

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

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Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon
Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.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.*



*Jesus, Savior, pilot me over life's tempestuous sea;
unknown waves before me roll, hiding rock and treach'rous shoal;
chart and compass come from thee. Jesus, Savior, pilot me.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the name of our risen Lord! What a time this is to be alive! What a time this is to be the church!

Some have suggested that what we need today is a compass, not a map. The time we are living in is uncharted territory. *We* have never lived in a time like this before. While the world has faced plague, pandemic, war and other hardships before, *we* have not, and the world in 2020 is unlike any previous era. Church leadership coach Jake Morrill describes these days and what is to come in at least the near future as VUCA times: **V**olatile (likely to change quickly), **U**ncertain, **C**omplex (no easy solutions), and **A**mbiguous. In these new, uncharted times, we definitely need a compass, not a map.

Now, in my limited understanding, using a compass depends on its being able to access true north. I've done just enough orienteering with a compass to know that using one is not as easy as it might seem. 1) You have to be patient and stop and wait for the compass needle to settle down before you can determine in which direction you are headed. 2) In order to find a path, you need accurate chart, instructions, on how far to go in any one direction before turning and you need to keep referring to these. 3) You have to be flexible enough and have resources to get back on track if a storm blows you off course. 4) You also have to be aware that your compass can be thrown off by a magnet in the area. I am sure that if I were to venture out onto the seas, I would want someone very skilled with using a compass and piloting a ship to be with me.

God is our True North. Our loving God has not provided a clear map of where we are going. Throughout the Old and New Testament God did not provide a map and send God's people off on their own. God accompanied God's people. Even when they wandered, God encouraged them to get back on track. God does the same for us. God accompanies us and helps us find our way. God sent Jesus to walk with God's people, to assure his disciples, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." On Ascension Day we hear Jesus' promise to be with them and us always and his promise to send them and us *another* Advocate, another guide. On Pentecost we celebrate the fulfillment of that promise, the coming of the Holy Spirit to guide the disciples and the new church into uncharted territory and to keep bringing them back to their relationship with their True North.

That same Spirit is available to guide us and keep us in relationship with our True North. We, like God's people throughout the ages, must, however, be ready to 1) be patient for God's Spirit to settle down in us. We need to 2) keep referring to the charts available through God's word, prayer, worship and the community. We need to 3) be ready to be flexible when a storm blows us off course. We also need to 4) guard against being thrown off by "magnets" such as our own anxiety, fear-mongers, the temptation to spend valuable energy on assigning blame rather than working together for solutions. We need to be wary of those who promise quick fixes, and those who claim life will be just the same as it was before. Each day is a new day, never the same as the day before. Even in calm times each day slightly alters our perceptions of what is normal.

As the weather warms and plants burst forth shouting the news of new life, it is a great time to be alive. As we enter this season of Pentecost, it is an uncharted but great time to be the church. The storms that surround us are threatening, but opportunities also abound and the powerful, skilled God of love is here to guide us through the "now normal" into the "new normal."

Celebrate with me the gift of God's promises and God's abiding Spirit. Even as we grieve, lament and protest current losses and the pain that we and others suffer, I pray that I and we can rejoice in new skills for staying connected to our True North and one another. I pray that God will open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to new opportunities for doing God's work; and allow our Savior to pilot us in the waters of these new times.

Peace and joy be with each of you!

Pastor Ruth

As a mother stills her child, thou canst hush the ocean wild,
boist'rous waves obey they will when thou say'st to them, "Be Still."
Wondrous sov'reign of the sea, Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

Edgar Hopper ELW 755, used with permission



NEWS & EVENTS

in New Jerusalem and the Synod

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were discussed and decisions made at our council meeting on May 11:

- Denny Beshore, Finance Committee Chairperson, updated council on the church's finances.
- Pastor Ruth provided handouts outlining expectations of what communities of faith and we as a church are likely to experience and need to think about doing during the pandemic.
- Since, at this point, we project that we won't be gathering for corporate worship in our church building until at least September, the Worship & Music Committee is discussing different ways to gather for worship such as services in cars on the parking lot.
- Estimates are being received to determine the cost to remove a large tree that fell down during a recent windstorm. Diane Keller stated that her husband, Rodney, would volunteer his time to cut up the tree trunk and clean up the debris.

BIBLE STUDY and CONFIRMATION CLASS are on hold, but we hope to start these again soon via Zoom.

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.

CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATIONS – Stay tuned.

JULY 2020 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the June 2020 newsletter is **Sunday, June 21**. Please have all articles and announcements to the church office by this date.

FINANCES

The work of our congregation continues even as we discover new opportunities for worship and ministry. Thank you to those who continue to regularly send in their offerings. During the past 2 months weekly offerings have averaged about \$200 (1/6) below last year, which is really

encouraging considering that we are not able to gather at this time. That said, expenses for our ministry continue to remain about the same, our average weekly offerings do not meet our budget, and some ventures we are using and exploring for worship, Bible study and faith formation could bring additional costs.

Please note: Contributions are being deposited every other week, so you might notice that your check is not clearing as quickly as before.

Please let us know whether you would donate online or through a mobile app if those were offered.

Please also remember our Local Care Fund handled confidentially by Pastor. Contributions to this can be made through your envelopes.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Speaking of contributions, you should be receiving your offering envelopes for July-December 2020 in the mail by the middle to end of June. If you would happen not to receive yours, please notify the church office. Thank you!

FATHER'S DAY – June 21, 2020

Even though we will not gather together for breakfast, we will give thanks to God for fathers and other special men in our lives.

MONTHLY CALENDAR

You might have noticed that the calendar for June is not included in the newsletter this month. Since all activities/events have been tentatively placed on hold, council has decided not to include the calendar at this time.

CHECK OUT OUR ZOOM WORSHIP SERVICES ON FACEBOOK AND OUR WEBSITE

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.

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 not allowed to enter hospitals or nursing facilities. Please continue to let her know when someone enters the hospital or is experiencing a change in health or situation.

REMINDER: FUNERAL POLICY DURING THE PANDEMIC

In light of the current COVID-19, Pastor Ruth will not be conducting funerals at church or funeral homes. She will preside at graveside services with only family members attending and will ask everyone attending the service to respect social distancing. When the coronavirus situation improves, the family is welcome to schedule a memorial service at which Pastor Ruth will consider it a privilege to preside.

Please be assured that Pastor Ruth is available via phone and electronic means, including email, Facetime and Zoom, to provide pastoral care, including the sick, the dying, and family members. Do not hesitate to contact her for these and other needs.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Because of concerns regarding COVID-19, Synod Assembly 2020 has been postponed to October 22-24, 2020. The assembly will be held at the Kalahari Resort, Pocono Manor. Bishop Zeiser will continue to serve until a new bishop is elected. Should it not be possible to elect a bishop in October, the bishop will serve until he retires on December 31. In that case, the ELCA will appoint an interim bishop. Further information on the Synod Assembly will be published when it becomes available.

T-SHIRT FUNDRAISER

Geist Sporting Goods, 330 West Weis Street, Topton, recently held a t-shirt fundraiser that raised money for local food pantries. With this fundraiser the Brandywine community was able to send \$700.00 to benefit the Brandywine Food Pantry. Since this was such a success, they are continuing this fundraiser that not only gives back, but also promotes community and school unity.

For each item sold, \$4.00 is donated to a local food bank in the respective school/community in the Brandywine, Kutztown, Fleetwood, Oley, Muhlenberg, and Boyertown areas. To place an order for t-shirts or hoodies, click on the link below. If you prefer not to order online, you can call Geist Sporting Goods at 610.413.9826 (Kristin Apgar's cell) or email at geistsptgoods@aol.com. All orders will be delivered to your home in about 2 weeks.



STRONG ALONE, UNSTOPPABLE TOGETHER

<https://www.geistsptgoods.com/ecommerce/spirit-wear/unstoppable.html>

INFORMATION GATHERING MEETINGS RE-SCHEDULED – July 11 and July 18, from 9-12 p.m.

Remember the surveys (at the three Info Gathering meetings throughout the Synod in February and online) that were completed in advance of the next NEPA Synod Bishop election? Well, given COVID-19, we've adjusted plans from in-person meetings to summarize survey results and develop preliminary questions for the Bishop candidates to Zoom sessions that you can connect to from home. The sessions will be identical. Registration for these Zoom meetings will be communicated shortly.

THANK YOU

A big thank you to Lucille Jones for funding the new handrails in the sanctuary. These are in memory of her husband, Ted, and son, Jeffrey Jones, and her mother-in-law, Eva Angstadt Nester.

A big thank you also goes out to Rodney Keller who volunteered his time to cut up the tree that fell and clean up the debris. All that would be left to do is to take down the existing portion of the tree.

