

# THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Ruth F. Doty, Pastor

E-MAIL: [njelchurch@windstream.net](mailto:njelchurch@windstream.net)

WEBSITE: <https://NewJerusalemLutheran.weebly.com>

OFFICE PHONE: 610.682.6064

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

*(Monday 7:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., Wednesday 7:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., Thursday 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Please call ahead to make sure someone is there.)*



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.*



## **SAINTS, STEWARDS, AND THANKSGIVING DAY**

Dear Friends,

This year, since the first Sunday in November is already the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, we will celebrate All Saints Sunday and Stewardship Sunday on the same day. November is, of course, also the month when we celebrate Thanksgiving Day.

**All Saints Sunday:** the day on which we remember that we are saints, redeemed children of God, and when we especially remember and celebrate the lives of those who have died, who no longer live among us, but continue to serve God in the new form of life God has prepared for all of us.

**Stewardship Sunday:** the day on which we remember that all that we have belongs to God and that God has charged us with managing these riches, these gifts, for the good of all. In addition, at New Jerusalem on Stewardship Sunday, we review and vote on the proposed budget for next year, the plan for how we will manage the financial resources of the congregation.

**Stewards.** In biblical times stewards held an extremely important position. Larger households had stewards to manage what was going on, particularly the physical resources and which servants were doing what so that the members of the household would have what they needed to survive and, hopefully, thrive. In smaller households these responsibilities fell to the married couple, and, in some ways, especially to the wife. In our times we use the word *steward* or *stewardess* to refer to a person charged with managing the resources of a plane or ship so that the passengers have what they need. Those of us who manage households today, know the importance, great number, and variety of the responsibilities that entails. We know how stewardship is, essentially, not just work, but service.

Being stewards of God's gifts involves more than handling and managing objects, money, time, or even personal energy. Observing and celebrating All Saints Sunday and Stewardship Sunday on the same day reminds us that for those who know God's love in Jesus, the focus of our stewardship is on how to distribute God's love so that all in God's household will experience it, will have what is most essential for them to grow and thrive. All saints, whatever age and ability, are called to be stewards of God's love, God's undeserved love.

**Saints, Stewards, and Thanksgiving Day:** As we remember the saints who have gone before us, we thank God for the many and various ways in which these brothers and sisters shared God's love with us and with those around. We thank God for the many ways God used their personalities, abilities, and their possessions, words, and actions to share God's love with the world God dearly loves. We thank God for the many resources with which God has entrusted us in the present and pray that God would help us to be good stewards, good managers of the love we have received. We look forward to the time when we will gather together in the new form of life God has prepared for all of us, when we will gather together in praise and service to the Giver of Love.

Thank you, each of you, for the many ways you serve as stewards of God's love.

*Pastor Ruth*

# NEWS & EVENTS

in New Jerusalem and the Synod

## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were discussed and decisions made at our Council Meeting on October 11:

- A motion was made and approved to begin worshiping in our church building every Sunday.
- The Congregational Meeting to consider the 2022 budget is scheduled for Sunday, November 7, after the worship service.
- Due to difficulty keeping the doors in the back of the church closed and locked, a motion was made and approved to replace the two doors for safety and security reasons.
- A motion was made and approved to send out a letter to the congregation in January inviting members to join in small group discussions concerning the future of our church.

## DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

is **Sunday, November 21**. Please have all articles and announcements to the church office by this date.

## PASTOR RUTH OUT OF TOWN AND VACATION

Pastor Ruth will be out of town from November 11 until the 14 and on vacation from November 15 until the 22. If you would need pastoral care during this time, please contact Pastor Jeremiah Sassaman 610.657.0269.

## ALTAR GUILD VOLUNTEERS

Now that we are going to be worshiping in our church building every Sunday, we need volunteers to sign up for Altar Guild. Please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex if you are able to help. Thank you!



## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

We invite you to join us for worship on Sunday, November 7, and stay afterwards when we will hold our Congregational Meeting to vote on the 2022 proposed budget. Please make every effort to attend and encourage others to do so. Remember, we need 25 voting members for a valid vote to take place.

## ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

On Sunday, November 7, we will celebrate All Saints Sunday, a day to remember the whole cloud of witnesses that surrounds us and cheers us on as we continue our journey here on earth. We will be lighting candles on the altar in remembrance of those who have died within the past 12 months: Dallas Bennecoff, George DeLong, Helen Fair, Luke Harnish, Patricia Keck, Penny Keller, Shirley Levensgood, Shirley Marks, Roy Merkel, Leon Moyer, Gary Seyfert, Eleanor Shaeffer, and Ernest Sheetz. Each family present will be invited to light a candle for those whom they want to remember and thank. Join us for worship and Holy Communion.

## THANKSGIVING EVE WORSHIP SERVICE

will be held at Christ DeLong in Bowers on **Wednesday, November 24, at 7:00 p.m.** We hope you will join with members of our community churches.

## WORSHIP AT NEW JERUSALEM

**It was voted on at our Council meeting on October 11 to begin worshiping in our building every Sunday starting on November 7.**

Bulletins will continue to be mailed or emailed to those who request them so that those who cannot be present can join in 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.

We are continuing to explore possibilities for connecting people through zoom to worship in the building.

Meanwhile, if, for some unforeseen reason (e.g. inclement weather, a rise in the risk of infection, etc. we are not able to worship in the building we may be able to temporarily revert to Zoom. In this case you will be able to connect with Zoom worship via internet, phone, and other devices. Links will now also be listed in the bulletins or you can call the church office if you need more information. 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. Website: <https://newjerusalemlutheran.weebly.com>.

**PLEASE KEEP THIS INFORMATION  
HANDY IN CASE WE NEED TO USE ZOOM  
FOR 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**

**UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR WORSHIP AT  
NEW JERUSALEM**

Our current guidelines are listed below, but may change as the infection rate changes around us. The guiding principle is love of God and love for our neighbor, including the vulnerable among us.

- 1) For the time being, seating will be every other pew.
- 2) Masks are expected to be worn as an act of love for others.
- 3) Communion will be held the first Sunday of the month in your pew.

The Worship and Music Committee, the council and our Task Force will continue to monitor the situation and will make modifications as they deem it wise.

**NOVEMBER 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!

We are mailing bulletins to many members. The cost for that is about \$45 per week. Any contributions to help offset this cost are appreciated.

**Altar Flower sponsors for November:**

November 7 – Gladys Kline

November 14 – *sponsor needed*

November 21 – *sponsor needed*

November 28 – *sponsor needed*

**Bulletin Sponsors for November:**

November 7 – Larry and Faye Dey

November 14 – Phyllis Fenstermacher

November 21 – Anna Angstadt

November 28 – *sponsor needed*

**Sanctuary Candle Sponsor for November:**

*sponsor needed*

**Children's Bulletins for November:**

*sponsor needed*

**BIBLE STUDY**

Our Bible Study group continues to study Paul's letter to the Romans. This month we will meet on **Monday, November 1, 8, and 29 at 11:00 a.m.** in the church building. 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, November 4, 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.

**THANKSGIVING FOOD BOXES FOR  
FRIEND, INC.**

We are again collecting food items to complete Thanksgiving Meals through Friend, Inc. Some members have already signed up for particular food items. If you are interested in helping out, the following are items being collected: cans of sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, canned vegetables, bottle of fruit juice, stuffing mix, canned or instant potatoes, fruit cocktail, cookies, cocoa or coffee, and holiday napkins. Items must be returned to church no later than **Sunday November 14<sup>th</sup>**. We have received a \$250 Thrivent grant to supplement our donations.

**GIFTS FOR CHILDREN THROUGH FRIEND,  
INC.**

If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Cheryl Wiltrout at 610-683-7152 as soon as possible. She will supply you with the name of a child. You need only buy clothing items as toys are sponsored by East Penn Manufacturing. Gifts must be returned to the church office no later than **November 28<sup>th</sup>**. We also received a \$250 Thrivent Grant to supplement these donations.



## CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed on Thursday, November 25, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

## CONGRATULATIONS

To Shannon Fink and Chad Lutz who were united in marriage on Saturday, October 9, at New Jerusalem Lutheran Church. May God bless you both with a lifetime of love and joy.

