

# THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Ruth F. Doty, Pastor

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OFFICE PHONE: 610.682.6064

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

*(Normally Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon, but during the current times, please call ahead to make sure someone is there.)*

*"Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful,*



*and kindle in us the fire of your love."*

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,

In a recent Confirmation Class meeting with Diane and Justin Keller we began our study of The Acts of the Apostles (aka Acts) which picks up the story that began with the Gospels. We read in our workbook:

“All the new followers of Jesus needed ways to get together to share their experiences and encourage one another at a time when it was truly risky to be a Christian. God’s solution was the church.”<sup>1</sup>

So, we asked ourselves, “What does *being* the church include?” “What would you say?”

We do not live in a time and place where it is necessarily risky to be a Christian, but we *always* live in a time when we risk losing sight of what it means to be church. We know from a favorite Sunday School hymn,

“The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple,  
the church is not a resting place, the church is a people.”<sup>2</sup>

Our confirmation book goes on to say that for the people who came to believe in Jesus,

“building the church often meant changing their ideas about who was included and what it meant to follow Jesus.”<sup>1</sup>

Changing ideas about who is included and what it means to follow Jesus has been an ongoing challenge for the church and takes a new twist today. We are not only challenged to expand our ideas about *who* is included, but also about *how* folks are included.

At the beginning of the pandemic our leaders made a decision not to gather for worship in the building. This decision was made because it was the way to care for ourselves and our neighbors. (The government never ordered us not to meet, though it did advise against gatherings.) As a result of not meeting in our building, we not only figured out other ways to meet such as Zoom and communion on the parking lot, we also discovered these new forms enabled some folks could be part of the worshipping community who have not been able to enter the building because of health or transportation concerns. At the same time we have been aware that many among us long to return to worship in our building, in the place that holds so many memories, sights and sounds that enhance our experience of being in the presence of God.

Each adaptation for gathering and worship has its limitations and challenges. These times call not only for adaptation, but for *continuous* adaptation and innovation.<sup>3</sup> And so, on Pentecost Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will again offer a short worship service in the building. This will be followed by communion on the parking lot, so that as many as possible can participate in the Lord's Supper.

We, like early Christians and the church throughout the ages, are challenged to be open to changing our ideas not only about what it means to follow Jesus and who is to be included, but also *how* they are to be included. How do we honor, rejoice with, and provide for those for whom worship in the building is not only possible, but deeply meaningful? How do we continue to include as full participants in the worshipping community those who cannot enter the building? (Currently there are at least 30 on my active "shut-in" list.) How do we expand this sense of full participation to those who do not have the technology or skill to join in things like Zoom? How can we continue to touch, to reach out to and show hospitality to those who are hungry for Christian community and have or might be willing to try out following our worship offered digitally?

Like other servant leaders, as I seek to provide care for each member of our parish and those God brings to my attention, I come up against limits. While focusing in one direction, I risk seeming to neglect another. Please know that I and other leaders in the congregation care for each of you, as well as for sharing God's love and good news beyond our membership. We pray for God's Spirit to guide and inspire us. We welcome ideas and offers to help prepare and seek innovative ways to help us followers of Jesus get together to share our experiences, encourage one another, and worship our creative God whose love has no limits.

Peace and joy be yours this day.

*Pastor Ruth*

<sup>1</sup> Collaborate Lutheran Confirmation Student Handbook: Unit 3, New Testament, sparkhouse, Minneapolis. 2015. p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Avery and Marsh, Hope Publishing Co.

<sup>3</sup> Adaptation means making changes to respond to current conditions. Innovation involves looking ahead, anticipating new situations, and trying out changes that may have a positive effect.

# NEWS & EVENTS

in New Jerusalem and the Synod

## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were discussed and decisions made at our council meeting on April 12:

- Rita Kayhart, representative for our Boy Scout Troop and Pack #585, provided council with an update as to how the scouts are doing.
- Council agreed to hold in-person worship on Sunday, May 23, Pentecost Sunday. Plans for how future worship services will be held are still in progress.
- A meeting has been scheduled with Pastor Rachael Dietz, the Executive Associate to the Bishop for Leadership, to allow her to assist us in discerning the ministry to which God is calling us as a congregation.

