

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Ruth F. Doty, Pastor

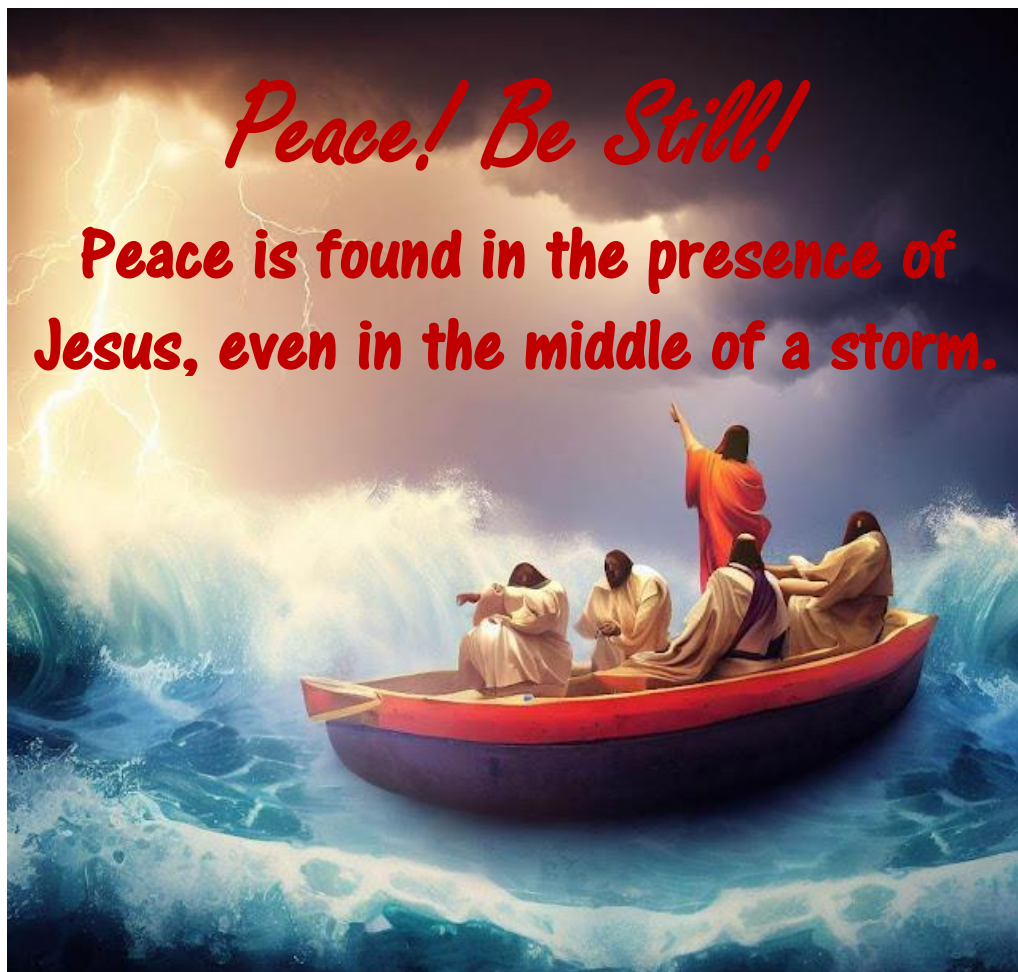
E-MAIL: njelchurch@windstream.net

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

OFFICE PHONE: 610.682.6064

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.-11:30 a.m.), Thursday 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.



THE MISSION OF NEW JERUSALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH:

*We are a group of people who
gather together in friendship and love
to worship God, to spread God's Word,
and to care for God's people.*



[Jesus] made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee] while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So, Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.

-Matthew 14:22-29

Fellow Disciples of Jesus,

Sometimes we need to get out of the boat.

Did you know that the main section of a church, the section where people gather for worship, is called *the nave*? The term comes from the Latin word, *navis*, meaning "ship." The main worship space of many churches was intentionally built to resemble a ship, or more specifically, Noah's Ark. This points to the role of the church as an "ark" of salvation. In fact, in many churches the ceiling is arched and the beams are exposed so it looks like the inside of an inverted boat.