Thank you to Dan Blanchard, Scoutmaster, and the Boy Scouts and their families of Troop #585, for getting and placing flags on the graves at the cemetery for Memorial Day.



COMMUNITY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Christ Mertz is holding a four-session virtual VBS this summer in which New Jerusalem will participate. More news to follow.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown, will be hosting a virtual community VBS this year. For those who would like, there may be some opportunities to join in activities at the church. Online **registration is due by June 15**. For a paper registration form, call St. Paul's office at 610.682.6229.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Mertztown, PA
Sun, July 26–Fri, July 31
6 p.m.–8 p.m.
Grades 1-6

Is there just one God? . . . Who is God? . . . What is God like? . . . Does God love me? . . . Can I know God? Our kids grapple with questions like these every day. At Mystery Island, we'll uncover the truth about our Creator God! There's a sea of confusion about who God is and what he's like, so we'll track down the one true God and learn how amazing he is through the pages of Scripture. Each day, kids will learn more about one of God's amazing attributes (great, almighty, ruler, Emmanuel, trustworthy) and how that applies to their lives. Grab your sunscreen and get ready for a taste of paradise as you track down the one true God at Mystery Island! To register, go to: <https://stpaulcommunityvbsmyanswers.com.myanswers.com/mystery-island/>.

CAN YOU HELP US FIND THE FORGOTTEN ONES?

We know at times like this many people are struggling and hurting. We are told that people are hungry and searching for work. We wish to help, but often times, for a variety of reasons, we don't know who they are. Can you help us find them?

Are you in need? Are you aware of anyone or of groups of people in need? What kind of help is needed or would be useful? If they need food, do they know about the food pantries available? Do they need help getting food from a pantry? Would a support group for those seeking jobs be helpful? If you tell us of specific needs, we can develop or direct you to an existing referral list. If you know of a specific person in need, be sure to get that

person's permission before letting Pastor Ruth know that.

Friend, Inc. is one resource to check. They are able to offer assistance as well as refer to other resources. Contact them at 610.683.7790.

The **Benefits Data Trust Hotline** – 833.373.5869 is available for PA residents to easily connect to public benefits completely over the phone for: SNAP, Medicaid, PACE, Childcare Subsidy (CCIS), CHIP, Medicare Extra Help (LIS), Property Tax/Rent Rebate (PTRR) and the Homestead Exemption.

You can also dial **211** to search for resources or go to www.usp.org/211gethelp. This database can help with access to basic needs, breaking news, and guidance on federal and state relief legislation. Pennsylvania has also launched a **COVID-19 Job Hiring Portal**: www.PAcareerlink.pa.gov – select the green PA COVID-19 Jobs – hiring immediately.

PLASMA NEEDED TO FIGHT COVID-19

Do you know anyone who has had COVID-19 and is fully recovered? If so, their plasma is needed to help others recover. Contact the Red Cross at www.RedCross.org/plasma4COVID.

HAVE YOUR TURNED IN YOUR CENSUS FORM?

Make sure you are counted! This affects our community's voice in Congress as well as billions in federal spending for programs citizens of our community rely upon. Mail in your response or complete online www.pa.gov/census.

WHAT'S COOKING?

What are *you* cooking while stuck at home?

One newspaper suggestion was "Depression Cake." Surely, it must contain chocolate, I thought. That's a go to food when I'm feeling depressed. Oh, wait, the name doesn't come from the mood, it's named that because it became popular during the Great Depression because it doesn't use eggs or milk, things that were in short supply. Apparently, it is also known by other names.

The recipe I saw called for flour, sugar, water, oil, vinegar, coffee, vanilla, baking soda, salt and *cocoa powder*. (Yes! There is chocolate!) Have any of you made such a cake? What's your recipe? What do you call it?

I'm going to try this one. What other suggestions or recipes can you offer? – *Pastor Ruth*

GOD PAUSE (a daily devotion brought to you by the alumni of Luther Seminary)

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Psalm 66:8-10, 16-20 (NRSV)

⁸ Bless our God, O peoples,
let the sound of his praise be heard,
⁹ who has kept us among the living,
and has not let our feet slip.
¹⁰ For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is tried.
¹⁶ Come and hear, all you who fear God,
and I will tell what he has done for me.
¹⁷ I cried aloud to him,
and he was extolled with my tongue.
¹⁸ If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.
¹⁹ But truly God has listened;
he has given heed to the words of my prayer.
²⁰ Blessed be God,
because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me.

