

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Ruth F. Doty, Pastor

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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.-11:00 a.m.), Thursday 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD.



HE GETS US AND HE'S GOT US!

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.



*The Lord is my shepherd.
He gets us and he's got us!*

Dear Partners in Sharing the Good News,

Lately I have been reading through the psalms using a small book, *The Songs of Jesus*, by Timothy Keller. Today I happened to be finishing up Psalm 22. This is the psalm Jesus cried from the cross which starts out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" but ends with claiming that all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord and that future generations will be told about what God has done: "God has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one. God has not hidden his face but listened to his cry for help."

So often in Lent as we remember Jesus' words from the cross, we don't realize that when Jesus cried out with those first words of Psalm 22, he and some of those standing around knew it ended in trust and then praise, even if all Jesus could feel at the moment was the agony of feeling abandoned. That's the strange thing about psalms, so many of the psalms of lament end with trust and even praise.

What I hadn't connected until this morning was that Psalm 22 is immediately followed by 23, our favorite psalm of trust. "The Lord is my shepherd. I lack nothing." Pastor Keller points out that Jesus is the only shepherd who knows what it is like to be a sheep. He gets us!

Perhaps you've become aware of a campaign that uses the slogan, "He gets us!" If you haven't seen it on TV or on a billboard, if you watched the Super Bowl you saw two of their ads. What's this all about? The organization behind these describes its campaign as "a movement to reintroduce people to the Jesus of the Bible and his confounding love and forgiveness. We believe [that] his words, example, and life have relevance in our lives today and offer hope for a better future." The organization says it is not a political organization of any kind and has no church or denominational affiliation. "We simply want everyone to understand the authentic Jesus as he's depicted in the Bible — the Jesus of radical forgiveness, compassion, and love."

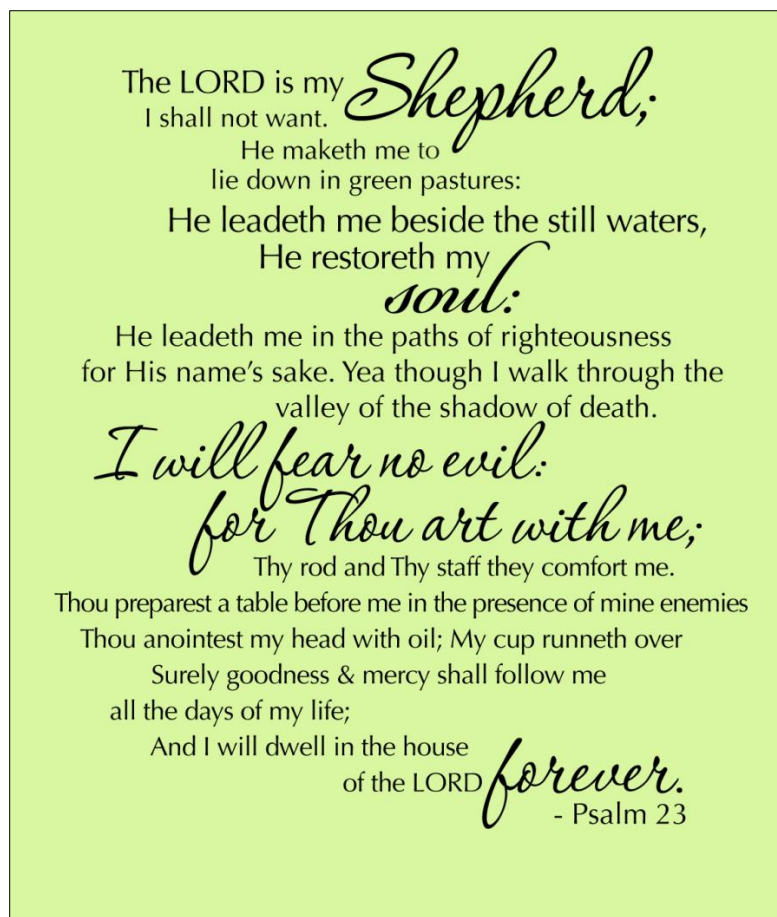
In the United States today, while Christians describe themselves as giving, compassionate and loving, non-Christians think of us as hypocritical, judgmental and self-righteous. They don't get what we're all about. The number of Americans who identify themselves as Christians is down 10% in the last 10 years but at the same time, three out of four American adults say they want to grow spiritually. Nearly half of Americans say they are more open to God today than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. This leads Pastor Carey Nieuwhoff to write, "All of these realities lead to a singular conclusion: it's time for the real Jesus to take center stage in the American cultural imagination. And that's exactly what the He Gets Us campaign is doing."