For many years we have observed that our congregation has been spending down its financial resources and that we have fewer and fewer people able to help maintain our ministry as it is currently configured. The exact state of our finances has been made quite clear and discussed at least twice a year at our congregational meetings. Council has also been carefully watching the numbers and taking steps to keep the property in shape and do other things that make sense in case we need to sell the building.

After worship the last Sunday in July, those gathered heard from the Finance Committee their assessment that *if things went as they had been going*, that is, giving staying the same and there were no unexpected major financial challenges, we would *probably* have sufficient funds to take us to the end of 2024. Council has been facing this reality for quite some time. The consensus of those present was that it is now time to divest ourselves of the building so that we no longer have to worry about how we can maintain it. In other words, it is time to "get out of the 'boat'" so that we can continue to exist and do ministry as a congregation. We were reminded that "the church is not a building, the church is a people."

"Getting out of the boat" does *not* mean that we are closing as a congregation. Please correct any rumors you might hear to that effect. "Getting out of our current boat" does *not* mean we have failed. It simply means our ministry needs a different kind of vessel.

So where will we worship? Where will we meet? Who will we be if we are not in the building we have thought of as home for so many years? Simple answer, we don't know. Peter didn't know where Jesus would take him when Jesus said, "Come." All he knew was that his focus was on Jesus.

There are a number of options we can think of at the moment for where we might meet if we did not own the building: If a group, say another congregation or organization took over ownership of the building, we might be able to rent from them. We could borrow or rent space from another congregation in the area. We could be like other congregations which meet in a store front or even, like the early church, meet in homes.

All we know at this moment is that God seems to be calling us to “get out of the boat” so we can continue to grow in faith and spend our resources and energy on ministry.

That’s a lot. Take a big breath in. Pause. Let it out. And take another.

What are those steps council has already been taking?

- We have hired a survey company to define the boundaries of the church and of the cemetery. This same company will handle working out how to deed the small old cemetery behind the church building to the Cemetery Board so that it will be taken care of and so that whoever takes on the building will not have the responsibility of that cemetery.
- We’ve begun cleaning out closets and corners.
- We have also begun going through old records in preparation for transferring them to the Lutheran Archives in Philadelphia. (Wait ’til you hear some of the fun and interesting things we have discovered during this process!)
- We’re already thinking about ways to celebrate our history and ministry.
- For over a year we have been meeting with the councils of other Lutheran congregations in the area in order to get to know them, share what ministry is like in each of our locations, and explore ways we might support one another and do ministry together.

That’s a lot—and there is so much more we haven’t listed or is being done behind the scenes. So, please pray for and thank all who have been working so long and hard to help in the process.

When Peter took the risk to believe Jesus’ invitation and get out of the boat, he, too, walked on water. He walked on water even though the winds were blowing and the waves were crashing all around him. At times like the ones we are facing, it may feel like the winds are swirling and the waves are crashing all around us. Yet, as has been true throughout the ages, God bids us to trust and to focus on what God wants. *At the same time* God promises to be with us, lead us, support us, and, through us, to bless those around us, even the world.

The gospel story listed above doesn’t end with Peter walking on water. Here’s what comes next:

³⁰But when [Peter] noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

What *will* get us through the “storms,” the ups and downs and multitude of things that swirl around us in the coming months? Keeping our focus on Jesus. It will be focusing on and clarifying the essence of being church, what it means to be Christ’s body in this place, in this time, under these circumstances. There will be times we need to remind ourselves and one another, that Jesus didn’t leave Peter to sink. He reached out his hand, helped him up, walked with him to a safe place where he got beside Peter. It was then that the winds ceased. The chaos ceased. There was peace. Then, once again, the disciples were able to row to shore, to get back to the business of being fishermen, fishers of people.

So my friends, as we prepare to take that risk to get out of the boat we have known as the building called New Jerusalem Lutheran Church, as we face the many feelings that will be involved, may we sense Jesus’ presence, hearing him call us to come. May we sense him reaching out his hand to steady us whenever we feel like we are sinking. I have no doubt that Jesus will be with us, guide us, hear our prayers, and give us peace, peace that passes anything we can expect or understand. I also have no doubt he is leading us into a future that is beyond anything we could possibly dream of or hope for.