DEVOTION

Some have asserted that the pandemic is God testing or punishing people. The psalmist seems to have followed similar logic about another crisis: "You, O God, have tested us; you have tried us. . . You brought us into the net; you laid burdens on our backs." But some of Scripture reflects people's *attempts* to understand God more than their *correct* grasp of God.

Elsewhere the Bible assures us God doesn't *impose* burdens on us but *relieves* us of them: the burden of fear (Isaiah 41:10), or weariness (Matthew 11:28), of earning salvation (Ephesians 2:8), of death as the last word (Revelation 21:4).

And as all of us go forward and back in our faith—sometimes even sideways or in circles—while the psalmist misunderstands God in some ways, at the end he gets it right: "Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me." Whatever you face today—illness, grief, lost work or overwork, anxiety, loneliness, or something unrelated to the coronavirus—God hears your prayer and wraps you in love.

PRAYER

God, thank you for the assurance of your love, especially in challenging times. Amen.

— Heidi Hyland Mann
"God Pause" Editorial Coordinator, Ely, Minnesota

"This devotional was first published by Luther Seminary at www.luthersem.edu/godpause."

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THREE-MONTH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Until further notice, worship will not take place in the church building, though it will occur each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Watch for information on how to connect via Zoom, phone, and other methods.

Sunday, June 7, we will celebrate the Festival of the Holy Trinity. The color is white. The rest of the Sundays in June, July, and August are observed as Sundays after Pentecost and the color is green.

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

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

JUNE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS & SPONSORS

Since we have been worshiping via Zoom each Sunday, bulletins are being mailed out to members who do not have access to email and/or internet. The cost to mail out the bulletins is approximately \$45.00 each week.

Bulletin Sponsors:

June 7 – Gladys Kline
June 14 – **(sponsor needed)**
June 21 – Elwood and Katie Ellen Cleaver
June 28 – Gladys Kline

Children's Bulletins: Diane Keller

Sanctuary Candle: Diane Keller

The cost to sponsor Bulletins is \$7.00, Children's Bulletins is \$5.00, and the Sanctuary Candle is \$15.00.

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE RESPONDS TO COVID-19 CHALLENGES

Did you know we have a highly regarded Lutheran College in our area? Below is a report from our Lutheran chaplain, Kristin Glass Perez, that is reprinted from the May 12, 2020 Synod News. <https://app.robly.com/archive?id=a9ccc884d71aee3e1a4835807a43e41f&v=true>. In it she tells how the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at Muhlenberg College is responding to the needs of students during the shutdown caused by the pandemic. She highlights the case of Kate Ekanem, a Nigerian student, who is one of those forced to remain on campus.

In my work as College Chaplain at Muhlenberg College, people often ask me if I am sad that there are not more Lutheran students. My usual response is “Well, it doesn’t really keep me up at night...” What do I mean by that?

In his book “Who Needs a Lutheran College,” Tom Christensen writes: “When we think of religiously-affiliated higher education, we often assume that it will be parochial, narrow, doctrinaire, and bent on making converts, and that it will want to teach its own views and silence all others.” As a part of a network of 26 affiliated colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Muhlenberg College defines Lutheran Higher Education in a different way.

In Lutheran Higher Education, we ask these kinds of questions:

- What are the deep needs of the world we are called to address through the process of education?
- What kinds of persons does the world need in order to serve these deep needs?
- What are the real needs of students who we meet through this educational process?
- How do we educate such persons?
- What gifts and limitations do we bring to this task?

The office of Religious and Spiritual Life at Muhlenberg College is a multi-faith collection of student organizations and staff. It includes the ELCA and Protestant Community at Egner Chapel, Muhlenberg Hillel at the Leffell Center for Jewish Student Life, and Roman Catholic Campus Ministry at the Newman Center. It also includes

opportunities for affiliated student religious organizations such as Disciple Makers Christian Ministry and the Muslim Student Association. The college takes seriously the mission of Religious Life to “provide spiritual support and hospitality to the whole community” and “encourage interfaith cooperation and engagement in all areas of College life in order to enrich the lives of individuals and to work together for the common good.”