People around us don't understand what Jesus or his followers are all about, yet the majority want to grow spiritually. What an opportunity! What a challenge! The "He Gets Us" campaign is challenging people to give Jesus another look and is trying to provide a safe place to ask questions. How will we, how will you, provide such a safe place? How will we, how will you, answer their questions?

Maybe the first step is to be open to the questions, open to the perceptions those around us may have about us. We don't have to defend ourselves. Christians and the Christian church have never been perfect. We also don't have to have all the answers. What we can do, is share what being a follower of Jesus means to us, our trust that he knows what it is like to be us, that he accepts — even welcomes — us as we are and he invites us to experience the love of God and to grow in that love. Once we welcome the questions and comments then we can invite whomever is asking, to seek and learn along with us.

In the coming days and weeks, may you hear the voice of our Shepherd leading you to the places your spirit can be fed and may you find many opportunities to invite others to share the feast of love God spreads before us even in the darkest places of our lives.

Pastor Ruth



NEWS & EVENTS

at New Jerusalem and in the community

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were covered at our Annual Meeting on January 29:

- An update was given on the progress being made and steps taken to discern our future.
- Sherri Carl, Mark Zeleznick, Carole Herbert, Joshua Keck, and Diane Keller were elected to join Ty Rissmiller, Ted Eshbach, Cindy Rissmiller, and Betty Eshbach on council.
- After the meeting council members voted to elect Ty Rissmiller as President, Joshua Keck as Vice President, and Cindy Rissmiller as Secretary. In reality, Ty and Josh will serve as co-presidents.
- The four proposed Constitutional Amendments were passed. This is the first of two votes that must be taken before the Constitution can be amended.

MEETING BETWEEN COUNCIL AND THE NEW JERUSALEM CEMETERY BOARD

At a joint meeting of the congregational council and the New Jerusalem cemetery board on February 2, it was decided to hire a surveyor to determine exact property lines. This will enable the congregation to apply to the township to convey the small cemetery which currently sits on church property to the cemetery board so that no matter what happens with the church building, the small cemetery will be cared for. The church and the cemetery board will split the costs for the survey and legal fees involved.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were covered at our Council Meeting on Monday, February 13:

- The minutes from the Congregational Meeting on January 29 were approved.
- Denny Beshore made a presentation about the current state of our finances and, as in past years, council then authorized the Finance Committee to tap, as needed, money from Fidelity to meet expenses not covered by current income.
- The Annual Congregational Report to be sent to the ELCA was approved.

- Property Committee reported on upcoming maintenance projects as well as the scheduled tour of our building by the Lyons Fire Company. (This is done so firefighters would be familiar with the layout if they ever had to respond.)
- Stewardship Committee reported on upcoming events and fundraisers.

Our next council meeting will be held on **Monday, March 13, at 7:00 p.m.**

PASTOR RUTH will be out of town until Friday, March 3. If you would need pastoral care during this time, please contact Crystal Angstadt who is serving Christ DeLong and St. Peter's UCC (484.336.8661) or Pastor Martin Milne (484.505.0987).

COLORING GROUP

The next meeting is **Thursday, March 2, at 10:00 a.m.** Friends are welcome. Contact Phyllis Fenstermacher (610.682.2423) or Diane Keller (610.682.4152) if you would like pages sent to you.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will be held on **Mondays, March 6, 13, 20, and 27 at 11:00 a.m.** We will continue our study of 1st and 2nd Peter. New members are welcome.

PASTA! PASTA!

A Pasta Dinner will be held at New Jerusalem on **Saturday, March 11, from 4:00 p.m. to-7:30 p.m.- Adults \$12, youth 3-12 \$6.**

The meal includes bread, pepper cabbage, beverage and dessert. Plan now to attend and invite your friends. While we will be serving cafeteria style in

order to minimize the number of people needed to prepare and serve, some help as well as donations of baked goods is still needed. Since wanting to encourage fellowship with our neighbors is one of the main reasons we are offering this evening, volunteers are also needed who will focus on making sure we visit with those who come. We're so excited about doing this, we've even designated **March 25 as our backup date, just in case** we get snow on the 11th.



TIME CHANGE – SPRING FORWARD

Daylight Saving Time begins on **Sunday, March 12th**. Please remember to “spring” your clocks forward one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

LIONS AND TIGERS AND HORSES! OH MY!