## WORSHIP AT NEW JERUSALEM

At their meeting, members of the Worship and Music Committee discussed in-person worship and made the decision to worship in the church building on Sunday, May 23, which is Pentecost Sunday. As was our practice in the fall, this will be a short service and we will be following social distancing guidelines. The service will be immediately followed with communion on the parking lot so that those who are not able to enter the building can at least share in the Lord's Supper.

### Communion on the Parking Lot

A **healing service including communion** will be held **Saturday, May 1, at 5:00 p.m.** In addition, on **May 23** the 10:00 a.m. worship begun in the building will be concluded by sharing communion on the parking lot at **11:00 a.m.**

For services on Zoom (May 2, 9, 16 and 30), you can connect with Zoom worship via internet, phone, and other methods. If you are not already receiving information about how to connect, please contact the church office. Links will now also be listed in the bulletins.

Bulletins are being mailed or emailed to those who request them so that they can worship at home. If you would like to receive one, please let us know at

610.682.6064 or [njelchurch@windstream.net](mailto:njelchurch@windstream.net).

Bulletins are also available on our website.

Those not able to join a Zoom service, can watch them later on our Facebook page or on our website under the "Zoom Worship Services" tab.

Our website is:

<https://newjerusalemlutheran.weebly.com>

## LINK FOR ZOOM WORSHIP

New Jerusalem Sunday Worship

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89499550266?pwd=Mnl3bmxCMkI3TDIHZGlrNXVaVVlmZz09>

Meeting ID: **894 9955 0266**

Passcode: **27**

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,89499550266# US (Chicago)

Dial +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: **894 9955 0266**

## REMINDER ABOUT WORSHIP IN THE BUILDING

Please be assured that we will practice safe re-opening procedures. Here are some guidelines to help us:

- Please use the entrance ramp to the old door.
- There is ample hand sanitizer located throughout the sanctuary.
- All attendees are expected to wear a mask or face covering.
- Pews are marked off to encourage proper social distancing.
- Please only sit with those with whom you have frequent contact, such as family members.
- The first to enter the building are asked to sit in the front.
- Others are asked to fill in the front first then toward the rear.
- Dismissal will be in reverse order with those in the rear exiting first.
- An offering basket is located in the entrance way.
- Services will be shorter than usual.
- Music with words for meditation or recorded anthems will substitute for singing.
- Folks are asked to greet one another outside since there will be no passing of the peace during the service.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

The Bible Study group is currently finishing its study of the Letter to the Galatians and will soon begin The Letter to the Romans. Bible Study will be held on **Mondays, May 3, 10, 17, and 24 at 11:00 a.m.** Let Pastor Ruth know if you would like to join.

## **COLORING GROUP**

Our Coloring Group continues meeting monthly to color Bible-themed pages while visiting with one another. The next meeting is **Thursday, May 6, at 10:00 a.m.** Pages and supplies provided, but feel free to bring your own. There is plenty of room to maintain a safe distance from one another. Participants are asked to wear masks. Friends are welcome.

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.

If you are interested, please let Phyllis Fenstermacher (610.682.2423) or Diane Keller (610.682.4152) know.

## **THREADS FOR OTHERS**

Keep on knitting and crocheting for the Seafarers. If you need material to make masks or yarn for cowls and hats for seafarers, let Pastor Ruth know.

## **MAY WORSHIP SPONSORS**

The cost to sponsor bulletins for a week is still \$7.00 and sponsorship of the Sanctuary Candle is \$15.00 for a month. If you would like to sponsor any of the available dates below, please leave a message on the church answering machine with your dedication. Thank you!

Since the pandemic limits our ability to gather, we are now mailing bulletins to members. The cost for that is about \$45 per week. Any contributions to help offset this cost are appreciated.

