July 28 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. The theme is “God’s Living Water.” If you are able to help out with VBS, please let Pastor Jeremiah Sassaman or Kimberly Meitzler know at 610.682.6229.

Thank you

Members of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church, All of the volunteer firefighters here at Lyons Fire Company #1 want to extend a sincere thank you for sharing your proceeds from your recent soup and sandwich sale. We appreciate all your kindness and support shown to our first responders.

A little side note: The food and baked goods were delicious, especially the potato soup and rhubarb pie! Thanks again! – Sincerely, *Jerry Keller*, Assistant Fire Chief



Turn around and believe that the good news that we are loved is better than we ever dared hope, and that to believe in that good news, to live out of it and toward it, to be in love with that good news, is of all glad things in this world the gladdest thing of all. Amen, and come Lord Jesus.

—Frederick Buechner, *The Clown in the Belfry*

COMPASSIONATE CRAFTERS PARTNERS WITH NEW JERUSALEM TO MAKE QUILTS

New Jerusalem has been blessed with an overabundance of material for making quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Recently members of The Compassionate Crafters who meet at Trinity, Topton decided they would also like to make some. In early June they picked up some of our material (don’t worry, we have lots left) as well as some of the quilts we have not been able to finish. Soon even more quilts will be sent from our area to the many people throughout the world in need of warmth, shelter and comfort. We’re really thankful to have partners in this work.

BRANDYWINE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Donated items most needed right now:

Breakfast: pancake mix, cereal

Lunch/Dinner: beef stew, Hamburger Helper, canned meat (tune and/or chicken breast), Ramen noodles, pasta sides, rice (instant), spaghetti sauce (with meat or traditional), soup (all kinds)

Baking/Cooking Products: cooking oil, flour, sugar

Snacks: chips, cookies, crackers, pretzels, pudding,

Drinks: coffee, fruit juice (all kinds)

Condiments: ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard

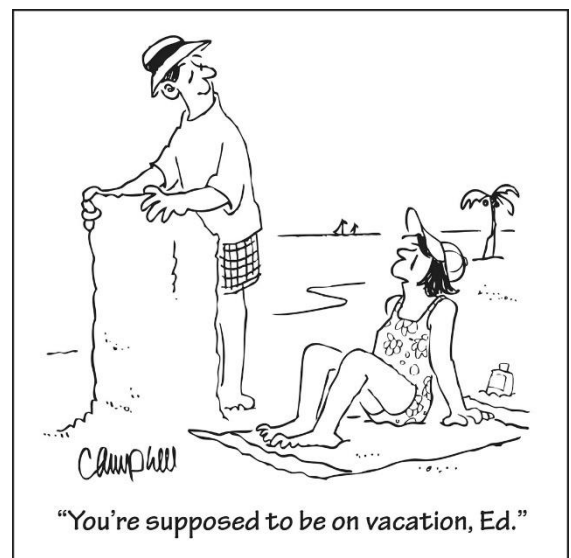
Miscellaneous: peanut butter, evaporated milk

Personal Hygiene Products: shampoo

Household Items: dish soap, laundry detergent

Paper Products: paper towels, tissues, toilet tissue

NOTE: Please check the expiration dates on donated food products.



USING THE PAST TO CREATE STEPPING-STONES INTO THE FUTURE: A REPORT ON SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2023

From June 1 to 3 the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod met for its annual assembly at Kalahari Resort in the Poconos. Our thanks to Carole Herbert and Sherrie Carl for being our representatives.

The theme of the assembly was *Going Beyond*, short for “Going Beyond Death to Life,” one of the three themes we as a synod have been exploring since 2021. (The other two are: “Growing Young” and “Gaining Strength.”) Since the assembly those of us from New Jerusalem, Hope, Bowers, Christ Mertz and Trinity, Topton, are engaging in conversations to process what we heard and experienced and to listen and imagine what we think God is saying to us, what God is calling us to.