On **Sunday, March 19** adults and youth from our area churches will gather at **New Jerusalem** at **2:00 p.m.** to stuff lions and tigers and horses and other animals which will be used as Bingo prizes for residents of The Lutheran Home. Come join the fun!

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, March 18, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Topton.

THE COMPASSIONATE CRAFTERS

Want to make things that not only glorify God’s glory but also help make the world a better place? If so, you are welcome to join with other crafters at Trinity Lutheran Church in Topton. Meetings take place on **Thursday, March 9 and Thursday, March 23 this month from 9:30-11:00 a.m.** in the Sunday School room.

APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the March newsletter is **Sunday, March 19**.

HELPING HARVEST/TOPTON MOBILE MARKET – Tuesday, March 21, 2023

The Helping Harvest food distribution will take place on **Tuesday, March 21, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Brandywine Heights IS/MS.

SOUP, SANDWICH AND BAKED GOODS SALE – Saturday, April 29, 2023

Save the date! New Jerusalem will have a soup, baked goods, hamburger and meatball sandwich sale on **Saturday, April 29, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Pre-orders will be taken for the soup (chili, potato, or chicken noodle). Watch for further details on how to order. Sign up in the fellowship area to help and/or contribute baked goods.

MUSIC FESTIVAL WITH THE MAJESTICS

Mark **Saturday, July 29**, on your calendar for an evening of fun and toe tapping, hand clapping music with “The Majestics Band.” Other congregations will be assisting us with setup and food. More details to come at a later date.



The theme for this year’s Lenten worship is *The Desert of Compassion*. **The following midweek services begin at 7:00 p.m.** and will be located as follows:

- March 1 – Christ Mertz, Dryville
Theme: Remove this Heart of Stone
Preacher: Rev. Jeremiah Sassaman
- March 8 – New Jerusalem
Theme: Reach Out Your Hand
Preacher: Rev. Scott Lingenfelter
- March 15 – Hope Bowers
Theme: Stay Awake with Me
Preacher: Rev. Dan Hoffstetter
- March 22 – Trinity, Topton
Theme: Your Whole Mind
Preacher: Crystal Angstadt
- March 29 – St. Peter’s UCC, Topton
Theme: Do Not Condemn
Preacher: Rev. Ruth Doty
- April 5 – St. Paul’s, Mertztown
Theme: Do This and You Will Live
Preacher: Rev. Kimberly Berenotto

Upcoming Events

- **Pasta Dinner**, Saturday, March 11, from 4:00-7:30 p.m.
- **Soup, Sandwich and Baked Goods Sale**, Saturday, April 29, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- **Community Outdoor Worship in Bowers Park**, Sunday, May 21, 2023, 10:30 a.m.
- **Music Festival featuring The Majestics Band**, Saturday, July 29
- **Community Outdoor Worship in Bowers Park**, Sunday, August 6, 2023, 10:30 a.m.

“Jesus breaks the bonds of captivity and breaks bread with those whom others have condemned” (p. 125).

-*The Desert of Compassion* Rachel M. Srubas,
Westminster John Knox Press 2023

A SECOND LIFE FOR PLASTIC BAGS

Don't forget to bring your plastic grocery bags to church so they can be made into waterproof sleeping mats to be distributed to the homeless. Each mat requires 500-700 bags and a lot of teamwork.

If you would like to join in making these, the next mat-weaving sessions will be Saturday, March 4 and 18 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at St. Peter's UCC, Topton. Please use the back door.

Any questions, contact Sue Lishman at 610.413.0907 or suelishman@yahoo.com or speak to Sara Jane Beshore.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PREPARED AND SERVED BREAKFAST ON SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Not only was it delicious and filling, 37 people had the opportunity to visit with one another. Thanks also to everyone who brought soup and other items for the Brandywine Food Pantry.

THE VALENTINE'S DANCE AND PARTY WAS A HIT!

On February 10, youth and adults from the area gathered at St. Paul's, Mertztown, for a dance and party sponsored by our cooperative youth ministry program.

A MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SAM MARKS

Sam Marks, who lives in Florida, requested to become a member of our congregation. His late wife, Shirley, who was a member, maintained her membership even after the couple retired to Florida.

January 24, 2023

Pastor Ruth, I really enjoyed your last *Good Newsletter*. I've been to many Lutheran churches here in Florida and they all seem to have the same problems as New Jerusalem—merging, losing members, etc. One of the churches however, is moving in the right direction—why—because of a good youth movement and missionary visits. I tell the same things to the pastors of each of the churches: With God's assistance, each church will survive. Thanks for keeping me informed. – *Sam Marks*

P.S. Sorry about the shoo-fly pies, however, I watched the women lift those molasses containers—Ouch! Have a blessed year “23.”

