

## THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

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Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.



In all things  
*God*  
works for the  
*good*  
of those who  
love him.

Romans 8:28

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.*



Dear friends,

What if.

These days our lives are full of "what if's."

Of course, they always have been. Farmers have always wondered, "What if." "What if we have a heavy frost when the fruit trees or new plants have just started to blossom?" "What if it doesn't rain enough, or too much, or the rain comes at the wrong times?" "What if. . ." The rest of us have plenty of our own "what if's."

This year, however, there are so many more, so many more concerns raised because of the new, aggressive virus that threatens our lives and our livelihoods. The most obvious one is, "What if I or my loved ones get sick?"

School administrators trying to plan how to educate our children, are asking, "What if the infection rate is radically different from what we are planning for?" "What if teachers decide it is too dangerous to be in a classroom?" "What if the majority of parents, but not all, decide to keep their children at home?" "What if we don't get enough funds to carry out the new safety guidelines?" "What if the governor or local officials decide to totally shut the schools?" Of course, business owners and employees are asking similar questions. The truth is, we just don't know for sure what will happen, and therefore have trouble planning how to respond. Searching for a stable plan that covers all the possible scenarios, increases the stress of the situation. It can drive us crazy.

"What if's" can, however, also be useful. They push us to recognize that life isn't always predictable, that we are not in total control, that we need to look for options, learn to be flexible and work together as community. They can also encourage us to examine our relationship with God. They push us to hear again, that God is in control and that God wills, will, and is even now bringing about good, good for everyone.

The lessons we have been reading lately, and will hear later this summer, remind us that God is a God of abundance and abounding in generous, steadfast love. God is the farmer who sows the seed broadly, even though some will land on the rocks. Jesus is the one who feeds so many—5,000 not even counting women and children—who feeds so many with what appears to be so little: 5 rolls and 2 small fish. Jesus is the one who stills the storm, whom even the wind and the waves obey. And, Jesus assures us, these are not just stories about God's presence and action in the past. Life as God wants it to be, life as God *always* wanted it to be, is so close that we are experiencing it already, though not in its fullness. Take time to read Matthew 13 and 14.

As we read and hear God's word in the coming weeks, let us also hear the underlying theme stated so beautifully and confidently by Paul: "In all things God works for the good of those who love him. . . If God is for us, who [or what] can be against us? . . . For I am convinced that neither death nor life, . . . neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, . . . [not even a pandemic], . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." (Romans 8:28, 31b, 37-39, NIV)

In this time of great uncertainty, may all your "what if's" help you to not only be more flexible, but also draw you closer to God, who comes to God's people, who comes to us, who comes to you, when we are in trouble and sustains us in our fears and doubts.

God's peace be with you.

*Pastor Ruth*

# NEWS & EVENTS

## in New Jerusalem and the Synod

### COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were discussed and decisions made at our council meeting on July 13th:

- Communion on the Lot will continue on Saturday, August 1 and 22 at 7:00 p.m. Rain dates will be on the respective Sundays.
- Pastor and Worship & Music Committee are looking into getting a loudspeaker so members can sit on lawn chairs outside of their cars for the Saturday evening communion services.
- Vacation Bible School is being held at New Jerusalem. It started on July 22 and will continue on dates chosen by those attending. This VBS is also being offered online for those who do not feel comfortable attending in person.
- A coloring group is being formed and will meet once a month.
- Council decided against holding the Fall Festival in September.

**BIBLE STUDY** continues meeting weekly via Zoom. We are discussing the book of Acts, which tells of the story of the early church. If you would like to join us, call or email Pastor Ruth and she can send you the link.

**CONFIRMATION CLASS** has resumed as well and meets weekly.

**THREADS FOR OTHERS** – Stay tuned. If you need material to make masks or yarn for cowls and hats for seafarers, let Pastor Ruth know. Supplies are available at church.

### SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the September 2020 newsletter is **Sunday, August 23**. Please have all articles and announcements to the church office by this date.

### WORSHIP VIA ZOOM CONTINUES THROUGH THE MONTH OF AUGUST

We are continuing worship via Zoom each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Information on how to connect via internet, phone, and other methods is available. We know this isn't a perfect way to worship and that not everyone is able to join in this way, but it

seems to be the best alternative we can offer at this time.

If you haven't been able to join us for our Zoom worship services on Sunday mornings, you can watch the services on our Facebook page or on our website <https://newjerusalemlutheran.weebly.com> under the "Worship Resources" tab.

If you would like to receive a bulletin via mail or email, please let us know at 610.682.6064 or [njelchurch@windstream.net](mailto:njelchurch@windstream.net).