God’s peace be with you, no matter what storms you are facing today or might encounter tomorrow.

Pastor Ruth

NEWS & EVENTS

at New Jerusalem and in the community

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following discussions took place and decisions made at our council meeting on Monday, August 21st:

- Our worship service time will change beginning October 1st to 10:15 a.m. See below.
- Pastor Ruth will be assisting Trinity Lutheran, Topton, with planning their worship services and preaching there once or twice a month.
- Our Congregational Meeting and Stewardship Sunday will be held on November 12, 2023.
- A survey of the church and cemetery property has been completed.
- The funeral service guidelines have been updated.

Our next council meeting will be held on **Monday, September 11, at 7:00 p.m.**

PASTOR RUTH will be taking vacation from September 16 until October 2. If you need pastoral care during this time, please contact Pastor Jeremiah Sassaman at 610.657.0269.

BIBLE STUDY

Our Monday morning Bible Study will begin again on **Monday, October 9 at 11:00 a.m.** We will be studying 1st John, 2nd John, and 3rd John. All are invited to attend.

COLORING GROUP

The Coloring Group will be meeting on **Thursday, September 7, at 10:00 a.m.** Friends are welcome. If you can't get to church or don't feel comfortable gathering, pages can be sent to you. If interested, contact Phyllis Fenstermacher at 610.682.2423 or Diane Keller at 610.682.4152.

COMMUNION ON THE PARKING LOT

Join us on **Saturday, September 9, at 5:00 p.m.** There will also have a Blessing of the Animals. Our next Communion on the Parking Lot will be held on **Saturday, October 14th.**

SAVE THE DATE

Our Congregational Meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 12**, along with Stewardship Sunday.

HARVEST HOME – SEPTEMBER 10

On Sunday, September 10, we will be celebrating our Harvest Home service. You are invited to bring fresh produce and non-perishable items to worship which will be donated to the Brandywine Food Pantry.

HELPING HARVEST/TOPTON MOBILE MARKET

The Helping Harvest food distribution will take place on **Tuesday, September 15, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Brandywine Heights MS/IS.

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, September 16**, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Topton.

OCTOBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

The deadline for the October newsletter is **Sunday, September 17.** Please have all articles and announcements submitted to the church office by this date. Thank you!

OLEY FAIR

Members and friends, New Jerusalem will again be helping out at the french fry stand at the Oley Fair on **Thursday, September 21.** Stop by and say hi!

IMPORTANT! - WORSHIP TIME CHANGE

Please take note that as a way to help our sister congregation of Trinity Topton, in order that Pastor Ruth can preach there once or twice a month, **beginning on Sunday, October 1, 2023**, New Jerusalem will be changing their worship time to **10:15 a.m.**

MILLER-KEYSTONE BLOOD CENTER

A blood drive will be held on **Sunday, October 1, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville, in their fellowship hall. To register a timeslot, go to Miller-Keystone at https://donor.giveapint.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/85624. Or, if you prefer, call the Miller-Keystone Blood Center at 800-223-6667. There are 42 total timeslots available. Together, we can fill all those slots. Please help!

SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR SEPTEMBER

We are in need of Altar Flower sponsors for September 10, 17, and 24; Bulletin sponsors for September 3, 10, and 17; an Altar Guild volunteer; and a Communion Set-up volunteer for September 3. Thank you!

WORSHIP IN THE PARK ON AUGUST 6

Thanks be to God for the beautiful day we had for our community worship service. Between 150 and 200 people attended, including some who just came to enjoy the park that morning. Many stayed afterward to enjoy a picnic. Thanks to all who helped provide salads for the picnic and for those who provided music and leadership. As a result of the loose offering, we were able to donate over \$200 to the Brandywine Food Pantry.

THE MAJESTICS CONCERT

Despite threatening weather which led us to relocate the event to our church building at the last minute, over 100 community members attended and enjoyed the music provided by The Majestics. Not only was there a lot of toe tapping, some were literally dancing in the aisles. In addition to the music, folks enjoyed the hamburgers, hot dogs, desserts and other goodies provided by our area churches. Over \$700 from the sale of food and freewill donations was collected for the Brandywine Food Pantry. Our thanks to Thrivent for a grant that helped purchase some of the food. A special thanks to all the congregations who contributed food for the event and the over 20 volunteers who made it all possible.