SCOUT SUNDAY

New Jerusalem's observance of Scout Sunday was a bit different this year. On February 12 we gave special thanks to God as we recognized the work of those who have led our Troop #585 through the years, including presenting the Lamb Award to Art and Rita Kayhart.

What is the Lamb Award? The Lamb Award is sponsored by an organization called the National Lutheran Association on Scouting (NALS). This organization was formed by and responsible to the youth ministry departments of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Its purpose is to encourage scouting and other youth activities that help young people connect with their faith. As such they provide learning materials, badges for youth, etc.

In addition, NALS also developed something to recognize the work of Lutheran adults who work with youth both in a congregation and also through civic organizations like the Boy Scouts. This is called the Lamb Award as a remembrance of Jesus' charge to Peter that if he truly loved Jesus he was to feed Jesus' lambs and sheep (John 21:15-17).

In order to qualify for the Lamb Award an adult must have been actively involved both working with youth within their congregation as well as in a civic youth organization such as scouting. Anyone who has been involved with our troop knows of the hard work Art and Rita have put into the troop through the years. What many might not know is how active they have been at their home congregation, Christ Mertz.

Knowing that both Art and Rita are the kind of people who prefer to work behind the scenes and not call attention to themselves, our congregation and Christ Mertz applied for this award without them knowing it. What a privilege to honor these two servants of Christ and to thank God for giving them to us and our youth.

THANK YOU NOTES

Dear friends of New Jerusalem Church, thank you for all so much for the very pretty crocheted bookmark! Your thoughtfulness and kindness is very much appreciated. – Sincerely, *Norma Conrad*

“Openhearted connection with another child of God makes compassion real—not just a virtue, but a practice, a way of living well with others (p. 45).

–*The Desert of Compassion*, Rachel M. Srubas,
Westminster John Knox Press 2023.

BRANDYWINE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS
40 Days, 40 Food Items

In observance of the Lenten Season, many people choose to “give up” something they enjoy as they enter a period of reflection. An alternative to or perhaps in addition to this observance is to “take on” something new. Please consider contributing food to the Brandywine Food Pantry. You can collect an item for each day of the 40 days in Lent.

1. peanut butter
2. jelly
3. Spaghetti O’s
4. canned chicken
5. ramen noodles
6. oatmeal
7. canned green beans
8. canned fruits
9. canned carrots
10. Manwich
11. Knorr’s
12. canned tuna
13. juice
14. flour
15. sugar
16. macaroni and cheese
17. ready-made soups
18. instant mashed potatoes
19. toilet paper
20. paper towels
21. Hamburger Helper
22. canned corn
23. coffee
24. baked beans
25. toothbrushes
26. toothpaste
27. bath soap
28. laundry detergent
29. shampoo
30. conditioner
31. deodorant
32. crackers
33. spaghetti sauce
34. ketchup
35. salad dressings
36. mustard
37. tomato soup
38. Chef Boyardee
39. granola bars
40. microwave meals



- 3 Linda Guinther
- 13 Judith Kemmerer
- 18 Sara Moyer
- 19 Lucille Jones
- 21 Cindy Rissmiller
- 25 Barbara Johnson
- 25 Lillian Jones
- 26 Donald Gajewski
- 28 Jerry Keller



- 5 Earl Derr and Gladys Kline (7 years)



“Our hope is that you see how Jesus experienced challenges and emotions just like we have. We want to provide a safe place to ask questions, including the tough ones. We are also about sharing Jesus’ openness to people that others might have excluded. His message went out to all. And though you may see religious people as often hypocritical or judgmental, know that Jesus saw that, too—and didn’t like it either. Instead, Jesus taught and offered radical compassion and stood up for the marginalized.” – *He Get Us* campaign

“God give me the equanimity to accept Jesus at his most challenging, the humility to be transformed by his grace, and the discernment to live with compassion toward myself and others. Amen.”

-*The Desert of Compassion* by Rachel Srubas. Worship material provided through *The Thoughtful Christian*, John Knox Press

We do accept sugar free, low sodium, and gluten free. The Brandywine Food Pantry is located at St. Peter’s UCC, 122 West Franklin Street, Topton, PA 19562.