The worldwide coronavirus pandemic has shown how very important our grounding in the Lutheran theological tradition lived out in a multi-faith environment has been. At the forefront of our decision making, has been the care and support for all people, including students, faculty and staff. While most students left campus by March 16, around 100 students initially remained for various reasons (30 will remain on campus for the summer). In some cases, they are international students unable to travel to their homes, or students with no primary residence outside the college. They may have also stayed because they had immune-compromised family members at home. During the pandemic, the work of the Religious and Spiritual life team of the college, has been grounded in a collaborative effort with many different colleagues, to provide care, counseling, support and programming for students online—as well as actively supporting students who have remained on campus. Here are some of the ways we have done that:

- Holding daily virtual office hours for pastoral care conversations with students and others
- Hosting online religious services
- Hosting small group ministry and educational events online (i.e. Bible Study, Jewish Learning Fellowship)
- Keeping the U.L.E. Community Cabinet (on campus food pantry) stocked for access by students who remain on campus
- Supporting students who have had increased responsibilities caring for family members with COVID-19
- Supporting students who have encountered other forms of economic hardship during the pandemic
- Helping faculty connect students to various campus resources during this time of high stress

Here is the story of one student who remained on campus:



Hello! My name is Kate Ekanem. I am a first-generation student from Nigeria here at Muhlenberg. I am a junior and my major is Media and Communications with double minors in Women and Gender Studies and Creative Writing. I am involved in various activities on campus; I am a Campus delegate, a tour guide, an inductee of the Tri-IOTA Woman and Gender Honor Society, and the elected president of Tri-Alpha First-Generation Honor Society.

How have you been affected by the coronavirus?

Since the outbreak, I've honestly been in a constant on and off panic mood. I am a first-generation student, a single mother to a six-year old daughter, and an international student from an economically-underserved family in Nigeria. It is the first time in many years that I'll feel like I don't have anything under control because I am afraid of failing in my usual responsibilities to myself, my child and my elderly father back home. In a pandemic like this one—when most students are either calling home or returning home to a family, I realize I am the home that is called by members of my family in distress and that's because I am the first in the family to attempt a college degree. Monthly, I support my family in Nigeria, my daughter's care and my own self-care. These were not challenges before the pandemic because I work on campus during school and summer period, but as an international student, I have different challenges than other students. Per their student visa status, international students can only hold on-campus jobs and are ineligible for various relief programs. Thoughts of survival through the summer and the entire period of this pandemic scare me. It's almost impossible to find the right words to explain the multiple challenges attached to being a first-generation student, a single mother, and the eldest child in my Nigerian family. This pandemic awakens my consciousness to the heavy loads I'd been carrying all this while, without deeply considering its weight.

How has the college supported you and others who remain on campus?

When the outbreak started, my first thought was of my daughter who lives with another family. I knew I'd lose my mind if I were away from her while a virus was out there. I remember reaching out to the

college and they responded immediately and made it possible for my daughter and I to stay together. The mere thought of it brings tears to my eyes. Since the pandemic, the college has gone beyond what's expected of any institution to express genuine care and love for students like me on campus. I've heard several students talk about how the college paid their trips back home, provided emergency supports for technology and other personal challenges, and during a conversation with a friend from Rwanda who would be graduating this year from Muhlenberg; she mentioned how the food pantry on campus and all the support from the college has been immensely remarkable, leaving her speechless. In the Muhlenberg community, I have seen love, felt it deeply, and I cannot begin to explain how much my heart bursts in joy to have a school that cares for, and protects their students in a time of crisis like this one. It is definitely not enough to say that Muhlenberg is just an institution—to me, it's like belonging to a family.

What are you hopeful for in the future?

I am excited for the future. I hope to make it through graduation next year. I almost cannot believe I'll be senior in the fall. It is a miracle that I've come this far and I think every first-generation student can relate to that feeling. After graduation, I'll work for a while to save money and be in a place of stable independence to attempt a graduate degree in the future. I was once denied education, and now that I have it, I will never look back. My desire is to transform the destinies of my family by graduating and helping the next person climb the same ladder of success. My six-year old daughter is my inspiration to continue on, regardless of the obstacles. Whenever I see her, I remember that I am doing this for me, for her and for our future.