## WITH SYMPATHY

Our condolences to the family and friends of Shirley R. Levengood who passed away on October 13, 2021. Shirley is Tammy Cleaver's mother. A funeral service was held at Catagnus Funeral Home, Allentown on Friday, October 15.

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Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Dallas R. Bennecoff who passed away on Monday, October 18, 2021. A funeral service was held at Mae Stump Funeral Home, Fleetwood on Monday, October 25.

## HELP NEEDED!

We will be decorating the church for Christmas on **Saturday November 27th at 1:00 p.m.** and are in need of folks to help do this job. At this time, we will be decorating the tree in blue for Advent. On December 19th after church we will be taking the Advent decorations off the tree and putting the angels on it. Please plan to stay after church to help with this project as well.

# NEWS & EVENTS

## in the Community

## FEED THE NEED

Christ Mertz Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dryville will be sponsoring a "Feed the Need" food packing project on Saturday morning, November 13, 2021 starting at 9:30 a.m. Your help is needed to pack 20,000 meals which will be distributed to local and regional food banks. They are also looking into shipping the meals to Haiti to assist in their ongoing earthquake recovery.

If you would like more information or would like to help, please contact Christ Mertz's Christian Education director, Carla Flemming, at [carla.flemming64@gmail.com](mailto:carla.flemming64@gmail.com).

# Stewardship Updates

## CHRISTMAS AT SEA: SATCHELS FOR SEAFARERS

Once again this year we will be filling satchels for those who transport our goods across the waters. The fingers of our members have been hard at work knitting and crocheting hats and cowls. Now it is time to provide the other items that go in a satchel:

- One Sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded (size M-L-XL)
- Three Pairs of Socks (thermal or gym)
- One T- Shirt (size M-L-XL) ▪ One Knitted Winter Cap (coordinating scarf optional; no pastels please)
- One Can of Nuts, Large Bar of Chocolate, or Health Snack Bar
- A Holiday or Christmas Card from YOU!

You pick the colors, styles and brands, but please no substitutions from the list. If buying both a sweatshirt and a t-shirt, please make them the same size.

If you would like to contribute any of these items, please get them to church by **November 21** so we can fill what is needed using a \$250 Thrivent grant. Additional hats and cowls are also due **November 21**.

## REMEMBER THE CLEAN-UP BUCKETS WE HELPED TO FILL

When Hurricane Ida struck, these buckets were quickly on their way to people in our region who needed the supplies. **Lutheran Congregational Services (LCS)** is also providing a case manager to help survivors identify available assistance and navigate applications. In addition, LCS is helping to match teams from Lutheran congregations in our region who can assist in muck out and rebuilding with those who need help.



**Daylight Savings Time Ends November 7th**



- 1 Diana Moyer
- 6 Justin Moyer
- 10 Irene Noll
- 11 Cheryl Wiltrout
- 12 Lisa Landis
- 19 Linwood Merkel
- 23 Gary Alexander Lambert
- 24 Carolyn Dise
- 25 Horace Rothermel
- 25 Emily Jones
- 27 Jeff Wengert
- 28 Baylee Cleaver



- 9 Daniel and Kathy Bailey (19 years)
- 25 Ty and Cindy Rissmiller (32 years)
- 28 Horace and Joyce Rothermel (62 years)

### REJOICE IN GOD'S SAINTS

Rejoice in God's saints today and all days!  
A world without saints forgets how to praise.  
Their faith in acquiring the habit of prayer,  
their depth of adoring, Lord, help us to share.

Some march with events to turn them God's way;  
some need to withdraw, the better to pray;  
some carry the gospel through fire and through  
flood:  
our world is their parish, their purpose is God.

Rejoice in those saints, unpraised and unknown,  
who bear someone's cross, or shoulder their own:  
they share our complaining, our comforts, our cares:  
what patience in caring, what courage is theirs!

Rejoice in God's saints today and all days!  
A world without saints forgets how to praise.  
In loving, in living, they prove it is true:  
their way of self-giving, Lord, leads us to you.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

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### HONORING OUR VETERANS

Veterans Day has its roots in what was called Armistice Day, when a peace agreement ended World War I on November 11, 1918. President Wilson proclaimed that Armistice Day was to be marked with solemn pride in heroism and with gratitude for victory as well as the “opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice.” In 1954, the remembrance was renamed Veterans Day to honor all U.S. military personnel. It’s a reminder to pray for and honor all who serve and sacrifice, to support and assist their families, and to pray that God will bring peace on earth.



– Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*



### THE JOURNEY BEGINS AT ADVENT

When Advent begins on November 28 this year, so does a new church year for liturgical congregations. The church seasons, which correspond to key events in Jesus’ life, begin with the four-week Advent period of preparation for our coming Savior at Christmas. After the 12-day season of Christmas is Epiphany, which begins January 6 and continues through Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. That period of preparation culminates in Holy Week, and then Easter marks the pinnacle of every church year. Forty days after the Resurrection we celebrate Ascension, and 10 days after that, the Pentecost season begins; it lasts until Advent, when the cycle begins again.

“Like a great waterwheel,” writes Joan Chittister, “the liturgical year goes on relentlessly irrigating our souls, softening the ground of our hearts, nourishing the soil of our lives until the seed of the Word of God itself begins to grow in us, comes to fruit in us, ripens in us the spiritual journey of a lifetime.”

– Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

## THANKSGIVING'S PATH TO CONTENTMENT

“Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.” – **Hebrews 13:5**

What would it take to make you happy? Really. In our culture, advertisements sell us on the idea that true happiness is always just one more purchase away. When we believe this, we put ourselves on the hamster wheel of want. No matter how hard we run, we will never get to happiness.

More often than happiness, the Bible speaks of contentment. The two concepts are often confused, but the distinction is important. Whereas happiness is a pleasurable sensation that rises and falls like the tide, contentment is a state of satisfaction that remains calm, like the surface of a pond.

God calls us to live contentedly, finding sufficiency in our lives, our relationships, and all we possess. We are enough. We have enough. When our essential needs are met, incessant wants do not infest our soul like itchy fleas.

How do we find contentment? Thankfulness provides a way. We give thanks for all we are and all we have, appreciating every blessing. Since this is the month of Thanksgiving, make a pledge to yourself this November to find contentment through giving thanks. Make a “Gratitude List” of everything for which you are thankful. Review it daily, praying over each blessing, “I thank God for ...” Add to it as you think of new things.

May you finish November as someone who is not only thankful, but also content with all you are and all you have.

Rob Blezard

*Copyright © 2021, 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)*



## 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, Verna Guinther, Shirley Hertzog, and Irene Noll.

**PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT Members:** Myles Angstadt, Family and friends of Dallas Bennecoff, Sara Jane Beshore, Erma Guinther, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Sheila Long, Forrest Merkel, Edna Miller, Grace Miller, Lloyd and Linda Moyer, Betty Musser, Horace and Joyce Rothermel, Gabriele Sanders, and Dale Schwoyer.

**Friends of the congregation:** Michael Basta, Carrie Bausch, Adam Bell, Darlene Bogert, Bob Bright, Thelma Bright, Mitch Burkhardt, Mark Derr, Randy Dreibelbis, Lori Eck, Jennifer Engle, Nicole F., Dennis Grof, 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, Family and friends of Shirley Levensgood, Ella Loose, Joe M., Mike Mattiuz, Rodney Miller, Harry Naugle, Johnathan Naugle, Ruth Ramsey, Lexi Recke, Tierney Schmeer, Patricia Sigfried, Cleon and Jean Smith, Shawn Sptaz, Robert Taylor, Leticia Weaver, Linda Wegman, Richard Weller, Terry White, Althea Young, Barry, Gabby, Lynn, Meaghan, Pat, Sam, and Tim.

**OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS:** We pray for: all seeking to respond responsibly to COVID-19, especially healthcare workers; those recovering from and responding to disasters; 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 systemic racism maintain inequality between people and injustice; an end to threats between nations; peace in the world; and our military personnel serving around the world.

**LONG-TERM PRAYER LIST:** Nancy Bennecoff, Gary DeWees, Don Gajewski, Erma Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, Denise Haage, Amanda Herman, Janis Kershner, Mary Kring, Michelle Meck, Arlene Reider, Leilani Rodriguez, Andrew S., Donna Schwoyer, and Leah Wiest.