Bulletins are also available on our website: <http://NewJerusalemLutheran.weebly.com>.

### COMMUNION ON THE PARKING LOT

On Saturday evening, **August 1**, at **7:00 p.m.** and again on **August 22**, same time, we will celebrate communion on the parking lot. **On August 22**, we will also observe **Blessing of the Backpacks** and **Harvest Home**. In case of rain on either of these dates, the service will be held on Sunday evening.

These short services (about ½ hour) allow us to not only share the meal our Lord gave us, but also to see and visit with one another. As the days grow shorter and the sun is setting earlier, we are finding that heat is not so much of a problem at the designated time.

The Chanters have graciously donated two loudspeakers to us and are helping us with set-up. In addition, we also have the capability of broadcasting into car radios. So, whether you feel safer in your car, or want to wear a mask and bring a lawn chair, we hope you will join us in these celebrations of God's love.

**SEND US YOUR FAVORITE HYMNS** and Worship and Music will continue to incorporate them into worship services.

### PASTOR RUTH TO TAKE FLEX TIME AUGUST 3-13

Pastor Ruth will be taking some time for renewal starting August 3. Pastor Althea Albright will be available for pastoral care. You can reach her at 484.345.0399.

A number of people have asked to be friends with me on Facebook. While I welcome their friendship, I've been basically reserving my Facebook account for family members. So please don't be offended if I have not responded to your request. Thanks for understanding. – *Pastor Ruth*

### **DO YOU LIKE TO COLOR?**

Whether you color inside or outside the lines, you are invited to join a new friendship group we are forming. Starting **Monday, August 3, at 10:00 a.m.** a group will be meeting downstairs at church to color Bible-themed pages while visiting with one another. Pages will be provided. Feel free to bring your own supplies, though colored pencils and markers will also be provided. There is plenty of room to maintain a safe distance from one another. Participants are asked to wear masks. Friends are welcome.



If you are interested, let Phyllis Fenstermacher (610.682.2423) or Diane Keller (610-682-4152) know. Not able to get to church or don't feel comfortable getting together there? Just let them know and pages will be sent to you and you can visit with other members by phone.

### **AUGUST WORSHIP SPONSORS**

In the last newsletter, some members misunderstood information about the cost of the bulletins. We apologize for this confusion. The cost to sponsor bulletins for a week is still \$7.00 and sponsorship of the Sanctuary Candle is \$15 for a month. However, since we are not worshipping in the church building, bulletins are being mailed/ emailed to members. The cost to mail the bulletins to members each week costs \$45.00. Any contributions to help offset this cost are appreciated.

#### **Bulletin Sponsors for August:**

August 2 – Larry and Faye Dey  
August 9 – *sponsor needed*  
August 16 – *sponsor needed*  
August 23 – *sponsor needed*  
August 30 – *sponsor needed*

**Sanctuary Candle Sponsor for August:** Gladys Kline

### **PASTORAL CARE DURING THE CURRENT SITUATION**

Pastor Ruth is available via phone and electronic means to provide care to anyone in our congregation or seeking care from us. Currently, she is monitoring whether she is allowed to enter hospitals, but is not entering nursing facilities. Please continue to let her know when someone enters the hospital or when anyone is experiencing a change in health or situation.

### **OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE AT BOWERS PARK**

It's back! On **Sunday, August 9, at 10:30 a.m.**, New Jerusalem will join with other area churches for Outdoor Worship in the Park. Holy Communion will be celebrated using prepackaged elements. This will take the place of our regular worship at New Jerusalem for that particular Sunday. If there is inclement weather, the service will be cancelled.

Please bring along lawn chairs to sit in the grass and maintain physical distancing of 6 feet from one another. All are asked to wear masks, unless exempt for medical reasons. You are welcome to bring along food and stay after the service to enjoy your lunch. Drinks will be provided.



Come enjoy God's great outdoors and praise the Lord with other members of God's family.

### **OUR THANKS TO THE TASK FORCE WORKING ON FAITHFUL USE OF OUR PROPERTY DURING THIS PANDEMIC**

Members include Ty and Cindy Rissmiller, Kathy and Dan Bailey, Gladys Kline, Faye Dey, Sara Jane Beshore, Diane Keller, Cheryl Wilttrout, Korinne Hotzman, and Pastor Ruth. The task force acts in an advisory capacity for Congregation Council.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Hello friends! Would you help a neighbor in need? Consider volunteering for SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice. Make friendly visits or supportive phone calls to our hospice clients. Still serving our clients for over 20 years in Berks, Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties. For more information, please call Cathy Sweeney, Volunteer Coordinator at 570-599-5390.