UPDATE ON DISCERNING OUR FUTURE

Here are the steps council and others have been taking during the past few months:

- Our council met twice with the council of St. Paul's, Mertztown.
- Council and the Cemetery Board contracted for a survey of the property in preparation to deed the small cemetery behind the church building to the Cemetery Board so that it will be cared for, no matter who owns the building.
- We began cleaning out the room and staircase area off the altar, as well as the old kitchen area.
- Finance Committee and council presented an update on our financial situation to those present at worship on July 30. Council received a directive from those present to work on divesting ourselves of the building.

A formal congregational vote will be taken before any property is sold or transferred to new ownership.

- Council members met with those of Grace Lutheran Church, Topton and St. Paul's, Mertztown for Communion on the Parking Lot and a get-to-know-each-other picnic on August 12.
- Beginning in May Pastor has been meeting with the pastors of Christ Mertz, Dryville, St. Paul's, Mertztown, Trinity, Topton, and Grace, Topton to discuss ways our congregations and its pastors can assist in supporting ministry at Trinity, Grace, and Hope. This is especially important at this time since as of the end of August, Pastor Scott Lingenfelter, who has been serving as an interim at Trinity Topton, will be retiring from ministry, and Pastor Carl Schmoyer, who serves Grace, Topton and has just celebrated his 65th anniversary of ordination, is experiencing health challenges.
- An agreement has been reached with Trinity, Topton for Pastor Ruth to assist with their Worship and Music Committee and to preach once or twice a month at their worship service. Since Pastor and council view this as an outreach of New Jerusalem's ministry, a way we can help our sisters and brothers, Trinity will be paying New Jerusalem for her services.
- On August 13, those present at worship agreed that starting in October we would move our worship time to 10:15 a.m. which will enable Pastor Ruth to preach at Trinity, Topton once or twice a month. This is a temporary adjustment while Trinity is searching for a pastor, so we will revisit this decision at the end of the year.
- On August 14, Pastor met with Deacon Kat (Katherine) Tigerman to talk about possibilities for the model of 6-2-6-1. You will hear more about this later. Basically, it is a model being developed and offered by synod for six congregations to be served by 2 full-time pastors, 6 trained lay leaders, and 1 deacon. Each congregation would maintain its unique identity, but work together in a variety of ways. This is being explored as one possibility to meet the need of congregations for pastoral leadership at a time when there are very, very few pastors available and many congregations cannot afford to support a full-time pastor. Given the many ways our congregations have already been working together, this may be a viable and exciting option for this area. Again, you will hear more about this later.



- 2 Dawn Wartzenuft
- 10 Larry Dey
- 10 Regina Kohl
- 11 Virginia Guinther
- 16 Dorothy Turner
- 17 Alan Carl
- 17 Taylor Cleaver
- 17 Shirley Hertzog
- 20 Ty Rissmiller
- 21 Michael Barlet
- 21 Madison Cleaver
- 24 Andrew Musser
- 25 Elaine Seip
- 25 Kenneth Wiltrout
- 28 Carrie Paige Lambert
- 28 Brooke Wengert
- 30 Ronald Herman



- 6 David and Dawn Wartzenuft (26 years)
- 9 Randy and Luann Bennecoff (51 years)
- 20 Ronald and Wilma Herman (48 years)

**VOLUNTEER READING TUTORS
NEEDED FOR READY.SET.READ!
PROGRAM**

Help make a difference in a child's life! Volunteers are needed to tutor 2nd grade students that need extra support with reading at the District-Topton Elementary School on Wednesdays from 3:30 p.m. to 4:20 p.m. and Kutztown Elementary Schools on Thursdays from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the 2023-24 school year. No previous teaching experience is required. This opportunity is for anyone interested in volunteering one hour each week from October through May. Background clearances are required and training provided. Please contact Darby Wiekrykas at United Way 610-685-4574 or darbyw@uwberks.org.

³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."



Thy sea, O God, so great,
My boat so small.
Thy sea, O God, so great,
My boat so small.
It cannot be that any happy fate
Will me befall
Save as Thy goodness opens paths for me
Through the consuming vastness of the sea.