### **Altar Flowers for May:**

May 23 – Gladys Kline

### **Bulletin Sponsors for May:**

May 2 – Virginia Guinther

May 9 – sponsor needed

May 16 – sponsor needed

May 23 – sponsor needed

May 30 – sponsor needed

### **Sanctuary Candle Sponsor for May:**

sponsor needed

**JUNE 2021 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE** is **Sunday, May 16th.** Please have all articles and announcements to the church office by this date.

## **SAVE THE DATE**

A Festival featuring The Majestics is being planned for **Saturday, September 11th.** The Stewardship Committee will be asking for a Thrivent Grant to help support this.

### **Watch for these other projects:**

- Tying fleece blankets for Camp Noah
- Additional support for the Lutheran Center Food Pantry
- Supplemental supplies for Seafarer's satchels – end date October 31

In addition to these drives, the Stewardship Committee will be working on developing an inventory of our resources, as a way of assisting the congregation in discernment of our call to ministry.

## **WHAT CAN WE SAY BUT THANKS, THANKS, AND AGAIN, MANY THANKS**

Lent and Easter have been especially busy this year. Many thanks to members of the Worship and Music Committee, organist and choir members for all the hard work they put in to prepare the weekly, midweek, and Holy Week services during Lent. Thanks to all who colored the illustrations for our Good Friday worship. Thanks to everyone who reads during worship.

A special thanks to all our thespians (aka actors) and videographers (people who held the phones that videotaped the segments) who helped produce our Virtual Easter service. (Now you can claim a fancy title.) And most especially, thanks to our Office Administrator, Korinne, for all her work producing all the extra bulletins, and mailing bulletins while dealing with the unpredictability of the postal service, and helping to prepare the power point slides for worship, all while attending to her "normal" duties.

There is always a danger when offering public thanks, that not everyone has been named. Please know that the contributions of each person to the many details of life in our congregation are not only valued, but greatly appreciated. If you think of someone in particular, please express your thanks as well.

## PUTTING TOGETHER AN ALLELUIA

During Easter Sunday worship we sang along with a virtual choir of over 1700 Lutheran singers and musicians. What a glorious way to celebrate our Lord's resurrection and to remember that we are church together.

Here you will find another expression of uniting in praise: a mosaic put together by our members, a larger scale version of the page many of you colored at home.

We rejoice together as we remember that God, not death, has the final word, for Christ *is* risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!



## NOTICE A CHANGE OUTSIDE OUR BUILDING?

Just as many of us longed for a haircut during the stay-at-home directives, the bushes outside our doors were greatly in need of more than a trim. Thanks to all who helped clean up the area and to those who continue to plant and weed the flowerbed.

## BECAUSE OF YOU

Here's a *glimpse* of what was made possible because of contributions you and others made to ELCA good gifts in 2020:



- 26 fishponds serving 157 families in Malawi were fully stocked.
- 319 mothers and their newborn babies were provided with postnatal care in Bangladesh.
- 4 cows were born on a dairy farm in Senegal, which will contribute to producing milk for drinking and sale.
- 680 medical consultations were provided for vulnerable immigrants, refugees and trafficking victims in Eastern Europe.
- 38 programs provided backpacks full of food for children experiencing hunger in the United States.

Together we share God's love at home and around the world.

## SUPER SATURDAYS

The Faith Formation Resource Ministry Team presents Super Saturdays. Workshops will be held virtually on the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Cost is \$5.00. Please register in advance at [www.cvent.com/d/fjq1wn](http://www.cvent.com/d/fjq1wn). Log-in information will be sent to registrants two days before the event. Each workshop will feature a guest presenter. For a description of each workshop, check out the synod website at [www.godslove.org](http://www.godslove.org).

## BISHOP CHRISTOPHER DEFOREST INSTALLATION SERVICE

You're invited to the installation of our new bishop, Christopher deForest at the end of Synod Assembly on June 5th. Whether or not you attend the assembly, you're invited to participate fully in the installation worship, which will be broadcast live for all to join in and witness this truly joyous occasion. More information will follow letting you know how to connect to the worship and a specific start time.