Have you already completed the 2020 Census? This is just a friendly reminder that if you haven't, there is still time. EVERYONE COUNTS!

## SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council has decided to hold Synod Assembly electronically in October. (It was originally set for this past June.) Members and a Task Force Team have determined this is the best way since it is not possible to find an accommodation that could accommodate 300 delegates safely. They are working hard to make this as smooth an experience as possible. Since the major agenda is election of a new Bishop, the council has determined the assembly cannot be put off until next year.

Since the assembly will be held electronically, it is now being spread over parts of 4 days: Friday evening, October 16, and Sunday afternoon, October 18, Friday evening, October 23, and Saturday morning and afternoon, October 24. More information will be coming.

Please keep the planning team in your prayers as they continue their challenging work.

## INFORMATION GATHERING TEAM SURVEY RESULTS NOW AVAILABLE

Although not ideal, but still practical in a time of COVID-19, the Information Gathering Team supporting the election of the next NEPA Synod Bishop has recorded a presentation explaining the results of the in-person and online survey completed in February 2020. The team wanted to make results available. Two key links:

- The YouTube recording of the presentation, which lasts 54-1/2 minutes can be watched by clicking this link: <https://youtu.be/3fRyZZHKZvl>
- The presentation slides, which include clickable links to “deliverables” and “supporting materials” the team has prepared for viewers, click here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o0ah\\_K4\\_AsE0Slr\\_puYQ9lj9DJDRzO-iw/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o0ah_K4_AsE0Slr_puYQ9lj9DJDRzO-iw/view?usp=sharing)

You are welcome to direct questions or suggestions to any member of the team; the chair of the team, George Freestone, is readily available at [freestga@me.com](mailto:freestga@me.com) to help address any requested follow-up.

The team will also consider options for future “interactive” sessions to further review and discuss these results and use them to develop preliminary questions for candidates for the role of Bishop for the NEPA Synod. Thank you for reflecting on the

content of this presentation and the associated documents.

## UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY ANNOUNCE A NEW PRESIDENT

As of August 1<sup>st</sup>, Bishop R. Guy Erwin will become the next President of United Lutheran Seminary. (This seminary was formed from former Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and Lutheran Theological Seminary located in Gettysburg.) Bishop Erwin was elected in 2013 to a six-year term as bishop of the Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). A member of the Osage Nation, Erwin is the first native American bishop elected to office in the ELCA.

In addition, the seminary announced:

- there are 60 new students enrolled for the Fall Semester, including three pastors from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Holy Land who will begin work on their Doctor of Ministry degrees; and
- every student in any degree program received full tuition due to endowments and contributions from congregations. (This allows graduates to enter ministry without student debt.)

Please keep our seminaries and our students in your prayers.

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## LEARNING—AND LAUGHING—ON THE FLY

Faced with the sudden move to livestreamed church services, many pastors and worship leaders had to learn new technology quickly during the pandemic. As they were “winging it,” bloopers and bobbles added levity to the tense time.

For instance, a fake tree fell on a drummer while a worship song was being broadcast from Georgia. After getting too close to a candle, a vicar in England had to pause to extinguish flames from his sweater. And several preachers appeared on screen with cartoon-like features after inadvertently turning on social media filters.

“This wasn’t planned,” wrote the pastor about the falling ficus, which didn’t cause injury but quickly went viral. “But God used it to bring laughter to the hearts of many. For that, we are thankful.”

*In the July 21<sup>st</sup> Morning Call, Laurie Gostley Hacckett noted: You can tell a lot about a person by the way they handle a box filled with tangled strings of holiday lights. And on a much grander scale, you can tell a lot about a community by the way our most vulnerable friends and neighbors are served and supported by various agencies. . .”*

*Expanding on that, you can tell a lot about a church by the way its various agencies serve our most vulnerable friends and neighbors throughout the world.*

### **EVEN A PANDEMIC DOES NOT STOP THE WORK OF LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE (LDR)**

In early March, a series of tornadoes ripped through center Tennessee, killing 25 people and destroying hundreds of homes and businesses. Soon after COVID-19 struck. Then another line of tornadoes hit Tennessee and Georgia. The normal efforts to find shelter and food for the survivors and to clean up and repair the homes were suddenly altered.

“The pandemic certainly created the necessity of responding in ways that looked much different from the typical,” said Sherry Buresh, director of disaster relief programs for Inspiritus, a social ministry organization supported by LDR in Georgia and Tennessee. “The safety of our volunteers and those we assist are always our number one concern. Those impacted by the natural disaster needed our help more than ever. Without it, the risk of the pandemic spreading due to homelessness or living in shelters would only escalate.”