—Kate Ekanem

During the Easter season, students like Kate remind me of the ever-hopeful promise of resurrection. Serving at a Lutheran College isn't about counting Lutherans; but it is about finding the ways in which God is active and alive in our world and service to our neighbor. Thanks be to God for our shared ministry, for all people, in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Peace be with you,
Rev. Kristen Glass Perez
Muhlenberg College Chaplain

If you would like to support students who remain at Muhlenberg College over the summer, here are a few ways to do that:

- Donate to the [Emergency Grant Fund for Students](#). All donations directly support emergency hardship needs for Muhlenberg College students including the M.U.L.E. Community Cabinet on campus food pantry.
- Donate new or gently used kitchen items to support students who remain on campus. If you are interested in donating items, please contact EgnerChapel@Muhlenberg.edu.

Note from Pastor Ruth: Please also keep the faculty and students of Kutztown University in your prayers and watch for ways we can support those who have remained on campus as well as those whose studies have been interrupted. Please share any ideas or known needs with us.

COLORING WITH THE SPIRIT

Enclosed with this newsletter is a coloring sheet "Filled with the Holy Spirit." As we are entering the season of Pentecost, we invite everyone to color in this illustration and either post it somewhere in your home or window or send it in to our church. In fact, why not do both? If you need an extra copy, just ask. We will use what you color in upcoming worship.



INTERESTED IN A COLORING GROUP?

Many adults as well as young people enjoy coloring. If you would like to be part of a coloring group, please let us know. Faith Formation would provide pages to color. Work can be done at home, though perhaps in the future at least some can meet and enjoy time together. We'll figure out how to share our work.



STEWARD YOUR NEW COMMUNITY

Like a caterpillar emerging from a cocoon to new life as a butterfly, we can steward our congregations and communities to awaken from COVID-19 to a more excellent reality that brims with faith, hope and love.



COVID-19's hardship, deprivation and grief have inspired an outpouring of kindness, generosity, selflessness, neighborliness and courageous service. Suffering has given us a glimpse of what our communities can and should be, following Christ's two principal commands: love God and love one another.

Our stewardship opportunity and challenge is clear: Can we cultivate this renewed spirit of loving neighborliness as a "new normal"? As our community's central, defining ethos?

The last several months have taught us much:

- **Life is precious.** Everyone counts. No exceptions.
- **We suffer together.** Shared pain creates strong bonds.
- **Serving brings fulfillment.** Many sacrifice joyfully.
- **We need each other.** We can't go it alone.
- **We miss each other.** We require human interaction.
- **Personal contact is sublime.** Nothing beats face-to-face.
- **We are grateful.** Thank God for what we have.
- **We are wiser.** We know what's important.

COVID-19 is receding, though slowly. Much pain lies ahead. Before it's through, the virus will claim more of our friends and loved ones. Many families will suffer economically.

But the virus is also teaching us anew how to be loving neighbors. As COVID-19 abates, we can deepen these lessons and steward our communities to live more closely aligned with God's purposes, to discover life abundant with joy, connection, fulfillment and generosity. With God's help, our congregations and communities can emerge from our COVID-19 cocoon to a more excellent reality, centered in faith, hope and love.

—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, Erma Guinther, Virginia Guinther, Amanda Herman, Lucille Jones, Patricia Keck, Penny Keller, Sheila Long, Forrest Merkel, Roy Merkel, Edna Miler, Grace Miller, Linda Moyer, Betty Musser, Joanne Pauley, Joyce Rothermel, Dale Schwoyer, Elaine Seip, Gary and Vikie Seyfert, and Dawn Wartzenluft.

Friends of the congregation: Gayle Arndt, Carrie Bausch, Adam Bell, Family and friends of Millie Berger, Carson Bosma, Bob Bright, Thelma Bright, Sandy Burkhart, Mark Derr, Gary DeWees, Randy Dreibelbis, Jennifer Engle, Eric Fox, Mamie Guinther, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Corinne Hersh, Johnson-Agiri Family, Sue Kerny, Emily Kershner, Angie Kistler, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Cayden Kresge, Michelle Kurtz, Anh La, Marie Leibensperger, Catherine Lenio, Ella Loose, Joe M., Family and friends of Michael Mattmusser, Doris Meadway, Duane Petersheim, Ruth Ramsey, Rich Reimert, Bronwin Schielke, Donna Schwoyer, Patricia Sigfried, Robert Taylor, Leticia Weaver, Jared Weiss, Terry White, Family and friends of Jean Winkler, Althea Young, Barry, and Pat.

OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS: We pray for: all seeking to respond responsibly to COVID-19, especially healthcare workers; our nation: our president, congress, judicial system, and leaders of our communities; 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: Don Gajewski, Erma Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, David Jenkins, Michelle Meck, Nancy Meck, Tonya Petersheim, Arlene Reider, Leilani Rodriguez, Andrew S., Joshua S., Roger Schollenberger, The Spatz Family, Jack Stoudt, and Leah Wiest.