# NEWS & EVENTS

## In the Community

**SAUSAGE SANDWICH SALE** – Hope Lutheran Church, Bowers, will be holding their first Sausage Sandwich Sale of the year on **Saturday, May 1st**. Cost is \$5.00 per sandwich. Pick-up beginning at 10:00 a.m. until sold out. Mark your calendars for additional sales on Saturday, June 5, and Saturday, August 7.



- 2 Derick Wartenluft
- 4 Dana Wartenluft
- 7 Erma Gajewski
- 8 David Moyer, Jr.
- 15 Susan Schlenker
- 15 Sharon Guinther
- 22 Daniel Gehman
- 26 Joshua Keck
- 26 Olivia Moyer



- 17 Donald and Erma Gajewski (41 years)
- 20 Blane and Jennifer Musser (21 years)



**THE PAST IS THE PAST. NOTHING AND NO ONE WILL *QUITE* GO BACK TO “NORMAL” — AND THAT CAN BE A GOOD THING.**

Yes, many options that were available to us before the pandemic and were slammed shut in 2020 are now opening up, but most of us realize some things will never be as they were. So, what can help us deal realistically?

Pastor Carey Nieuwof writes,

*They say it takes 21 days (or 66 days, depending on who you read) to form a habit.” [The pandemic has already passed 365.] That means a lot of new habits have been formed. Think about how much your patterns and the patterns of those you know have shifted in the last year. From work, to schooling, to shopping and eating, to travel and how you entertain yourself and your family – so much has shifted. Multiply the new and shifted habits by millions of people and you’ll quickly realize that normal has changed a lot in the last year. Going back to normal only works if normal still exists.*

The crisis of the pandemic has accelerated the rate of change in our culture.

*As much as you may wish that weren’t true... ignoring it, pretending it’s not happening and arguing it shouldn’t be the case will not reverse it.<sup>1</sup>*

But there can be some good news. Accelerated change is pushing us to re-evaluate what we are doing. Do you spot the root of the word *value* in that sentence? The accelerated change is pushing us to compare what we are doing with our values, to ask what is really important. Just as many folks have taken the extra time at home to clean out clutter, the changes that have occurred are also giving us an opportunity to shed what is not working well or no longer important to do, to focus our energy on what better matches our values and situation, and to try new ways of doing things. Pastor Nieuwof also notes that home is likely to become the new hub. Instead of running here and there, many are and may continue to discover the many gifts of family life and work to strengthen their relationships.

So here’s the deal: when it comes to dealing with change, we have choices. We can deny it is happening. We can spend our time and energy trying to recreate or revert to the past. We can admit change is happening and sigh in resignation. We

can adapt to it. And/or we can see the change, anticipate future changes and innovate. This doesn’t mean that we won’t grieve the loss of what was comfortable, of what we were used to, but it does mean that we do not have to be stuck in grief.

So let’s let the past be the past. Let’s celebrate and savor what was good about it. Let’s admit and learn from what was not good. Let’s sift out what might still be useful and true to our faith and our values. Let’s try things out and learn from what doesn’t work. And let’s live as people of the resurrection, as people of hope.

<sup>1</sup> Thoughts and quotes taken from “7 Disruptive Leadership Trends that will Rule 2021” and “The Pivot Ready Cheat Sheet” by Carey Nieuwof.

**SEEN ON THE INTERNET: SOME OF THE BEST WORDS LITERALLY EVER:**

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Bamboozled      | Flabbergasted |
| Discombobulated | Shenanigans   |
| Malarky         | Kerfuffle     |
| Skedaddle       | Nincompoop    |
| Flibbertigibbet |               |
| Whippersnapper  |               |
| Pumpnickel      |               |
| Poppycock       |               |
| Persnickety     |               |
| Dingleberry     |               |
| Flummoxed       |               |
| Gobbledygook    |               |
| Canoodle        |               |
| Codswallop      |               |
| Whatchamacallit |               |
| Thingamajig     |               |



Which ones do you use? Any others to add to the list?

**Bible Quiz**

Acts 1:1 (NIV) reads: “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach.” What “former book” did the author write to Theophilus?