Sherry and others leapt into action, handpicking a team of highly skilled volunteers who were willing to work under strong COVID-19 guidelines. Operations were managed as remotely as possible with teleconferencing and other technology.

“The plan worked,” Sherry said. “We now know, as we prepare for this hurricane season, that with the plan having been tried and tested, we can easily duplicate it and increase volunteer numbers by having multiple small-number base sites, while we continue helping homeowners impacted by natural disasters.

Last year LDR was at work in 40 countries around the world, including 20 states and territories of the U.S. In our area, our LDR staff and volunteers are

working with state and local organizations to make sure resources and volunteers are matched with local needs.



### **LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF (LWR) ASKS FOR HELP MAKING 75,000 MASKS AND MORE**

In April LWR issued a challenge to make 75,000 cloth face masks to protect our most vulnerable neighbors. These are being included in the Personal Care Kits along with a flier to explain proper wear and washing of the masks. As of July 10, they have received 44,965. They will continue to collect and ship masks, even after the initial goal has been reached.



What is LWR? LWR is an organization that collects supplies to be distributed through companion organizations around the world. LWR is the group to which we donate our quilts. They also collect school kits, personal care kits, baby care, and fabric kits (materials and supplies to make a dress.) Each year they distribute about \$13 million worth of kits.

LWR focuses on sustainable development projects and disaster relief and recovery. The organization was founded in 1945 to collect and send aid to people living in post-World War II Europe. Today, LWR helps communities living in extreme poverty adapt to the challenges that threaten their livelihoods and well-being and responds to emergencies with a long-term view. It is a member of the Corus International family of faith-based international development organizations.

A pattern for making the masks is on the LWR website. Basically, it has cloth ties, though those with elastic are acceptable provided they are permanently affixed to the mask. Please use tightly-woven cotton fabric or quilting cotton, enough material to cover the nose and mouth and either bias tape, elastic or cotton ties to secure. No loose hair ties, please. If you are willing to make and donate masks, please contact Pastor Ruth or bring them to church with the designation for LWR.

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“To see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower, hold Infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour.”

— William Blake

## EMAIL MEDITATIONS

A visiting pastor was attending a men's prayer breakfast in a Mississippi Farm County. He asked one of the impressive older farmers in attendance to say grace that morning. After all were seated, the older farmer began: "Lord, I hate buttermilk."

The pastor opened one eye and wondered to himself where this was going. Then the farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard."

Now the pastor was worried. However, without missing a beat, the farmer prayed on, "And Lord, you know I don't care much for raw white flour."

Just as the pastor was ready to stand and stop everything, the farmer continued, "But Lord, when you mix 'em all together and bake 'em up, I do love fresh biscuits. So, Lord, when things come up we don't like in our lives, when life gets hard, when we just don't understand what you are sayin' to us; we just need to relax and wait 'till you are done mixin', and probably it will be somethin' even better than biscuits. Amen."



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## SHINE ON, FRIENDS!

Friendship is one of the greatest gifts a human being can receive. It is a bond beyond common goals, common interests or common histories. It is a bond stronger than sexual union can create, deeper than a shared fate can solidify and even more intimate than the bonds of marriage or community.

Friendship is being with the other in joy and sorrow, even when we cannot increase the joy or decrease the sorrow. It is a unity of souls that gives nobility and sincerity to love. Friendship makes all of life shine brightly.

— Henri Nouwen

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"A friend is one of the nicest things you can have, and one of the best things you can be."

—Douglas Pagels

## STEWARD OUR FUTURE CHURCH

For clarifying our thoughts and helping us to reset priorities, there's nothing like a crisis – whether it's a job layoff, a death in the family, social upheaval or a health emergency.

With COVID-19 we've witnessed plenty of all of these, and more! Despite our natural resistance to change, we're learning new ways to live. *As a disciple of Christ*, what thoughts have clarified for you? *As a follower of Jesus*, what personal priorities have you reset?

The questions arise because you are the church, we are the church together and stewards of the church. We will pray the Holy Spirit will guide us to a "new normal" of holy living as both disciples and community that will be different – and better – than what we've known.