One of the first observations those who attended had about the assembly is that from the very start we were presented with reality. Most specifically:

- congregations have fewer members and fewer resources;
- there are not enough available pastors to fill vacancies;
- neither of these are likely to change in the foreseeable future;
- and, we are not alone in this experience

At first this might have seemed like quite the downer for the start of an assembly. However, naming the reality at the beginning of the assembly meant that for the rest of our time together we could focus on dealing with that reality. (That’s a lot like the way finally getting a diagnosis of what is troubling us health-wise can help us see our way forward.) No magic pills, no sure-fire solutions were offered. Nor, we were reminded, is pronouncing “the” solution the job of the synod staff, since each situation is different and God works through the community of believers to bring in the future. Instead, we were encouraged to face the realities, acknowledge and learn how to grieve the losses in ways that could help us move through them, and together listen for and imagine the future to which God is calling us.

The keynote speaker for the assembly was Michael Girlinghouse, outgoing Bishop of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (aka the A-OK synod, if you get the play on words). Those of us who attended noted his message was definitely right on target for this assembly. You see, Bishop Girlinghouse has spent decades studying how people grieve losses and, in particular, how congregations do so and what ways

of grieving can help congregations move beyond what looks like death to discerning and answering God’s call for their immediate future. The very title of Bishop Girlinghouse’s book, *Embracing God’s Future without Forgetting the Past* is a great summary of what he presented. The subtitle is *A Conversation about Loss, Grief and Nostalgia in Congregational Life*. (The book is available from Fortress Press or Amazon.)

Embracing God’s Future. This is what is most important: we need to remember that it is *God’s* future. The love God has for us does not change, yet the God we worship is always doing new things. As Christians we are not about “survival” in the sense of keeping all the things we cherish about the present and the past. Clutching *all* those things and constantly looking backwards and lamenting what has been lost prevents us from moving forward. At the same time, and Girlinghouse was very clear about this, we need to acknowledge and even honor the past: the good, the bad and the in between. We need to name and feel the losses as well as the learnings. Only then will we be able to glimpse how God has worked through us and begin to hear how God is calling us into the future. Naming what was, the losses, and the learnings will help us identify strengths and resources which will provide the stepping-stones into the future. Clear understanding of the past is key to letting go and using both good and bad from it to move forward.

Those present at our local discussion on June 12 spoke about discovering the history of their congregations and how that could help their congregations. One of the ways recommended by Bishop Girlinghouse is getting newsprint on which we plot three timelines, one under the other, for 1) the history of the congregation, 2) losses experienced and learnings, and 3) what was happening in the community, the nation and the world. It is important that those associated with a congregation do this together because each person has a lot to add and each was and is affected differently. What was an easy change for one may well have affected another quite profoundly.

Another significant suggestion at the assembly, something simply thrown out to *consider* as a *possible* step into the future, was titled: 6-2-6-1. Fleshed out this could look like 6 congregations being served by 2 full-time pastors, 6 lay support staff and 1 deacon. Again, this was offered as something to *consider*, something to spark the imagination of various congregations on how to move together into

God's future. In our local post-assembly discussions we observed that in many ways the Lutheran churches in our community are already discussing how we can serve the 6 Lutheran congregations in the Brandywine Heights area with fewer pastors while treasuring the identities, social connections, strengths and resources of these congregations.

There were lots of other great thought-provoking presentations during the assembly which we will highlight in future newsletters, but you don't have to wait. You can view recordings of the session on www.nepasynod.org if you click on *synod assembly*. Carole, Sherrie and I have shared some of our observations during worship and are happy to have further conversations with you. Just ask.

*Rise, remember well the future
God has called us to receive;
present by God's loving nurture,
Spirit filled then let us live.
Alleluia, alleluia;
Christ, our present, past and goal.*

-Susan Palo Cherwien,
"Rise, O Church like Christ Arise"

Pastor Ruth

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE FIRST ARTICLE in the Synod News this month. It features Seafarers International House (SIH). SIH is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. This is the organization for which we gather hats, cowls and other items that are shared through the SIH project called *Christmas at Sea*.

FOR WHAT SHALL WE PRAY

Recently I started handing out small pieces of paper at the beginning of worship and asking those present to put down something for which they would like to pray. I asked that during our time for the prayers of intercession, people lift these concerns. Then, while coming up for communion or immediately after the service these concerns were hung on a large cross in front of the nave to which nails had been attached.

Many individual names were listed. Many are already on our prayer concerns list, but they were especially on the hearts of someone present in worship on a particular Sunday. There were other names which I will not list here due to wanting to respect confidentiality. (Remember, when we put someone on our prayer concerns published list, we either need to ask them first if that is okay or list in an anonymous way such as initials.)