- A. Matthew
- B. Mark
- C. Luke
- D. John



## New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Statement of Accounts

March 31, 2021

<u>Asset Accounts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Memorial	\$ 21,241.67
Thrivent	10,396.38
Checking	6,026.76
Youth	406.54
Fidelity	87,010.71
Cash Reserve	24,413.76
Mission Investment	11,569.98
Local Care	2,090.31

Total: \$ 163,156.11

Total Balance of Asset Accounts  
from **March 31, 2020** \$ 165,587.24

### March 2021 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’ Income

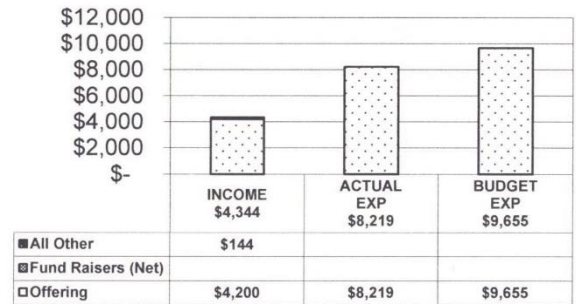
	Income Required	Actual	
Income			
<u>Used For:</u>	<u>Per Month</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Operating Expenses	\$ 9,651.25	\$ 4,681.00	(\$ 4,970.25)

*Income Required per Month — Based on 2021  
Budget Passed by Congregation  
Less Budgeted Benevolence Contribution*



“Because he works from home. That’s  
why we never see God in person.”

### MARCH 2021 YEAR-TO-DATE INCOME AND EXPENSE



MONTHLY AVERAGE

### CALENDAR YEAR 2021 INFORMATION NORMAL OPERATIONS (DOES NOT INCLUDE MAJOR REPAIRS/PURCHASES)

#### INCOME & EXPENSE ACTIVITY MARCH 2021 YEAR-TO-DATE

	Mar Y-T-D	Average Month
<b>Income</b>		
Offering	\$ 12,600	\$ 4,200
Fund Raisers	\$ -	-
Other	\$ 431	144
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 13,031</b>	<b>4,344</b>
<b>Actual Exp</b>	<b>\$ 24,658</b>	<b>8,219</b>
<b>Budget Exp</b>	<b>\$ 28,966</b>	<b>9,655</b>
<b>Shortage *</b>	<b>\$ (15,935)</b>	<b>(5,312)</b>

\*NOTE: Shortage - Total Income to 2021 BUDGET Expense  
Less Benevolence

# DID YOU KNOW?

### THREE INTERWOVEN CIRCLES

Each circle in this symbol represents one of the Persons of the Holy Trinity — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The circles, having no beginning and no end, signify the Trinity’s eternal nature. The circles’ interlacing symbolizes unity. In the center is a triangle, an ancient symbol of the Trinity.





IN OUR  
*Thoughts and Prayers*



## BRANDYWINE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

**(updated as of January 19, 2021)**

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 information 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, fruit juices, sugar, flour, mayonnaise, ketchup, spaghetti sauce, ramen noodles or cup of noodles, beef stew, Chicken-ala-King, canned meat (such as tuna, chicken breast or Spam), Chef Boyardee style canned items (such as beefaroni, lasagna, etc.), instant potatoes, pasta or rice sides, snacks of all kinds (cookies, chips, pretzels, pudding, etc.), shampoo, bar soap, body wash, and laundry detergent. ***We do not currently need: corn, green beans, mixed vegetables, or tomato soup.***

The pantry is always in need of the following items:

**Canned fruits:** pears, mandarin oranges, fruit cocktail, applesauce, etc.

**Canned vegetables:** creamed corn, sweet peas, carrots, beets, sliced potatoes, yams

**Canned goods:** diced tomatoes, tomato sauce

**Condiments:** yellow and brown mustard, pickles, salad dressings, vinegar, cooking oil

**Drinks:** hot or cold tea, water

**Extra:** peanut butter, marshmallow fluff, jelly

**Dry goods:** stuffing mix, Rice-a-Roni, ramen noodles, rice

**Baking items:** cake or brownie mix, frosting

**Breakfast food:** oatmeal, pop tarts, cereal bars

**Paper products:** tissues, toilet paper, paper towels

**Personal care items:** combs and hairbrushes

**Cleaning and disinfectant products:** dish soap and laundry detergent.

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

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

**As always, thank you for your support. It is greatly appreciated.**

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“If at first you don't succeed, try doing it the way mom told you to in the beginning.”