What might that look like? Here are some questions to pray over and discuss:

- When your church suspended in-person worship, what ways did you find to stay connected to God? To one another? What did this teach you about holy living? About being church together?
- COVID-19 forced us to "be church" without buildings. What has this revealed about the nature of community? About the value of buildings? As we go back into our buildings, how can things be different? Why must they be?
- In light of what we've learned, what values, ideas, traditions, habits should we let go of? Which should we keep? What really matters? And why?
- How can your insights, strengths and gifts help to shape the future of your life as a disciple and follower of Jesus? Of your congregation? What can you give to the future church in time, talent and treasure?

COVID-19's crises are still teaching us. As stewards of God's church, we can renew and restructure our church to fulfill God's mission. With God's guidance, we will.

—Rob Blezard

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IN OUR  
Thoughts and Prayers

**PRAYERS FOR AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE  
for Those with Limited Mobility or in Care**

**Facilities:** Anna Angstadt, Bertha Bennecoff, Helen Fair, Verna Guinther, Shirley Hertzog, Leon Moyer, and Irene Noll.

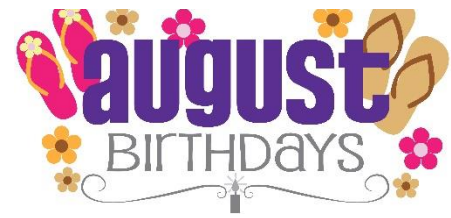
**PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT**

**Members:** Myles Angstadt, Dallas Bennecoff, Sara Jane Beshore, Erma Guinther, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Patricia Keck, Penny Keller, Sheila Long, Forrest Merkel, Roy Merkel, Edna Miller, Grace Miller, Linda Moyer, Betty Musser, Joyce Rothermel, Dale Schwoyer, Gary and Vikie Seyfert.

**Friends of the congregation:** Gayle Arndt, Carrie Bausch, Adam Bell, Bob Bright, Thelma Bright, Anne Cunningham, Mark Derr, Lee Dice, Randy Dreibelbis, Jennifer Engle, Eric Fox, Family and friends of Jane Francis, Harry Geidner, Jason Grof, Mamie Guinther, Stephen and Denise Haage, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Family and friends of Corinne Hersh, Johnson-Agiri Family, Family and friends of Kim Kegerise, Angie Kistler, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Edna Kramer, Cayden Kresge, Michelle Kurtz, Catherine Lenio, Ella Loose, Joe M., Doris Meadway, Rodney Miller, Ruth Ramsey, Patricia Sigfried, Robert Taylor, Leticia Weaver, Linda Wegman, Terry White, Althea Young, Barry, Pat, and Sam.

**OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS:** We pray for all seeking to respond responsibly to COVID-19, especially healthcare workers; our nation, including our president, congress, judicial system, and leaders of our communities; an end to the many ways prejudice and systemic racism maintain inequality between people and injustice; an end to threats between nations; peace in the world; our military personnel serving around the world; areas enduring disaster; and migrants and refugees.

**LONG-TERM PRAYER LIST:** Gary DeWees, Don Gajewski, Erma Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, Amanda Herman, David Jenkins, Sue Kearney, Anh La, Michelle Meck, Nancy Meck, Joanne Pauley, Arlene Reider, Leilani Rodriguez, Andrew S., Joshua S., Bronwyn Schielke, Roger Schollenberger, Donna Schwoyer, The Spatz Family, and Leah Wiest.



- 14 Brian Keller
- 15 Steven Seip
- 16 Gabriele Sanders
- 19 Penny Keller
- 19 Lynne Lounsbury
- 21 Patricia Keck
- 21 Denny Beshore
- 22 Tara Basta
- 24 Shirley Marks
- 24 Anna Angstadt
- 26 Joyce Rothermel
- 27 Faye Dey
- 28 Forrest Merkel, Jr.



- 9 Jeff and Dawn Wengert (23 years)
- 15 David and Diana Moyer (22 years)
- 18 Marlowe and Brenda Greis (36 years)
- 19 Richard and Pastor Ruth Doty (48 years)
- 23 Kenneth and Cheryl Wiltrout (45 years)

*If your name or the name of someone you know didn't appear on this list, we apologize and hope you will let us know so we can make the necessary corrections.*





## BRANDYWINE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

In the light of concerns about increased food needs in response to COVID-19 and possible challenges of delivering items to the food bank – *please consider a generous monetary donation.* We will keep you posted with info from the food pantry. You can make out a check to “Brandywine Food Pantry,” and mail it to Brandywine Food Pantry, c/o St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, 122 W. Franklin St., Tipton, PA, 19562.