Here are the other concerns listed from mid-May through the beginning of June:

**OUR CONGREGATION
and cemetery board
Discerning our future
Where we are headed**

PEACE

**World peace
Peace in our hearts
Ukraine – war with Russia
prevent this from happening again
Mass shootings
That future children can live in a peaceful and loving world
Kindness to everyone and peace, love and thankfulness to all
No violence
No shootings**

OUR COUNTRY

**Our current government
Health of our country
Division and Christian Nationalism are a real threat**

FINANCIAL

**Stock Market
Retirement
Having enough money to survive
Inflation**

OTHER

**Rain
Concerns with COVID be put to rest
Worries about the unknown
Concerns for future generations
Diabetes
Getting older and needing help
Not being able to do my own things
For our whole earth of creation
Protect our family
To make the right call
Good decision making**

THANKS

**Family
Creation
Good parents and spouse
Having lots of children**

I will be continuing to encourage people to write down their prayer concerns each Sunday and hang them on the cross, then collect and note them every so often. Please join me in including these concerns in your prayers as well.

Pastor Ruth



I apologize for missing these celebrations in the June newsletter. The birthdays/anniversaries listed in the June newsletter were from April. – *Korinne Hotzman*

Special belated wishes to these members:



- 1 Brenda Greis
- 2 Abigail Keller
- 2 Kristi Rahn
- 2 Todd Wagaman
- 9 Glenn Allen
- 11 Grace Miller
- 15 Julian Tich
- 16 Bradley Musser
- 18 Charli Rissmiller
- 18 Brenda Wagaman
- 19 Diane Keller
- 20 Jason Keller
- 24 Betty Eshbach
- 26 Amanda Cleaver
- 30 Nathan Keller



- 3 Glenn and Holly Allen (34 years)
- 14 Steve and Lydia Seip
- 26 Ted and Betty Eshbach (29 years)
- 26 Jason and Regina Kohl (19 years)
- 27 Elwood and Katie Ellen Cleaver (59 years)
- 27 Larry and Faye Dey (59 years)
- 29 Lloyd and Linda Moyer (55 years)

"Truly it seems that we are never so alive as when we concern ourselves with other people."

—Harry Chapin



- 1 Kathy Bailey
- 1 Randy Bennecoff
- 7 Carson Seip
- 8 Logan Seip
- 12 Kenneth Keck
- 14 Phillip Litschke
- 18 Daniel Bailey
- 18 Richard Bausher
- 22 Rodney Keller
- 23 Dale Schwoyer
- 26 Brian Hess
- 29 Madison Musser



- 15 Daniel and Sheila Gehman (17 years)

A PRAYER FOR THE FOURTH

Loving God, we thank you – the true Father of our country – for the blessings of this land and the gifts of cultures around the world. Prompt us to strive for justice for all, at home and abroad. Remind us, in the words of the hymn, that “this is our Father's world” and that your goodness prevails. Amid tragedies and conflicts, guard us against despair. Help us focus on the kindness evident daily: from generous neighbors to conscientious public servants (because most are). On Independence Day and every day, “O let [us] ne’er forget that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the Ruler yet.” Amen.

—Sandy Hyland



July

WORSHIP SPONSORS & ASSISTANTS

Altar Flower Sponsors:

July 2 – *sponsor needed*
July 9 – The Bailey family
July 16 – Dale Schwoyer
July 23 – Dale Schwoyer
July 30 – *sponsor needed*

Bulletin Sponsors:

July 2 – Elaine Seip
July 9 – *sponsor needed*
July 16 – *sponsor needed*
July 23 – *sponsor needed*
July 30 – *sponsor needed*

Sanctuary Candle Sponsor:

sponsor needed

Altar Guild Volunteer(s):

volunteer needed

Communion Bread Sponsor:

July 2 – Gladys Kline

Communion Set-up Volunteer:

July 2 – Gladys Kline

Readers:

July 2 – Kathy Bailey
July 9 – Cindy Rissmiller
July 16 – Dale Schwoyer
July 23 – Ty Rissmiller
July 30 – Sara Jane Beshore

Councilperson(s) for the Month:

Cindy Rissmiller

“Sometimes when you're in a dark place you think you've been buried, but you've actually been planted. Bloom!”