WORSHIP SPONSORS & ASSISTANTS

Altar Flower Sponsors:

March 5 – Gladys Kline and Earl Derr
March 12 – *sponsor needed*
March 19 – Dale Schwoyer
March 26 – *sponsor needed*

Bulletin Sponsors:

March 5 – Gladys Kline and Earl Derr
March 12 – *sponsor needed*
March 19 – *sponsor needed*
March 26 – *sponsor needed*

Sanctuary Candle Sponsor:

Larry and Faye Dey

Altar Guild Volunteer(s):

Joshua Keck and Cheryl Wiltrout

Communion Bread Sponsor:

March 5 – Gladys Kline

Communion Set-up Volunteer:

March 5 – *volunteer needed*

Readers:

March 5 – Sara Jane Beshore
March 12 – Ty Rissmiller
March 19 – Dale Schwoyer
March 26 – Gladys Kline

Councilperson(s) for the Month:

Ted Eshbach and Sherrie Carl



**Daylight Saving Time Begins
Sunday, March 12th**

CONSIDER PERCENTAGE-BASIS GIVING

No matter how or what amount you give to your congregation, thank you! Your offerings sustain important ministries, and there is no such thing as an inappropriate or inadequate offering.

But if you are among the many who give regularly on a “lump sum” basis, consider giving on a percentage basis instead.

The “lump sum” basis is when donors give a fixed amount – say, \$50 a week – to the church, regardless of what percentage it represents in their annual income. The advantage of lump sum giving is that it’s simple to calculate and keep track of. But lump sum giving reveals little about the generosity behind the gift. For a poorer family, \$50 a week may be significant, whereas it could be a pittance for a wealthy family.

Since the Bible lifts up the principles of sacrificial giving as well as tithing, giving by percentage provides a better measure for giving. Once a family has calculated their gift as a percentage of income, it’s easier to track it and, over time, build up to a tithe. Here’s how to get started with percentage giving:

- Calculate your regular offering over the course of the year.
- Divide the total yearly offering by your total annual income. This will give you a figure.
- Multiply that figure by 100 to determine your percentage giving.

When planning your offering, consider increasing it by 1 percent a year. If you do, in less than 10 years you will be tithing. However you give, thank you for supporting God’s ministries.

--Rob Blezard

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Thank You
FOR
GIVING
GENEROUSLY

**New Jerusalem Lutheran Church
Statement of Accounts**

January 31, 2023

<u>Asset Accounts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Memorial	\$ 18,532.74
Thrivent	10,337.73
Checking	4,946.00
Youth	412.68
Fidelity	54,639.85
Cash Reserve	19,422.70
Mission Investment Fund	11,666.80
Local Care	<u>2,395.31</u>

Total: \$ 122,353.81

Total Balance of Asset Accounts
from **January 31, 2022** \$ 142,005.61

January 2023 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’ Income

	<u>Income</u>		
	<u>Required</u>	<u>Actual</u>	
<u>Income</u>			
<u>Used For:</u>	<u>Per Month</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Operating Expenses	\$ 9,860.00	\$ 6,652.25	\$ (3,207.75)

*Income Required per Month — Based on 2023
Budget Passed by Congregation
Less Budgeted Benevolence Contribution*

ELCA MISSION SUPPORT

In 2022, congregations of the Northeastern PA Synod contributed a total of \$1,832,213.00 to undesignated Mission Support. Of this total amount, \$971,072.89 stayed in the Synod and \$861,140.11 was sent on to the ELCA to support various ministries. This means that 53 cents of every dollar of Mission Support from our congregation supported the commitments below for mission and ministry right here in the Synod.

- Deepen the spiritual lives of people
- Build a network that uses our gifts, skills, and resources
- Develop leaders, both lay and ordained
- Enhance lives of service to deal with social needs and issues
- Strengthen the work being done with children, youth, and families

New Jerusalem Lutheran Church generously gave **\$2,577.00** to Mission Support in 2022. Thank you! Find out more about how our generous offerings to Mission Support helped the ELCA and our Synod at: www.https://nepasynod.org/resources.

 **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, and Irene Noll.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT Members: Holly Allen, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Rodney Keller, Forrest Merkel, Grace Miller, Lloyd and Linda Moyer, Horace Rothemel, and Gabriele Sanders.

Friends of the congregation: Charlie Ackerman, John Arndt, Steve Beck (PA), Steve Beck (TX), Adam Bell, Jason Beshore, Darlene Bogert, Tim C.-W., Bishop Christopher deForest, Earl Derr, John Drumheller, Jennifer Engle, Alice Epler, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Katelyn Hotzman, June Jenkins, Debra Kenny, Angie Kistler, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Cayden Kresge, Catherine Lenio, Julia Lombardo, Joe M., Rodney Miller, Vivian Reist, Arlan Schwoyer, Patricia Sigfried, Cleon and Jean Smith, Shawn Spatz, Robert Taylor, Leon Wagner, Leticia Weaver, Linda Wegman, Richard Weller, Althea Young, Becky, Dawn, Jason, Lynn, Pat, Sam, Tim, and Vivian.