**Donated Items in much need right now:** coffee, hot chocolate, fruit juices, breakfast cereal, pancake syrup and mix, mayonnaise, ketchup, soup of all kinds, spaghetti sauce, beef stew, Chicken-ala-King, canned meat (such as tuna, chicken breast or Spam), Manwich or sloppy joe mix, chili, Chef Boyardee canned items (such as beefaroni, lasagna, etc.), pasta or rice sides, snacks of all kinds (cookies, chips, pretzels, pudding, etc.), shampoo, bar soap, body wash, and laundry detergent.

**Gluten-free and sugar-free food is also greatly appreciated.**

**Please check dates on donated food products.**

During this time, it is best to take physical donations to St. Peter’s during pantry hours or call to arrange a convenient time at 610.682.7633. If you cannot deliver things to St. Peter’s, please call our church office to arrange a time to deliver them to New Jerusalem.



### WILLOW

The billowing branches of the “weeping willow” symbolize mourning, especially of the Israelites as they endured captivity. The willow, which grows well in marshy areas, is associated in the Bible with fruitful, well-watered land (see Ezekiel 17:5). In descriptions of Old Testament festivals of praise, God’s people were told “to take branches from luxuriant trees—from palms, willows and other leafy trees—and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days” (Leviticus 23:40, NIV).



## New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Statement of Accounts

May 31, 2020

<u>Asset Accounts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Memorial	\$ 21,445.56
Thrivent	6,650.75
Checking	4,719.11
Youth	406.38
Fidelity	92,140.96
Cash Reserve	28,771.75
Mission Investment	11,507.72
Local Care	1,891.43
	Total: <u>\$ 167,533.66</u>

Total Balance of Asset Accounts  
from **May 31, 2019** \$ 197,600.99

### May 2020 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’ Income

	Income Required	Actual	
<u>Income</u>	<u>Per Month</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Used For:	\$ 9,565.00	\$ 4,977.40	\$ (4,587.60)
Operating Expenses			

*Income Required per Month — Based on 2020  
Budget Passed by Congregation  
Less Budgeted Benevolence Contribution*

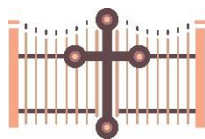
Parking Lot – Funds received to offset expenses  
for Driveway/Parking Lot Repaving

\$ 37,140.00 Total Expenses for Parking Lot  
Project  
\$ 31,508.52 Funds Received to Offset Expenses

## BIBLE QUIZ

In John of Patmos’ vision, what is special about the 12 gates of the New Jerusalem?

- They are made of gold and always closed.
- They are made of amethyst and onyx.
- They are closed by day and open by night.
- They are made of pearl and never closed.



Answer: D (See Revelation 21:21, 25.)

## A CHALKBOARD A DAY (as seen on Facebook)

The author writes, a chalkboard a day was started during the COVID-19 pandemic to bring humor and positivity to neighbors and friends.



Treat your mask like underwear:

1. Do not touch or adjust it, especially in public
2. Don't borrow or lend
3. Make sure fit is tight but comfortable
4. Make sure it is CLEAN
5. Wear the right side out
6. If it is damp, change it
7. Do not go without

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## GOD AMID PANDEMIC

Last spring, life changed as we became familiar with terms such as social distancing, flattening the curve and self-quarantining. We could hardly believe the closed schools, businesses and especially churches—just as Holy Week and Easter drew near! The coronavirus ran rampant in the world. Where was God?

But as the spread continued, many civic leaders stepped up, calmly informing us of the facts, of actions being taken to mitigate the crisis and of how we could help. Healthcare professionals risked their lives and endured separation from families; teachers drew on astounding stores of creativity to teach online; pastors delivered sermons and lessons to empty sanctuaries as members listened and prayed while living in lockdown. Surely God was present—through them!

Then I remembered how God assures us through Isaiah, "Fear not! When you pass through the waters, the fires, yes, even the pandemics of this world, I will be with you" (43:1-2, paraphrased). And Jesus echoes, "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20)

– Sandy Hyland

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

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"You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together, we can do great things."

– Mother Teresa

## PATIENT ATTENTION, VALUABLE DISCOVERIES

For many people, the coronavirus pandemic has been a test of patience—or worse. Medically vulnerable people face an anxious time of hypervigilance. Furloughed workers wait on hold or in lines for assistance. Special events have been canceled or rescheduled.