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



- 3 Glenn and Holly Allen (31 years)
- 26 Ted and Betty Eshbach (26 years)
- 27 Elwood and Katie Ellen Cleaver (56 years)
- 27 Larry and Faye Dey (56 years)
- 29 Lloyd and Linda Moyer (52 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.



June 14, 2020

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.

DID YOU KNOW?

The olive branch is a symbol of peace, harmony and healing. Olive trees provide shelter, as well as oil used for ointment and consecration. The olive branch also represents deliverance from hardships and anxiety because a dove brought an olive leaf back to Noah’s ark after the flood ended (Genesis 8:11).



June 20, 2020

**New Jerusalem Lutheran Church
Statement of Accounts**

April 30, 2020

| <u>Asset Accounts</u> | <u>Balance</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Memorial | \$ 21,445.56 |
| Thrivent | 6,650.75 |
| Checking | 5,978.21 |
| Youth | 406.38 |
| Fidelity | 90,056.41 |
| Cash Reserve | 28,561.75 |
| Mission Investment | 11,492.41 |
| Local Care | 1,891.43 |
| | Total: <u>\$ 166,482.90</u> |

Total Balance of Asset Accounts
from **April 30, 2019** \$ 204,018.43

April 2020 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’ Income

| | Income Required | Actual Income | Difference |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Income Used For: | <u>Per Month</u> | | |
| Operating Expenses | \$ 9,565.00 | \$ 5,346.77 | \$ (4,218.23) |

*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
\$ 31,298.52 Funds Received to Offset Expenses

BIBLE QUIZ

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” Which of the following are mentioned in the list that follows?

- A. a time to teach, and a time to learn
- B. a time to mourn, and a time to dance
- C. a time to fast, and a time to eat
- D. a time to work, and a time to rest



Answer: B (See Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

ROAD TRIP TREAT

Make this snack necklace to enjoy during summer travels.

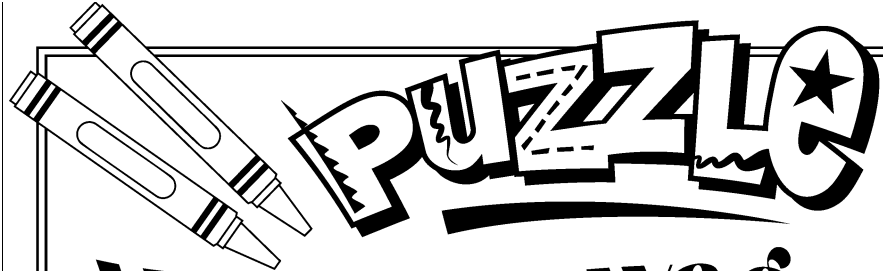


What you need:

- Dental floss
- Sewing needle
- O-shaped cereal
- Raisins
- Popcorn

What you do:

1. Carefully thread a yard of floss through the needle.
2. String a pattern of cereal, raisins and popcorn on the floss until only 4 inches remain on either end. Tie the two ends together.
3. Repeat to make necklaces for your whole family.
4. When you're ready to eat, simply bite off each "bead." Experiment with other non-perishable foods.

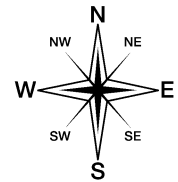


Wherever we go

No matter where we journey, God always protects us.

Directions: Use the map and compass to answer the clues. Then write the boxed letters in order in the spaces below to complete Psalm 121:8, NIV.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |



Start at the SHIP.

Move 1 space N, 3 spaces E, and 2 spaces N _ _ _ _

Start at the WORLD.

Move 1 space W, 1 space S, and 1 space SE _ _

Start at the SUITCASE.

Move 1 space NE, 2 spaces S, and 1 space E _ _ _

Start at the PLANE.

Move 2 spaces SW, 1 space S, and 1 space W _ _ _

Start at the CAR.

Move 1 space E, 1 space N, and 1 space NW _ _ _ _

Start at the SIGN.