Thy winds, O God, so strong,
So slight my sail.
How could I curb and bit them on the long
And saltry trail,
Unless Thy love were mightier than the wrath
Of all the tempests that beset my path?

Thy world, O God, so fierce,
And I so frail.
Yet, though its arrows threaten oft to pierce,
My fragile mail,
Cities of refuge rise where dangers cease,
Sweet silences abound, and all is peace.

-Winfred Ernest Garrison

This small prayer is known as the *Breton Fisherman's Prayer*, who are fishermen from Brittany, an administrative region in western France.

According to D. K. Mattai, this Old Breton prayer was inscribed on a block of wood on the desk of President John F. Kennedy. Admiral Hyman Rickover would give it to new submarine captains and also presented one to the President. Kennedy loved the quote and used it in his dedication of the East Coast Memorial to the Missing at Sea on May 23, 1963. He always kept it on his desk in the Oval Office and it is now in the JFK Presidential Museum and Library.



WORSHIP SPONSORS & ASSISTANTS

Altar Flower Sponsors:

September 3 – Dale Schwoyer
September 10 – *sponsor needed*
September 17 – *sponsor needed*
September 24 – *sponsor needed*

Bulletin Sponsors:

September 3 – *sponsor needed*
September 10 – *sponsor needed*
September 17 – *sponsor needed*
September 24 – *sponsor needed*

Sanctuary Candle Sponsor:

Elaine Seip

Altar Guild Volunteer(s):

volunteer needed

Communion Bread Sponsor:

September 3– Gladys Kline

Communion Set-up Volunteer:

September 3 – *volunteer needed*

Readers:

September 3 – Cindy Rissmiller
September 10 – Kenneth Keck
September 17 – Ty Rissmiller
September 24 – Kathy Bailey

Councilperson(s) for the Month:

Ty Rissmiller



We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of Nancy Bennecoff. A memorial service was held on August 18, 2023 at Mae Stump Funeral Home in Fleetwood.

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 Gabriele Sanders.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT:
Members: Holly Allen, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Brian Keller, Diane Keller, Forrest Merkel, Grace Miller, Linda Moyer, Lloyd Moyer, and Horace Rothermel.

Friends of the congregation: Charlie Ackerman, Brad Auge, Sr., Brad Auge, Jr., Steve Beck, Family and friends of Nancy Bennecoff, Sharon Bennett, Jason Beshore, Darlene Bogert, Earl Derr, John Drumheller, Jennifer Engle, Alice Epler, Dawson Freed (military), Karen Gossert, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Debra Kenny, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Cayden Kresge, Catherine Lenio, Julia Lombardo, Joe M., Vivian Reist, Arlan Schwoyer, Patricia Sigfried, Jean Smith, Shawn Spatz, Michael Stevens, Robert Taylor, Johnathan Wagner, Tim Walck, Leticia Weaver, Richard Weller, Althea Young, Becky, Dawn, Jason, Kim, Lynn, Pat, Sam, and Tim.

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: Gary DeWees, Don Gajewski, Erma Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, Amanda Herman, Johnson-Agiri Family, Mary Kring, Leilani Rodriquez, Andrew S., Tierney Schmeer, Donna Schwoyer, Lesley Wegman, and Linda Wegman.

New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Statement of Accounts

July 31, 2023

<u>Asset Accounts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Memorial	\$ 18,516.20
Thrivent	11,047.97
Checking	6,129.21
Youth	412.76
Fidelity	35,006.60
Cash Reserve	19,426.07
Mission Investment Fund	11,693.87
Local Care	<u>2,381.27</u>
Total:	<u>\$ 104,613.95</u>

Total Balance of Asset Accounts
from **July 31, 2022** \$ 133,514.00

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

	Income		
Income	Required	Actual	
<u>Used For:</u>	<u>Per Month</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Operating	\$ 9,860.00	\$ 5,596.00	\$ (4,264.00)
Expenses			

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

LONGSWAMP UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 275TH ANNIVERSARY DAY

Longswamp UCC, 200 Clay Road, Mertztown, will be celebrating their 275th anniversary of the founding of their congregation in 1748! A big festival is planned for **Sunday, September 24, 2023**. A celebratory worship service will be held at 10:15 a.m. and continue with a celebration from 2:00-5:00 p.m. There will be a basket raffle, historical displays, music, homemade ice cream, horse and buggy rides, cake walks, a bake sale, so much more. There will be old-fashioned fun for the whole family! All are welcome! For more information, contact secretary@longswampucc.org or call 610-682-6230. Also check out their website at www.longswampucc.org.