# New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Statement of Accounts

**September 30, 2021**

<u>Asset Accounts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Memorial	\$ 21,818.82
Thrivent	11,193.04
Checking	1,025.58
Youth	406.58
Fidelity	60,883.47
Cash Reserve	34,416.24
Mission Investment Fund	11,603.88
Local Care	<u>2,160.31</u>

Total: \$ 143,507.92

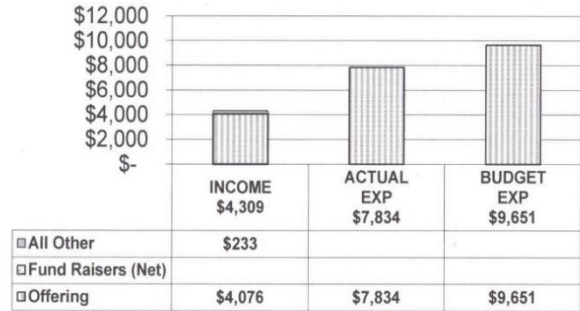
Total Balance of Asset Accounts  
from **September 30, 2020** \$ 157,859.95

## **September 2021 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’** **Income**

Income	Required	Actual	Difference
<u>Used For:</u>	<u>Per Month</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Income</u>
Operating Expenses	\$ 9,651.25	\$ 4,056.07	(\$ 5,595.18)

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

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



MONTHLY AVERAGE

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

INCOME & EXPENSE ACTIVITY SEPTEMBER 2021 YEAR-TO-DATE		
	Sep Y-T-D	Average Month
<b>Income</b>		
Offering	\$ 36,681	\$ 4,076
Fund Raisers	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ 2,102	\$ 233
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 38,783</b>	<b>\$ 4,309</b>
<b>Actual Exp</b>	<b>\$ 70,504</b>	<b>\$ 7,834</b>
<b>Budget Exp</b>	<b>\$ 86,863</b>	<b>\$ 9,651</b>
<b>Shortage *</b>	<b>\$ (31,721)</b>	<b>\$ (3,525)</b>

\*NOTE: Shortage - Total Income to 2021 ACTUAL Expense  
Less Benevolence & Major Repairs/Purchases

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and do not forget all his benefits—  
who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the Pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good as long as you live  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

—Psalm 103:2-5, NRSV

— Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*





## PRAISE-FILLED petals

Create an interactive display of God's provision for a Thanksgiving centerpiece.



### What you need:

- Colorful sheets of thin paper
- Scissors
- Black pen
- Dish of water

### What you do:

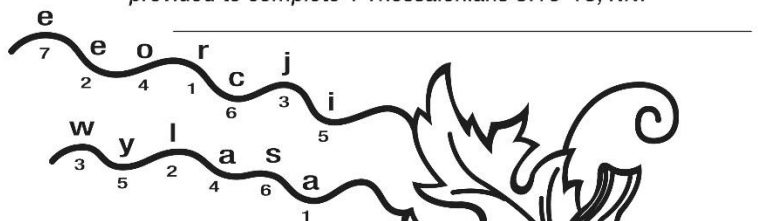
1. From the paper, cut out various shapes and sizes of flowers and petals.
2. In the center of each flower, write a praise to God. Thank him for who he is and for answered prayers.
3. Fold petals inward, toward the center of each flower.
4. Gently place flowers on the water. Petals will slowly unfold to reveal the words.
5. Invite meal guests to participate in this centerpiece that blooms with thanks.



## GOD'S WILL

God wants us to follow his will, but how can we know what that is?

*Directions: Write the letters on each vine in the correct order on the lines provided to complete 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV.*



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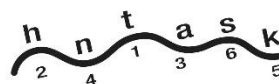
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continually,

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in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.



1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18, NIV

Answer: rejoice, always, pray, give, thanks



# SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

NOVEMBER 2021 • ISSUE 11 • VOLUME 29



## Gaining Strength: The Tie that Binds Bishop Christopher deForest

*And though one might prevail against another,  
two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not  
quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)*

Autumn blessings to you all! We find ourselves in November 2021, on the cusp of change. The pandemic is still upon us, but vaccines work and masks are making a difference. Advent is almost here, but we're uncertain what the new year will bring. Where do we go from here?