—Unknown

### **PRAYERS FOR AWARENESS OF GOD’S PRESENCE for Those with Limited Mobility or in Care Facilities:**

Anna Angstadt, Bertha Bennecoff, Verna Guinther, Shirley Hertzog, Leon Moyer, and Irene Noll.

### **PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT**

**Members:** Myles Angstadt, Dallas Bennecoff, Sara Jane Beshore, George DeLong, Erma Guinther, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Patricia Keck, Sheila Long, Forrest Merkel, Roy Merkel, Edna Miller, Grace Miller, Lloyd and Linda Moyer, Betty Musser, Dan and Joanne Pauley, Horace and Joyce Rothermel, Gabriele Sanders, Dale Schwoyer, Gary and Vikie Seyfert.

**Friends of the congregation:** Michael Basta, Carrie Bausch, Adam Bell, Darlene Bogert, Bob Bright, Thelma Bright, Joshua Buck, Mark Derr, Randy Dreibelbis, Lori Eck, Jennifer Engle, Nicole F., Harry Geidner, Jason Grof, Mamie Guinther, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Johnson-Agiri Family, Debra Kenny, Barry Kershner, Angie Kistler, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Cayden Kresge, Michelle Kurtz, Catherine Lenio, Ella Loose, Joe M., Rodney Miller, Johnathan Naugle, Ruth Ramsey, Tierney Schmeer, Family and friends of Ernest Sheetz, Patricia Sigfried, Thomas Spraut, Robert Taylor, Jacqi Wagner, Leticia Weaver, Linda Wegman, Richard Weller, Terry White, Althea Young, Barry, Lynn, Pat, Sam, and Tim.

**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, Denise Haage, Amanda Herman, David Jenkins, Mary Kring, Michelle Meck, Joanne Pauley, Arlene Reider, Leilani Rodriquez, Andrew S., Donna Schwoyer, the Spatz Family, and Leah Wiest.

## STEWARDS OF OUR ELDERS' WISDOM

“Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.” – **Exodus 20:12**

This month and next, as our culture celebrates Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day, God's people can make the occasions much more substantive than just greeting cards, gifts, and dinners for a few select relatives.

Instead, we can lift up the knowledge, wisdom and perspective that we possess from not only the mother and father figures in our own circles, but all the older men and women who have enriched our communities with their lives and experiences.

The wisdom of the past has helped people of every age to navigate the challenges of their times. Many communities in the world honor, respect, and value as “elders” their oldest members. It's something we surely can use in 21<sup>st</sup> century North America. Ours is a time of unprecedented change – both in the sweep of change and in the speed at which things are changing.

Our older members can give us perspective and patience and wisdom. Here are some ideas:

- Engage elders about issues facing you, your congregation and community. Listen deeply. Take notes.
- Enter into their thought world: How do they frame issues? What are their underlying assumptions? What sources help inform and inspire them?
- Compare their approaches to seeing the world and navigating challenges with your own. What is helpful? What can assist you?

Learning from our elder mother and father figures may be the best way to not only honor them, but also help us find our own way in life.

—Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2020, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for [www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org). He blogs at [www.thestewardshipguy.com](http://www.thestewardshipguy.com)



## A SHARED EXPERIENCE

What comes to mind when you hear the word *Pentecost*? Many people think of a mighty wind, tongues of fire and multiple languages. But Acts 2 begins with another detail that's just as key: Jesus' disciples “were all together in one place.”

Because they were together physically and spiritually, the early believers didn't miss the life-changing, world-changing birth of the Church.