—Christine Caine

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

PRAYERS FOR AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE for Those with Limited Mobility or in Care Facilities: Anna Angstadt, Myles Angstadt, Erma Guinther, Shirley Hertzog, Irene Noll, and Gabriele Sanders.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT Members: Holly Allen, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Brian Keller, Diane Keller, Forrest Merkel, Grace Miller, Linda Moyer, Lloyd Moyer, and Horace Rothermel.

Friends of the congregation: Charlie Ackerman, John Arndt, Brad Auge, Steve Beck, Jason Beshore, Darlene Bogert, Earl Derr, John Drumheller, Jennifer Engle, Alice Epler, Karen Gossert, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Debra Kenny, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Cayden Kresge, Catherine Lenio, Julia Lombardo, Joe M., Vivian Reist, Arlan Schwoyer, Patricia Sigfried, Cleon and Jean Smith, Shawn Spatz, Michael Stevens, Robert Taylor, Leon Wagner, Tim Walck, Waylon Warmkessel, Leticia Weaver, Richard Weller, Althea Young, Becky, Dawn, Jason, Kim, Lynn, Pat, Sam, and Tim.

OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS: We pray for: peace in the world, and particularly in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; all seeking to respond responsibly to COVID-19, especially healthcare workers; those recovering from and responding to disasters, especially those in Puerto Rico; migrants and refugees; for our nation, including our president, congress, judicial system, and leaders of our communities; an end to the many ways prejudice and racism maintain inequality between people and injustice; an end to threats between nations; peace in the world; our military personnel serving around the world.

LONG-TERM PRAYER LIST: Carrie Bausch, Nancy Bennecoff, Gary DeWees, Katie Didyoung, Don Gajewski, Erma Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, Amanda Herman, Johnson-Agiri Family, Mary Kring, Leilani Rodriguez, Andrew S., Tierney Schmeer, Donna Schwoyer, Lesley Wegman, and Linda Wegman.

“Instead of living in the shadows of yesterday, walk in the light of today and the hope of tomorrow.”



Sprinkle and split

A sprinkle of pepper and a dab of soap illustrate a big concept from God's Word.



What you need:

- Shallow dish
- Water
- Black ground pepper
- Toothpick
- Dish soap
- Bible

What you do:

1. With the dish on a table, fill it halfway with water. Don't jiggle the dish.
2. Sprinkle pepper on the water.
3. Dab the toothpick into a drop of soap. Then touch its tip to the center of the water and observe.
4. Read Psalm 103:8-12.
How does this experiment illustrate God's forgiveness?
5. Explain the science behind this experiment: The soap disturbs the water's surface tension. The soap molecules don't want to interact with the water. This repels the water molecules from the soap, causing the floating pepper to also move to the sides.

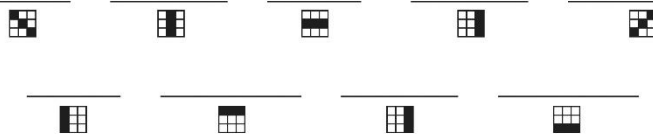


SEPARATION FROM SIN

David praises God for his love and compassion.
What does God do for people who fear him?

Directions: Using each grid pattern marked below, find the word that appears in all three of those squares. Write the words in the spaces below to complete Psalm 103:12, NIV.

FROM as is can	NORTH from far	at the EAST FROM
is South AS	as do far EAST	the THIS up as
WEST THAT is East	far down WEST	THE be AS West



... so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

PSALM 103:12, NIV

Answer: As far as the east is from the west



COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 29, 2023

4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Featuring Music by
The Majestics Band
from 5:00-8:00 p.m.**

- FOOD
- DRINKS
- LIVE MUSIC

**Wm. DeLong Memorial Park
(Bower's Park)**

233 Bowers Road, Bowers, PA 19511

Sponsored by community churches

All proceeds benefit the Brandywine Food Pantry



NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

SYNOD NEWS



OF NORTHERN STITCHES, CONTAINER SHIPS, PORT CHAPLAINS AND SEAFARERS: A JOURNEY OF HOPE THRU SIH

BY PASTOR SUSAN TJORNEHOJ, SIH BOARD MEMBER AND SUSTAINER, CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH, BEMIDJI, MN