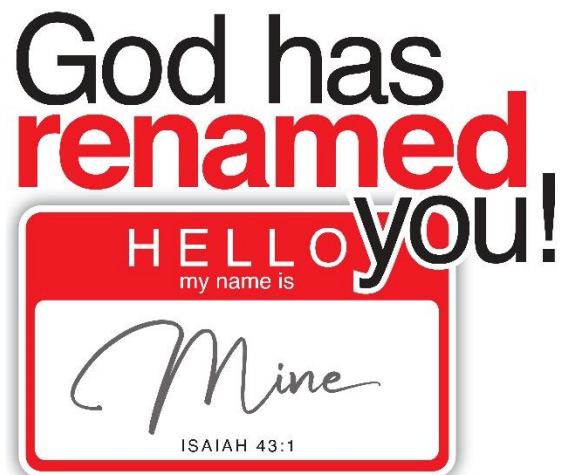
Those not impacted directly deal with assorted frustrations and inconveniences. Many people are learning the benefit of slowing down, being present (even virtually) to others and practicing patient attention.

Interestingly, scientist Isaac Newton did some of his best work when the plague forced Cambridge University to close. At home, the inquisitive student invented calculus and developed groundbreaking theories of gravity and optics. Later Newton called 1666 his *annus mirabilis* ("year of wonders") and reportedly said, "If I have made any valuable discoveries, it [owes] more to patient attention than to any other talent."

What have you discovered during the COVID-19 crisis? What appreciation have you developed for aspects of life you may have previously taken for granted? What has social distancing taught you about the value of neighbors, church, community volunteering?

During the pandemic, what have you learned about persistence and God's presence? What empathy do you now feel for writers of words such as "I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his Word I put my hope" (Psalm 130:5, NIV)?

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

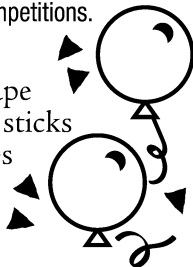


## GREAT SUMMER GAMES

Though this year's Summer Olympics were postponed, you can host friendly neighborhood competitions.

### What you need:

- Masking tape
- Large craft sticks
- Paper plates
- Balloons
- Ribbon
- Scissors
- Green construction paper
- Craft glue

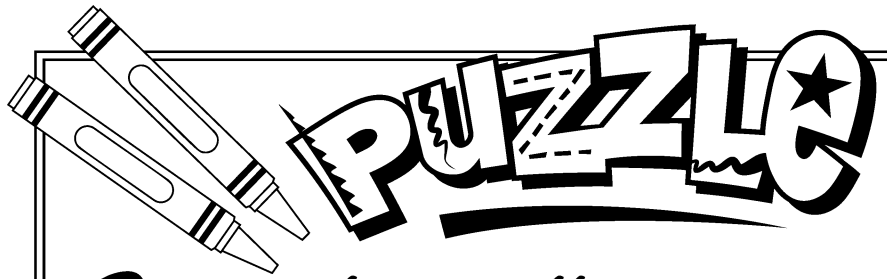


### What you do:

**Balloon Badminton:** Make rackets by taping a stick "handle" to each plate. Blow up and tie a balloon. Use the rackets to pass the balloon back and forth, without letting it touch the floor.

**Rhythmic Routines:** Using tape, firmly attach one end of a 4-foot ribbon to a craft stick. Display style and skill by waving it around. Try choreographing a routine to a praise song.

**Champion Crown:** Cut a large hole out of the center of a paper plate. Cut 2-inch ovals from green paper. Glue those "leaves" to the ring as garland. Crown a winner of each game!



## Compete for the crown



The apostle Paul compares the Christian life to running a race for an imperishable crown.



*Directions: From the starting line through the finish line, circle every third letter. Then place the circled letters in order in the blanks below to complete 1 Corinthians 9:24-25, NIV.*

**START**

ctrejasucphelnpomrxkibvztaejargiusonyccw

iqsatexympsakogmzsjeubtnyehapidmrfo

**FINISH**

"Do you not know that in a \_\_\_\_\_ all the runners run, but only one gets the \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ goes into strict \_\_\_\_\_ . They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a \_\_\_\_\_ that will last forever."

1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-25, NIV

Answer: race, prize, run, competes, games, training, crown

## NEW JERUSALEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH INSTRUCTIONS FOR “COMMUNING ON THE LOT”

- 1) Everyone who attends must be in a car as they enter the lot.
- 2) As you approach, there will be provisions for you, from the driver’s side, to:
  - a) receive a bulletin and the elements for communion
  - b) present an offering
  - c) deposit donations for the food bank