The pandemic, while changing our definition of gathering, also highlighted our need for interaction. If Jesus' first followers hadn't been assembled on Pentecost, they would've missed the outpouring of God's power and the indescribable joy God had for them. Think about what believers today might miss if we neglect to worship with other friends of Christ. Who would want to miss God's blessings, promises and joy?

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

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## WORTH CELEBRATING

While going through the so-called “daily grind,” it's fun to anticipate special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries and holiday meals—especially when other people cook and clean up! Although *every day* is full of countless reasons to rejoice, we may not always feel like celebrating. Life's concerns pile high, distracting us from gratitude, joy and intentional acknowledgement of our blessings.



When you need a reason to smile and celebrate, head to [www.NationalDayCalendar.com](http://www.NationalDayCalendar.com). Almost every food item and hobby now has its own day, and you'll even find gems such as National Be Late for Something Day (September 5, if you want to plan ahead!).

These fun “occasions” can help you embrace small joys and may even inspire you to celebrate them with family or friends. As you do, consider what it is about today and each gift from God that makes this day special.

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

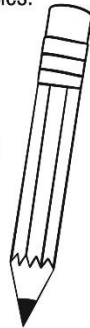


## WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Jesus commands us to be his witnesses. This craft is a reminder to reach out to all our "circles."

### What you need:

- 5 bowls or cups (assorted sizes)
- Construction paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Brad fastener
- Crayons or markers



### What you do:

1. Place the bowls and cups upside down, each on a different color of paper. Trace around the circles and cut them out.
2. With a pencil, pierce a small hole atop each circle. Layer circles on each other from largest to smallest, aligning the holes. Insert the brad through all layers.
3. Starting in the center, label the circles *my house*, *my city*, *my state*, *my country*, *the world*. Draw a picture on each one.
4. Pray, asking Jesus how you can spread his message.





## A lasting promise

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus speaks a final promise to the disciples.

*Directions: Use the picture clues to find the letters. Then write that word below to complete Acts 1:8, NIV.*

Find a letter that's in  but not in . \_\_\_\_\_

Find a letter that's in  but not in . \_\_\_\_\_

Find a letter that's in  but not in . \_\_\_\_\_

Find a letter that's in  but not in . \_\_\_\_\_

Find a letter that's in  but not in . \_\_\_\_\_

"But you will receive \_\_\_\_\_ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

ACTS 1:8, NIV

Answer: power

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# SYNOD NEWS

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## NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

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**Our Synod is trying something new – and we need you!** As many of you will know, our 2021 Synod Assembly (SA21) was scheduled to be at the Kalahari Resort in the Poconos. COVID canceled that plan. Our Synod Assembly for this year is to be virtual once again and is scheduled for June 4 & 5.



Our theme for SA21 is “Growing Young and Vital.

It will showcase our commitment to the nation-wide church renewal program called “Growing Young”. It will also introduce our three-pronged Synod-wide emphasis on the “Vital Signs,” signs of life and thriving among us. These Vital Signs are: **Loving the Land, Healing the Hurt, and Engaging the Stranger**. Our goal was to invite many churches and ministries in the Synod to participate by bringing your ministries in the three areas to display at the Kalahari Resort. **So, what to do, now that SA21 is virtual?**

**Introducing NEPA Ministry Lab 2021!** (MinLab for short.) MinLab is your opportunity to spotlight how your churches or organization’s ministries are already showing evidence of these Vital Signs. Where is your congregation shining as a “Jesus-Centered Community” (Growing Young)? Think of this day exactly as the name implies: *a ministry laboratory*. 1.) we give you a display area. You showcase your ministry in that space exactly how you choose. It is up to your creativity. 2.) this is your opportunity to mingle with others doing ministries like yours. And, 3.) perhaps most importantly, be inspired by others doing ministry around one of the other vital signs.

We will hold the event mainly outdoors at the Lutheran Center in Allentown – our Synod headquarters – on August 14, 2021 from 10:00AM to 3:00PM. More details about exactly when and how to participate will be coming soon. **This is where you come in!** How can your churches or organization’s ministries help all of us in our synod to see the signs of life among us?