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, Peg H., Denise Haage, Amanda Herman, Johnson-Agiri Family, Mary Kring, Ella Loose, Leilani Rodriquez, Andrew S., Tierney Schmeer, Donna Schwoyer, and Lesley Wegman.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF CHRIST'S CHURCH AND OUR LOCAL CONGREGATION

Did you know that some of the ways our congregation invests its money enable us to help spread God's love outside our walls? The question was asked at the annual meeting about just what Mission Investment Fund and Thrivent are. Here are some explanations. Note that both financial organizations accept individual investments, not just institutional ones.

MISSION INVESTMENT FUND (MIF)

Representative Helen Wuerl explains that:

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) is a financial ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It provides loans for capital projects for ELCA congregations and ministries. To fund these loans, MIF offers a variety of investments that are available to ELCA congregations, ministries and members.

As the lending ministry of the church, MIF works alongside the ELCA in its effort to grow the church. "The loans we make to congregations and ministries are impact investments," says MIF President Eva Roby. "These loans generate measurable impact on congregations and ministries—and the individuals and communities they serve."

In Center City Philadelphia, for example, MIF partnered with the Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion, which directs several robust feeding ministries. The congregation chose MIF to finance two important building and renovation projects: a new, commercial-grade kitchen and renovated fellowship hall. These enhancements paved the way for Church of the Holy Communion to expand its wide-reaching food ministry for those in need. Pastor Kari Hart explains, "We had a dream of providing more meals—a community meal for people experiencing food insecurity, people experiencing homelessness. MIF permitted us to dream. This is a great example of one ministry helping another ministry. We'll do anything we can to provide food for people."

You can watch the inspiring video of Church of the Holy Communion's story on MIF's website: www.mif.elca.org/mission-investment-stories/holy-communion-philadelphia. You can also read about other MIF projects in their publication called *The Mustard Seed*.

Here are other recent examples of the transformative work by the congregations and ministries assisted by MIF loans:

- New education buildings for youth ministry and preschools.
- New fellowship spaces to encourage connections among congregational members and with community groups.
- Medical and dental clinics sponsored by congregations to offer specialized health care services.
- Expanded sanctuaries to welcome more members and plan for future generations.

MIF is a strong, stable financial organization—well capitalized and prudently managed to help assure security for investors. It and its predecessor funds have been serving Lutheran congregations for more than 150 years. Some of us may have heard it called the Church Extension Fund or the Mission Loan fund in the past.

Again, you as an individual can contribute to MIF's impact investments with investments of your own. Be assured that when you and/or we do invest in a term investment or savings account, the investment dollars fund the transformational loans that MIF makes.

For more information or to apply for an investment:

Visit MIF's website www.mif.elca.org
or call MIF at 877-866-3522

WHILE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT MONEY, DID YOU KNOW THE ELCA HAS A FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

The ELCA Federal Credit Union is the newest financial ministry of the church to offer an even broader array of products and services to all members of the ELCA. Please visit www.elcafcu.org to view the ELCA Federal Credit Union's portfolio of products and services.



Thrivent is a financial services company with origins deeply rooted in the Lutheran faith. The modern company was formed in 2002 through the merger of Lutheran Brotherhood (f. 1917) and Aid Association for Lutherans (f. 1902). Today, it is a Fortune 500 financial services company serving more than 2 million clients, offering a full range of expert financial solutions that include advice, investments, insurance, banking, and generosity. Thrivent has more than 2,000 financial advisors located across the country, including representatives located throughout Berks and Lehigh Counties.

What makes Thrivent uniquely different is its not-for-profit structure as a fraternal benefit company, and its common bond to serve Christians. Thrivent provides financial advice that is grounded in Christian values, striving to help clients be good stewards of *all* that they have been given.