MEN IN HARMONY

Trinity Lutheran Church, Topton, will be hosting “Men in Harmony,” an Upper Dauphin County all-male Christian chorus concert on **Sunday, September 24, at 4:00 p.m.** Light refreshments will be served. A goodwill offering will be taken for the Chorus.



CCCC FALL FUNDRAISER

Christ Church Children’s Center Fall Fundraiser will take place on **Thursday, September 28, from 4:00-7:00 p.m.** (rain or shine) at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville. They will be having their annual drive-in event featuring a food truck, live music, a silent auction, vendor market, and children’s yard sale.

If you are interested in donating items for their Children’s Yard Sale, donations can be dropped off at the Children’s Center/Church until September 21st. They will be accepting the following gently-used items: clothing (infant-young teen), toys (all ages), strollers, books (infant-young teen), DVDs (G and PG-rated only), highchairs, infant play equipment (bouncy seats, jumpers/activity centers, play mats, etc.) **NO** car seats, pack-n-plays, or cribs will be accepted.



BLUE MOUNTAIN HERITAGE CHORUS

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Mertztown, presents a concert by the Blue Mountain Heritage Chorus on **Sunday, September 17, at 2:00 p.m.** Come out for an afternoon of music and fellowship. Refreshments to follow after the concert in St. Paul’s Center.

SAVE-THE-DATE

The East Berks and West Berks mission districts are working together to host a Districtwide Youth Event on Saturday, October 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.! More information will be coming shortly, but keep this date saved on your calendars.



UPDATE!!!

The **Brandywine Food Pantry** is committed to relieving hunger through the acquisition and distribution of food to individuals and families from the Brandywine/Topton area. The Food Pantry is generously supported by the churches, civic groups, schools, businesses, and individuals from our local community.

The **Brandywine Food Pantry needs your help!** Our local Food Pantry is in great need of personal care items (body wash, shampoo, soap, toothpaste, individually-wrapped toothbrushes, etc.), paper products (paper towels, tissues, toilet tissue), and household supplies (dish soap, laundry detergent). Local underprivileged patrons, who come to the Food Pantry once a month, appreciate it very much when the Pantry has personal care items, paper products, and household supplies for them. Currently, the Pantry is only providing food for our patrons. Please bring your donations of personal care items, paper products and/or household supplies to your church on a Sunday morning. You can also drop off your donations at the Food Pantry, which is located at St. Peter's UCC in Topton, on the first 3 Mondays of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the first 3 Tuesdays of the month from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Please feel free to contact Jill Shade, the Pantry Administrator at 484-861-7117 or brandywinefoodpantry@gmail.com if you have any questions about the Brandywine Food Pantry's desperate need for personal care items, paper products, and household supplies. Monetary donations are accepted as well. Please make checks payable to **Brandywine Food Pantry** and mail them to the **Brandywine Food Pantry, c/o St. Peter's UCC, 122 W. Franklin Street, Topton, PA 19562.**

The **Brandywine Food Pantry** is open to area residents by appointment only on the first three Tuesdays and the third Thursday of the month from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (the last appointment is at 12:30 p.m.). We also have evening hours (4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.) on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Please call

the Food Pantry's new number, **484-861-7117**, to schedule an appointment. Also, please feel free to call the Pantry's new number if you have any questions about the **Brandywine Food Pantry**.

Thank you very much to the members of the local churches, civic groups, schools, businesses, and individuals from our local community for your continued support of the **Brandywine Food Pantry!**

The Brandywine Food Pantry is always in need of the following items:

Canned fruit: fruit cup, mandarin oranges, sliced peaches, pears, pineapple, etc.