This is your opportunity to proclaim to all the signs of life that are active in your local community. To inspire others to partner with you, or to start a ministry of their own. To show the rest of us how it works, right where you are planted. There will be lots of fun and excitement on full display. We will use as much of the Lutheran Center’s parking lot and property as we can to accommodate all who

## TROUBLE THE WATER RACIAL JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION

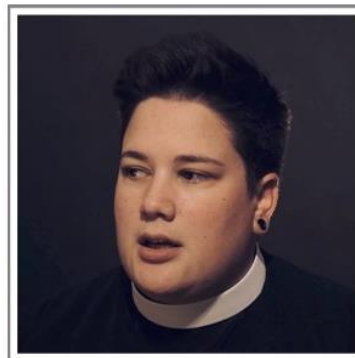
Registration is now open for the Trouble the Water: **Racial Justice & Reconciliation** event on Saturday, May 22. This is a completely virtual conference with our keynote speaker, the Rev. Cecee Mills, and featured speakers the Rev. Marsha Williams, Dr. Helen Davis, the Rev. Melissa Pohlman, and as both a workshop leader and preacher for the event we have the Rev. James Thomas. This is a day of **worship and workshops** to better grow in our understanding of racial justice and reconciliation that is open to all people: Pastors, Deacons, staff, lay member, non-church people, etc. Some of the topics of the workshops are a biblical view against racism, white privilege, how congregations can support communities during social unrest, & what is implicit bias is all about. [Register](#) from the synod's website. Please register and join us for this important and timely event. A suggested donation for the event is \$25 per person.

want to participate. There will be music – with an emphasis on Growing Young and Vital. Does your church have a ministry in music that reached out to others? Please bring that gift to share with us. There will be food – with an emphasis on food insecurity – an excellent example of all three of our vital signs. Loving the Land by using locally sourced ingredients; Healing the Hurt by sharing generously with those in need; Engaging the Stranger by showing love and compassion to “the least of these”. Join us!!

*-Dan Raudenbush, Trinity Lutheran Church, Kutztown*

### *Meet the Staff:* Rev. Lauren Wolfe Blatt

I joined the synod staff in January as the **Director of Communication and Events**. I also serve full-time at St. John's, Mahoning, which is a small rural congregation nestled in the Mahoning Valley farmlands. I received my undergraduate degree in Philosophy from Alvernia University, my Mdiv from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and I am currently working on my DMin from United Lutheran Seminary. I was ordained in 2017 as a Minister of Word and Sacrament, and I love pastoring God's people.



I enjoy spending time at home with my wife, Hannah, our dogs (Riley & Sirius), and our cats (Finnegan & Tank). In my leisure time, I enjoy anything related to Pokemon, reading, video games, and completing projects around the house!

# MAY 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>Fifth Sunday of Easter 10:00am-Worship on Zoom</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3</p> <p>11:00am-Bible Study via Zoom 12:15pm-Worship &amp; Music Committee Mtg. 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">6</p> <p>10:00am-Coloring Group</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">7</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p>10:00am-Hope Church, Sausage Sandwich Sale 5:00pm-Communion on the Parking Lot</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">8</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>Sixth Sunday of Easter 10:00am-Worship on Zoom</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mother's Day</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">10</p> <p>11:00am-Bible Study via Zoom 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Council Meeting</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">11</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">12</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">13</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ascension of Our Lord</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">15</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>Seventh Sunday of Easter 10:00am-Worship on Zoom</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p>11:00am-Bible Study via Zoom 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">18</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">19</p> <p>11:30am-Tentative Fellowship Luncheon (location TBD) 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">22</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>Day of Pentecost 10:00am-Worship in the building 11:00am- Communion on the Parking Lot</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p>11:00am-Bible Study via Zoom 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">27</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p> <p>12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">30</p> <p>The Holy Trinity 10:00am-Worship on Zoom</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">31</p> <p>11:00am-Bible Study via Zoom 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Memorial Day</b></p>					