It is a Thursday morning at Calvary Lutheran Church in Bemidji, MN. Canada is just 107 miles away. The winter morning is brisk, 7 degrees, with a stiff breeze out of the north. This means it feels like way too many degrees below zero. For the 8 to 10 women who are here, cold temps, icy winds, even blowing snow can't keep them home. The call to serve others through the art and craft of quilting is too compelling. Colors surround them, blues and greens, browns and oranges, reds, yellows, floral and stripe, squares and scraps, piecing together discarded fabric into warmth which becomes shawls and tents, blankets, a wedding dress, maybe even a death wrap for those fleeing war or the ravages of climate change. But here in the north, it is simply the joy of community and service.

Today I imagine the journey the quilts will take, from the cold north to a warehouse, into a container bound for a need somewhere in the world. Ukraine or Lebanon? Mali or Burkina Faso? I imagine them loaded onto a train or truck on its way to a port, part of the *Seafarers International House (SIH)* network. Baltimore? Newark? *Seafarers International House (SIH)*, the ELCA seafarers' ministry, has been that intersection where quilters from Bemidji, connect to a port chaplain, a seafarer, a dock worker loading up a container ship bound for somewhere across the Atlantic, through the Panama Canal, to places known and unknown.



For 150 years, hospitality and the welcome of strangers, support for seafarers and newcomers and refugees and immigrants, asylum seekers, this ministry has been a tapestry, a quilt, a piecing together of connection, support and a wayside rest. Perhaps some of the ancestors of these quilting women were assisted by SIH as they disembarked at Battery Park or Ellis Island, bound for a new home in a new land.

This is what interests me on a cold Thursday morning, how the stitches of these women, intersect with a dock worker, a seafarer, a port chaplain, an asylum seeker. This is why I continue to financially support this ministry and serve on its board with great joy, imagining and underwriting the hope, the intersections of strangers around the globe, all uniquely made possible through SIH. 🛖



The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod met in assembly from June 1-3, 2023 at Kalahari Resort in the Poconos. We gathered around Word and Sacrament, Song, Service, friendship, and food. We prayed together, worshipped together, and conducted the business of Christ's church for the first time, in-person, in three years!

In our time together we adopted changes to our constitution from the ELCA, elected a new Secretary, Rev. Ken Melber Jr, elected a new Vice President, Nancy Reichelt, and we adopted three new resolutions concerning money management in congregations, chaplaincy at Diakon home, and land acknowledgment concerning first peoples'. These can be found on the Synod website at www.godslove.org/assembly23



JULY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 <u>Fifth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 10:00am-Worship with Holy Communion -Fellowship	3 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	4  OFFICE CLOSED	5 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	6	7 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	8 5:00pm-Communion on the Parking Lot
9 <u>Sixth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 10:00am-Worship -Pulpit Exchange with Trinity (Pastor Scott Lingenfelter will preach at New Jerusalem)	10 9:30am-Worship & Music Committee Meeting 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Council Mtg.	11	12 12:00pm-Meeting with other churches to discuss Synod Assembly 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	13 9:30-11:00am-Compassionate Crafters, Trinity Lutheran, Topton	14 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	15 8:00am-James Men's Ministry Breakfast, Trinity Lutheran, Topton
16 <u>Seventh Sunday after Pentecost</u> 10:00am-Worship -Fellowship	17 9:00-11:30am-VBS at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	18 9:00-11:30am-VBS at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville 11:00am-1:00pm-Helping Harvest Food Distribution at Brandywine Heights Intermediate/Middle School	19 9:00-11:30am-VBS at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville 12:00pm-Fellowship Luncheon (location TBD) 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	20 9:00-11:30am-VBS at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville	21 9:00-11:30am-VBS at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	22
23 <u>Eighth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 10:00am-Worship NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	24 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 6:00-8:00pm-VBS at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown	25 6:00-8:00pm-VBS at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown	26 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 6:00-8:00pm-VBS at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown	27 6:00-8:00pm-VBS at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown	28 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 6:00-8:00pm-VBS at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	29 4:00-8:00pm-Community Festival at Bowers Park – The Majestics
30 <u>Ninth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 10:00am-Worship -Fellowship	31 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.					