Among the Generosity programs offered to clients are:

Thrivent Choice – a charitable grant program that allows eligible insurance and annuity clients to direct some of Thrivent’s charitable funding. New Jerusalem Lutheran Church is enrolled to receive Choice Dollars and to date has received \$11,980 in Thrivent charitable funds. The program also allows for personal *donations* made to the church via Thrivent’s Choice catalog, and Thrivent will pay all credit card transactions fees (up to \$300,000 – I must include this disclaimer). Here’s a link to New Jerusalem’s Choice catalog listing: [Thrivent Choice | Thrivent Financial for Lutherans](#)

Thrivent Action Teams – are member-driven volunteer service, fundraiser or education projects in support of causes and organizations. Thrivent provides up to \$250 in funding to defray project expenses along with Live Generously t-shirts for volunteers. 50 Thrivent Action Team projects have been conducted with New Jerusalem Lutheran Church since 2016, including food drives, disaster relief, shoo-fly pie bake sales and more.

Money Canvas – a new, *free*, virtual coaching program designed to help individuals and families build healthier budgeting, savings and spending habits. It’s a place to learn basic money management skills and correct spending habits without fear of judgment or sales pressure. Money Canvas is available to *everyone* – not just Thrivent clients. To learn more about the offering or to book an online session with a Money Canvas coach, visit: [Money Canvas | Thrivent](#)

I can tell you that New Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Fleetwood has received \$11,980 in Thrivent Choice funding since the program began in 2010. Last year the church received \$452. I can also see a total of 50 Thrivent Action Teams associated with the church since 2016 (eight last year). With \$250 provided for project expenses, that totals another \$12,500 in funding.

Vincent Saraceno is the Thrivent Advisor assigned to the church. Let Pastor Ruth know if you are interested in scheduling a coffee hour and she will reach out to him.

A unique financial services organization

We're a membership-owned fraternal organization dedicated to serving the unique needs of our clients—guiding them toward financial choices that will help them live the lives they want today and tomorrow.

As a fraternal benefit society, we have a shared purpose, have clients who share a common Christian bond, provide mutual protection in the form of insurance to eligible clients and offer clients opportunities to support their local communities through regional Thrivent Member Networks.

Putting purpose into action for our clients & communities

Since our founding more than 100 years ago, Thrivent has supported and amplified our clients' generosity efforts, providing them with the tools and resources to take action—and create impact. We believe humanity thrives when people make the most of all they've been given. Our organization helps people achieve financial clarity, enabling lives of meaning and gratitude.

The values that shape us:

We live in service

We serve our clients and communities with compassion, committing in heart and mind to put empathy and care into action.

We act as one team

We understand and treasure the responsibilities we're given, holding ourselves accountable to ensure we deliver on the promises we make.

We do what's right

We treat one another with respect and honesty. By acting with integrity, we build trusted relationships and do right by those we serve.

We get things done

We take initiative, act with urgency and use good judgment to adapt to challenges, making each other better and getting more done.

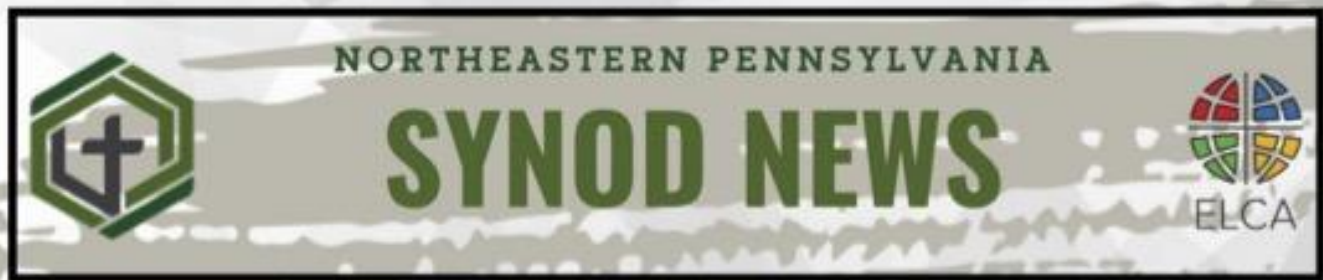
We think big

By staying curious and welcoming diverse perspectives, we anticipate needs, have the courage to take smart risks and make bold decisions.

THRIVENT CHOICE

THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS

THRIVENT MONEY CANVAS



Love for the Least

.....

The Global Missions Team at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, Emmaus, PA, led an advent appeal this past holiday season to support the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Arusha Lutheran Medical Center in Tanzania, which was established by ELCA medical missionary Dr. Mark Jacobson, and also had the opportunity to lead the church's worship services on their annual Global Missions Sunday, held this year on January 22, 2023, to share about this ministry with those in attendance.