In my prayers for us concerning this time, two scripture passages come to mind. The first is the one above, from the Old Testament. Many of us recall this biblical image, because it is used often at weddings, where "a threefold cord" is actually wound together into a stronger bond, symbolizing how God and the marrying couple are bound together in fidelity, faith and love.

But look closer at the full verse. It starts not with peace and harmony, but with conflict: two are divided, fighting to "prevail against" the other. Then straight away, a different path is taken: "two will withstand one." It doesn't say, "two will team up to overcome one." This is not bullying or ganging up, in other words. It's "standing with" – united against forces that may seek to drive them apart. This is taken even further in the second line, where two-against-one transforms into three, joining forces. Could it be, that the two have not destroyed or driven away their enemy – but have instead, drawn the other into a loving embrace? So that the three become something new: an unbreakable one.

This is both the will of our God, as well as the essence of God's very being. The Holy Trinity. One in Three and Three in One. Mysterious in so many ways, our Triune God also comes "down to earth" for us, in these days when so many forces and factions try to drive us apart. Jesus, the One who came down to us, reveals to us the truth of the threefold cord – through his life, death, and resurrection, connecting our reality to his. And he spoke of this connection in very everyday terms, in this second Bible verse:



*[Jesus said:] “Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” (Matthew 18:19-20)*

This practical promise lies behind the work we are doing, as a Synod, to reach God’s three “Vital-Sign Goals”, over the next five years. “GROWING YOUNG” is the goal to bring faithful young people and “young at heart” of all ages together, as Jesus-centered community, empowered and led by the Spirit to change the world. “GOING BEYOND DEATH TO LIFE” is the goal to bring together congregations to understand and live out their God-given purpose, at all points in their congregational life cycle, from birth to death and beyond, leaving a faithful, lasting legacy.

But the Vital Sign Goal that most comes to my mind at this moment, with these two verses, is the Goal we call “GAINING STRENGTH.” Over the next year especially, we have a unique opportunity to explore and shore up the strengths we have, as individuals, and congregations, and as synod. And the best way to build up strength is to share and combine those strengths, for our common good, the good of our neighbors, and most of all, because God has made us for life together, and work together.

We are the threefold cord. We are called to gather as twos and threes, in the name of Christ, and ask God to overcome our divisions, combine our strengths, and send us out to be Christ for the sake of all: healing the hurt, loving the land, and engaging the stranger. Blest be the tie that binds / our hearts in Christian love;

*The unity of heart and mind / is like to that above. (ELW 656)*

In God’s love,  
*Bishop Christopher deForest*

*Upcoming  
Events*




**NOVEMBER 6. 2021: WE LOVE**

**NOVEMBER 9- 10. 2021: BISHOP'S CONFERENCE**

**NOVEMBER 13. 2021: FAITH FORMATION SATURDAY**

# NOVEMBER 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  All Saints Day	2 6:00 pm Ministries with Seniors meeting at Christ Mertz, Dryville  Election Day	3 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	4 10:00am-Coloring Group	5 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	6
7 All Saints Sunday and Stewardship Sunday 10:00am-Worship w/ Holy Communion • Congregational meeting after worship	8 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Council Meeting	9 Pastor at Bishop's Conference	10 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  Pastor at Bishop's Conference	11 Pastor – out of town  Veteran's Day	12 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  Pastor – out of town	13 Pastor – out of town
14 21st Sunday after Pentecost 10:00am-Worship  Pastor – out of town	15 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  Pastor - vacation	16 Pastor - vacation	17 12:00pm-Tentative Fellowship Luncheon at Airport Diner 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  Pastor - vacation	18 Pastor - vacation	19 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  Pastor - vacation	20 Pastor - vacation
21 Christ the King Sunday 10:00am-Worship w/ Holy Communion  Pastor Laura Stoneback – supply preacher Pastor - vacation NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	22 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	23	24 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.  7:00pm-Thanksgiving Eve Worship, Christ DeLong, Bowers	25 OFFICE CLOSED 	26 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	27 1:00pm-Church Decorating for Christmas
28 1st Sunday of Advent 10:00am-Worship	29 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	30 1:00pm-Worship and Music Committee Mtg.				