Canned items: (especially those with meat) Beef stew, chicken a la king, chicken breast, chili, ham, Spam, tuna

Condiments: ketchup, mustard, pickles

Hot drinks: coffee (regular), hot chocolate, tea

Extras: jelly, marshmallow creme, peanut butter

Baking items: cooking oil, vinegar

Dry goods: dry milk, evaporated milk

Cereal: Hot or cold, oatmeal (regular and instant)

Gluten free and/or sugar free items

Paper products: paper towels, tissues, toilet tissue

Personal care items: bar soap, hand soap, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, personal hygiene items (hairbrushes, combs, individually wrapped toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc.)

Cleaning and disinfecting products: dish soap, laundry detergent, disinfectant products, etc.)

Paper products, personal care items and cleaning supplies, and disinfectant products are no longer purchased by the Food Pantry. Please consider donating these items.

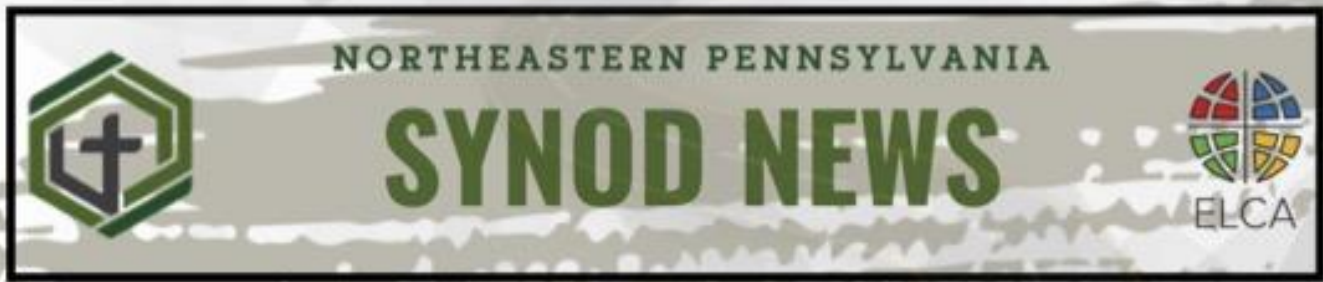
***** Please check expiration dates on donated food products.**

The Brandywine Food Pantry cannot accept expired food products.

Statistic summary for 2023 (January – July):

2022 Average - 28 families served monthly
2023 Average - 45 families served monthly
62% average increase over 2022

2022 Average - 70 people served monthly
2023 Average - 111 people served monthly
63% average increase over 2022



THE THREE ROADS TO VITALITY

As we gather together in the embrace of faith and fellowship throughout the synod (from assemblies, worship, ordinations, anniversaries, and to other synod-wide events) we are reminded of the powerful journey we are on as a Church with a capital C. Our commitment to Christ's teachings has allowed us to evolve beyond mere existence and instead embrace life abundantly. Throughout our synod over the past few years, we've been celebrating three key phrases that define our thriving communities: Growing Young, Stronger Together, and Going Beyond Death to Life.

Growing Young

Embracing life is not limited to any particular age group; it is a concept that transcends generations. We are proud to be a church that nurtures an intergenerational atmosphere, where the wisdom of our elders and the enthusiasm of our youth combine to create a vibrant and dynamic community.

In the teachings of Jesus, we find the encouragement to become like children, embracing a childlike faith that is open, eager, and receptive to God's grace. Our thriving churches have taken this message to heart, fostering an environment that allows every member, regardless of age, to experience spiritual growth and development, to participate in leadership roles, and exude the various elements of the growing young wheel. In doing so, we not only remain young at heart but also enrich each other's lives by sharing diverse perspectives and experiences.

Stronger Together

In unity, we discover strength. Our churches embody the spirit of togetherness, recognizing that we are bound by a shared faith and a common purpose. When we face challenges or trials, we do so as a united body, drawing support from one another, and standing firmly rooted in God's love.

As the Apostle Paul once wrote, "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ, we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." (Romans 12:4-5, NIV). This unity allows us to overcome obstacles, reach out to those in need, and fulfill our mission to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

Going Beyond Death to Life

In a world that often fixates on the inevitability of death, our church communities boldly choose to focus on the promise of resurrection and life. We are reminded of the words of Jesus when he said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." (John 11:25, NIV). This powerful message resonates within our hearts, filling us with hope and joy.