Move 1 space SE, 1 space W, and 2 spaces NW _ _ _ _ _

The _ ORD will watch ove_ your comi_g and go_ng both no_ and for_ vermores. Psalm 121:8, NIV

Answer: plane, car, sign, ship, world, suitcase. The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Psalm 121:8, NIV



SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

More Stories of Being the Church in a Time of Pandemic



Masks for Health Care Workers

Kourtney Keim from New Life, New Tripoli is a sophomore at Northwestern Lehigh High School. Seeing a need for protective gear for healthcare workers, she organized a community effort to make and distribute masks and headbands.

"It reminds me of the story of the fish and bread where the collections of few created plenty for many. Some members of our group could sew beautifully but had no material. Some had material and no sewing machine. Some had a machine, but not the skills or time

to use it. Some had fabric, others thread, still others (the coveted) elastic. Some had time to cut or money to donate materials. All of these efforts came together to provide more than 7000 masks, and counting."

Masks were donated to Lehigh Valley Health Network, St Lukes Health Network, KidsPeace, visiting nurses, Children and Youth Centers, dialysis centers, rehab clinics, homeless shelters, banks, grocery stores, and others. They have continued to donate to various healthcare workers as well as provide masks available to the general public. Asking for a \$5 donation to a local food pantry in exchange for a mask, they've raised over \$5,000 in just a few weeks - while helping to keep everyone safer.



Muhlenberg Chaplaincy Responds to the Pandemic

The worldwide coronavirus pandemic has shown how very important our grounding in the Lutheran theological tradition lived out in a multi-faith environment has been. At the forefront of decision making, has been the care and support for all people, including students, faculty and staff. While most students left campus by March 16, around 100 students initially remained for various reasons (30 will remain on campus for the summer). In some cases, they are international students unable to travel to their homes, or students with no primary residence outside the college. During the pandemic, the work of the Religious and Spiritual life team of the college has been grounded in a collaborative effort with many different colleagues, to provide care, counseling, support and programming for students online—as well as actively supporting students who have remained on campus.



Here is the story of one student, Kate Ekanem, who remained on campus. "Since the outbreak, I've honestly been in a constant on and off panic mood. I am a first generation student, a single-mother to a six-year-old daughter, and an international student from an economically underserved family in Nigeria. It is the first time in many years that I'll feel like I don't have anything under control because I am afraid of failing in my usual responsibilities to myself, my child and my elderly father back home.

"Since the pandemic, the college has gone beyond what's expected of any institution to express genuine care and love for students like me on campus. I have seen love, felt it deeply, and I cannot begin to explain how my heart bursts in joy to have a school that cares

The Food Pantry at Friedens, Oley

For almost 30 years, **Friedens, Oley** has been serving the surrounding community by hosting a Food Pantry. Allowing clients to enter the building, grab a grocery cart, and shop through the aisles of food was our mode of operation. All that changed during the pandemic! Like many congregations, we struggled how to allow this vital, life sustaining ministry in the midst of fear, regulations and hope. 75% of our food pantry volunteer force were identified as falling in the "most at risk" category. This included our food pantry directors! We did not want to put anyone in danger!

We decided to invite folks in the "least at risk" category to help us continue this important ministry. Our young people stepped up and volunteered with the understanding that strict safety standards and regulations would need to be followed. There was no hesitation! The volunteer hours were long, noon to 8pm. There was unloading trucks, repackaging food into boxes, delivering food to waiting vehicles and clean up all while maintaining physical distancing and wearing a mask and gloves. No time for rest while we created a new way of serving the community.



I like helping with the food pantry because unfortunately, so many people need it. Ethan Hohl (9th grade)



I like that we are helping with the food pantry during COVID-19 because people need food! Jacob Hohl (6th grade)



The Covid 19 pandemic caused me to come home from college. , I was pleased for this opportunity to serve in my community. -Jenna Reed (senior in college)



My grandparents and Mom work during the regular food pantry. Since I do not have school or sports, I have time to help! Kristina Kauffman (10th grade)

Lunch for a Homeless Shelter



St. John's downtown Easton was asked by Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter to provide 24 bagged lunches for people who usually come to the shelter to eat at noon but are not residents of the shelter. Because of the virus and fear of spreading, a table is set up at noon at Safe Harbor and the take away bagged lunches are available (and taken) by people who stop by. Some are homeless, some are temporarily sleeping at the homes of friends, some are food insecure. St. John's adjusted how the lunches were made as the rules of social distancing evolved. They began making the meals every Wednesday at the church and then started making the lunches at individual homes. Vicar Matthew picks the lunches up and transports them to the shelter. The program began March 25 and will continue until Safe Harbor no longer requests the help.

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