When a baby is born prematurely in Tanzania, it is considered as good as dead. Premature babies there are often referred to as 'stillbirths.' This was not acceptable to the staff of Arusha Lutheran Medical Center. Fifteen years ago they began to offer neonatal intensive care, and pediatrician Dr. Steve Swanson joined the program in 2011. Initially they were only able to save 4% of the babies. Today they serve almost 400 babies annually, and the survival rate in 2022 was 92%.

The care at the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center NICU is the best in Tanzania, and in most of East Africa. No baby is turned away because of inability to pay or insurance status. The five doctors and 26 nurses who staff the NICU do not just care for the tiny infants, but for the parents as well. A hospital bed and meals are provided to every mother with a baby in the NICU and both parents are encouraged and coached on how to interact with their babies.

Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit raised \$3,785 from their Love for the Least appeal to be directed to the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center NICU in Tanzania, and 175 preemie knit or crochet hats were lovingly crafted for the NICU infants, which they hope to send to Tanzania. These hats can save lives by helping to keep the babies warm.

Charlotte Gross, Co-Coordinator



JUNE 1-3 2023 AT
KALAHARI RESORT

ATTENTION ALL CONGREGATIONAL LEADERS

Now is the time to figure out who will be your voting members at the synod assembly! Don't worry, it will be well worth their time and yours! Let's have a record turnout, as we gather together (in person) as a synod for the first time since the Great Disruption of 2020. If you have any questions contact the synod office, and together we'll figure it out together!

BEING PUBLICLY INCLUSIVE OF ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS IS AN IMPORTANT STEP YOUR CONGREGATION CAN TAKE TO BE THE COMMUNITY CHRIST CALLS YOU TO BE!



Become a Reconciling in Christ congregation! Reach out to Stacey Burke in the synod office (stacey@nepsynod.org) for more information.

HONORARIUM UPDATE

How much should we pay a supply minister? That question is frequently asked by congregations in transition or when the regular minister is away.

Discussion by the Committee of Deans produced the following:

*that beginning 03/01/2023, minimum honorarium amounts for supply ministers be set as follows:

One worship service	no less than \$175
Two worship services	no less than \$225
Three worship services	no less than \$250

an additional \$50 for multiple point charges

an additional \$50 for leading an adult forum or Sunday School class

an additional \$75 if one of the services is on a day other than Sunday, (Saturday evenings, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, etc.)

Starting
March

FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE NEWS AND STORIES FOLLOW US ON ALL SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS OR VISIT US AT GODSLOVE.ORG

JOIN US FOR A DELICIOUS

PASTA DINNER



NEW JERUSALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

For more information call 610-682-6064

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2023

4:00 - 7:30 P.M.

Adults \$12.00

Youth 3-12 \$6.00



DINNER INCLUDES:

Pasta

Bread

Pepper Cabbage

Beverage

and Dessert

MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Midweek Lenten Service, Christ Mertz, Dryville PASTOR – Vacation	2 10:00am-Coloring Group PASTOR – Vacation	3 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton PASTOR – Vacation	4
5 Second Sunday in Lent 10:00am-Worship with Holy Communion	6 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	7 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	8 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Midweek Lenten Service, New Jerusalem	9 9:30-11:00am-Compassionate Crafters, Trinity Lutheran, Topton	10 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	11 4:00-7:30pm-Pasta Dinner @ New Jerusalem
12 Third Sunday in Lent 10:00am-Worship -Fellowship after worship DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS	13 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Council Mtg.	14 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	15 12:00pm-Fellowship Luncheon (location TBD) 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Midweek Lenten Service, Hope, Bowers	16	17 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton ST. PATTY'S DAY	18 8:00am-James Men's Ministry Breakfast, Trinity Lutheran, Topton
19 Fourth Sunday in Lent 10:00am-Worship 2:00pm-Stuffing animals for bingo prizes at Topton Lutheran Home NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	20 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. SPRING BEGINS	21 11:00am-1:00pm-Helping Harvest Food Distribution at Brandywine Heights Intermediate/Middle School 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	22 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Midweek Lenten Service, Trinity, Topton	23 9:30-11:00am-Compassionate Crafters, Trinity Lutheran, Topton	24 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Confirmation Retreat at Bear Creek Camp →	25 Inclement Weather Date for Pasta Dinner
26 Fifth Sunday in Lent 10:00am-Worship -Fellowship after worship Confirmation Retreat at Bear Creek Camp	27 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 6:30pm-Council Members Meeting with St. Paul's Council Members at New Jerusalem Church	28 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	29 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Midweek Lenten Service, St. Peter's UCC, Topton	30	31 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	