As a Church and as individual churches, we understand that life is not confined to this earthly existence alone. Our spiritual journey extends beyond the boundaries of mortality, and we find solace in knowing that a greater, eternal life awaits us. By embracing this profound truth, we are empowered to live with purpose, spreading love, compassion, and the Gospel to all corners of the world.

As we continue to journey together as a church that goes beyond death to life, grows young, and stands stronger together, let us celebrate the joy of living in God's grace. We invite you to participate actively and fully in our synod's diverse ministries, outreach programs, and spiritual growth opportunities, as they allow us to deepen our understanding of God's love and make a lasting impact in the lives of others. Remember, the limitations of this world do not define us but rather by the boundless life that Christ offers us. Let us carry this message of hope and transformation into our communities, touching lives, and inspiring others to embrace the abundant life that comes through knowing and following Jesus.

May God bless each one of you abundantly, and may our churches continue to be a beacon of light, love, and life in a world that desperately needs it.

The Reverend Lauren Wolfe Blatt
Director of Communication and Events, NEPS
Pastor at Calvary Lutheran Church, Laureldale
Pastor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Reading



GROWING YOUNG



GAINING STRENGTH



BEYOND DEATH TO LIFE



SEARCHING FOR SILVER

Godly, biblical wisdom is more valuable than gold or silver. Make this do-it-yourself toy to practice your searching skills.

What you need:

- 12 small, smooth rocks
- An empty, clean egg carton
- Paintbrush
- Acrylic paint (gold or silver)
- Black permanent marker

What you do:

1. Clean the rocks and egg carton. Place newspaper on a table to protect it from paint.
2. Paint all sides of the rocks and carton. Let dry. Add a second coat, if desired.
3. When rocks are dry, number each rock (1-12) with marker. Place rocks in the carton.
4. Play hide-and-seek with a friend. Take turns hiding the rocks in a room, sandbox or backyard. Give clues, if needed, and count the rocks as they're returned.
5. Use your imagination to incorporate a treasure hunt into study time or family devotions.



A PATH TO PRAYER

God's Word offers lots of insights about how to pray.

Directions: Use the code to fill in the blanks and complete a Bible passage about prayer.



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFE DCBA

R G S Z M P N B T L W
 V E V I B G R N V R
 I V N V N Y V I B L F
 R M Z O O N B
 K I Z B V I H U L I Z O O
 L U B L F R Z O D Z B H
 K I Z B D R G S Q L B
 K S R O R K K R Z M H

1:3-4, NIV

Answer: I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy. Philippians 1:3-4, NIV

SEPTEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	2
3 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00am-Worship with Holy Communion	4 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 	5	6 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	7 9:30-11:00am-Compassionate Crafters, Trinity Lutheran, Topton	8 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	9 5:00pm-Communion on the Parking Lot with Blessing of the Animals
10 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00am-Worship -Harvest Home Service -Fellowship after worship	11 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Council Mtg. Patriot Day	12 11:00am-1:00pm-Helping Harvest Food Distribution at Brandywine Heights IS/MS	13 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg.	14	15 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton	16 8:00am-James Men's Ministry Breakfast, Trinity Lutheran, Topton Pastor - Vacation
17 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00am-Worship 2:00pm-Blue Mountain Chorus, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Metztown Pastor - Vacation	18 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Pastor - Vacation	19 Pastor - Vacation	20 12:00pm-Fellowship Luncheon 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Pastor - Vacation	21 New Jerusalem serving french fries at the Oley Fair Pastor - Vacation	22 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Pastor - Vacation	23  Pastor - Vacation
24 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00am-Worship -Hymn Sing -Fellowship after worship 2:00-5:00pm-Longswamp UCC 275th Anniversary Celebration 4:00pm-Men in Harmony Concert, Trinity Lutheran Church, Topton Pastor - Vacation	25 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Pastor - Vacation	26 Pastor - Vacation	27 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Pastor - Vacation	28 4:00-7:00pm-Children's Center Fall Fundraiser, Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville Pastor - Vacation	29 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Pastor - Vacation	30 Pastor - Vacation until October 2