The pre-packaged elements for communion will be in a sealed baggie. Take as many as needed for those in your car. The elements are gluten free and the drink is juice, not wine.
- 3) Once all the elements are inside the car, you should roll your window up to within 2-3 inches from the top. Please do not open the bag until you are instructed to do so by Pastor Ruth.
- 4) You will be directed to a parking space.
- 5) Please remain in your car throughout the service.
- 6) Please do not roll your car windows all the way down. Either lower them about 2 or 3 inches for air or run your air conditioner.
- 7) Tune your car radio to **87.9 FM** to hear Pastor Ruth leading the service. It will sound fuzzy until the service starts.
- 8) The order of service will be brief.
- 9) Pastor Ruth will be located outside the original entrance to the church. Following a brief liturgy, she will bless the elements followed by the Lord’s Prayer. Then she will direct you to open your bags and distribute the elements to everyone in your car.
- 10) Once each person has their wafer and grape juice in hand, then you may proceed to unseal the wafer and eat it, then unseal the grape juice and drink it, thereby eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ as our Lord commanded.
- 11) Please place your empty cups back in the baggie and take it home to discard.
- 12) After the Dismissal, you are free to leave. If you are wearing a mask and maintain a 6-foot distance from others, you may get out of your car to greet one another. If you feel safer waiting in your car with your window shut, you may wait for others to walk by and greet you.
- 13) Please note: Bathroom facilities will be available inside the entrance to the church located at the top of the ramp. Please only enter and exit this way and do not go into any other area of the church. Hand sanitizer will be available as you enter and exit.

# SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

## Assembly 2020 Will Be Held Online

**Friday evening, October 16 & Sunday afternoon, October 18**

**Friday evening, October 23 & Saturday morning and afternoon, October 24**

At its meeting on July 14 the Synod Council voted 19-1 to hold Assembly 2020 online. This decision was not made quickly or lightly. Two resolutions were presented: (1) hold Assembly 2020 online or (2) cancel Assembly 2020 and hold the bishop election at Assembly 2021. Members of the Assembly Planning Team shared information about the feasibility of an online assembly, including the technology that would be needed, the process for voting, the agenda, and other details of how it would take place. After two hours of serious debate, the resolution to hold Assembly 2020 online was brought to the floor, voted on, and adopted.

Because the election of a bishop is by ecclesiastical ballot, and because lengthy online sessions are extremely fatiguing, the Assembly will be conducted on two successive weekends. The first ballot, on which the name of any pastor rostered in the ELCA can be entered, will happen on Friday evening, Oct. 16. Time will be required to vet all the names and to determine which individuals request that their name be removed. For that reason, the second session will be held on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 18, at which time there will be a second ballot.

The top seven candidates will be notified, vetted, and invited to come to The Lutheran Center the following Friday evening, Oct. 23, to answer questions prepared by the Election Team based on input from surveying the synod. Then on Saturday morning, Oct. 24, a third ballot will be conducted. Saturday afternoon the three finalists will be introduced and offered an opportunity to address the Assembly. Following that will be a fourth ballot, and later a fifth ballot. (Note: a tie on the fourth or fifth ballot could result in a sixth ballot.)

Other business of the synod will be conducted throughout the sessions, including a presentation from our Churchwide representative (still to be determined), adoption of the spending plan and compensation guidelines, other elections, debate on various resolutions brought to the Assembly, and other traditional and/or required reports and presentations. There will be an online worship service prior the beginning of the first session on Friday, Oct. 16; and the offering for World Hunger will be received through a "Donate" button on the synod website.

The Assembly Planning Team is acutely aware of the challenges involved in holding an online assembly. Every effort is being made to insure that Assembly 2020 feels as "normal" as possible and that the experience is secure, yet user friendly and readily accessible. Once registration is complete, voting members will be contacted with the instructions they need in order to participate.

Please check the synod website at <http://nepasynod.org/assembly-2020/> for more information as it becomes available. Registration will open mid-August, and a strict deadline for submitting registrations (probably very early October) will need to be observed because of technological requirements.

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View the full color edition online at <http://nepasynod.org>.

# AUGUST 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
NOTE: Worship continues on Sundays via Zoom						1 7:00pm-Communion on the Parking Lot Rain date: August 2 at 7:00 p.m.
2 9th Sunday after Pentecost	3 10:00am-Coloring Group  Pastor Ruth Flex Time until August 13	4	5	6	7	8
9 10th Sunday after Pentecost 10:30am-Outdoor Worship at Bowers Park	10 7:00pm-Council Mtg.	11	12	13	14	15
16 11th Sunday after Pentecost	17	18	19	20	21	22 7:00pm-Communion on the Parking Lot Rain date: August 2 at 7:00 p.m. ▪ Blessing of the Backpacks ▪ Harvest Home
23 12th Sunday after Pentecost ▪ Deadline for Newsletter items	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 13th Sunday after Pentecost	31					