

The Epistle

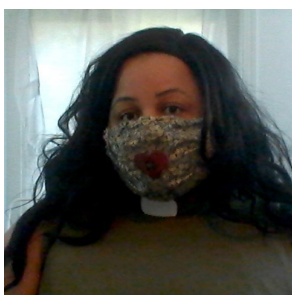
THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gloucester, Virginia

www.apostles-elca.org

June 2021

Our Mission is to be a Caring Christian Community responding to God's grace through
Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel



From Beyond The Page

“...I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young shall see visions, and your old shall dream dreams.”
-The Prophet Joel, 2:28

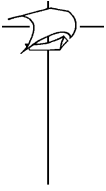
June is here and soon so will Summer arrive. This means longer days, warmer nights, and of course a plan for re-entering our building. I want to thank all lay members for their diligent work in making our worship space available again after an entire year of social distancing. As exciting as this news is, it is important to remember that the Pandemic has not been declared over. Until that day comes, we will be worshipping a little differently come July 4th. Worship may not look or feel the way that it did in January of 2020, but with will be worship so long as we gather together for the love of Christ. Now is the time to dream boldly, serve boldly, and love more boldly still as we discern God's mission in this corner of the world. We have some exciting news from our Synod Office. I along with Sue Turner and Judy Wright will participate in a day-long Synod Assembly this June 12th. The Assembly will take place

online as we discuss elections, changes to our constitution, and celebrate some significant installations. The Virginia Synod's Tapestry Ministry will host a worship service commemorating the Feast Day of the Emmanuel 9 on June 17th. Details concerning this event will be posted on our website soon. In 2020, the Council encouraged me to create a stewardship plan that holistically engaged all aspects of our Church. As a result, Seasons of Stewardship was born. Each of our teams, Administration, Service and Sharing, Caring Community, and Worship will have an opportunity to use the Three-Month Model as a means of presenting, seeking, and celebrating their gifts for Apostles' future. Our Administration Team will kick off with the season of Summer this June. Service and Sharing will have their shot at Autumn in September. Caring Community will take on Winter in December. Last but not least, Worship will bloom in the Spring next March. Four Teams, three months each, one amazing year. Let's do this!

“Keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable.”

— Mary Oliver

In God's Abiding Love,
The Reverend Jeniffer Tillman,
Mission Developer



Apostles Is Returning to In-Person Worship!!

Thanks be to God, and the effective vaccines, the Covid pandemic is finally waning. As of May 28th, all Covid restrictions are being lifted for fully immunized people in most settings. We can now return to our building! We have chosen, appropriately, **July 4th, Independence Day**, to be our first day back in our sanctuary. Between now and then, your worship and music committee will work out the details of our new worship service. Your administration team will be installing a new video and sound system so that we may continue to live stream our services for those who do not feel comfortable returning to the building. We at Apostles have been blessed. Our church, the people, never closed during the pandemic and now our building is reopening. Thanks be to God! tuned for updates. Looking forward to seeing all of you again - in person- soon.

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Live Streaming Is Coming to Apostles!

Thanks to the hard work of Gerald Britt and Shawn Jaeger, we are close to the goal of being able to live stream our worship services. The network wiring, switch and camera are fully installed and tested. The computer has been built and was used on May 30th on the new network to host the Holy Trinity Worship Service on Zoom. Hardware and network performance were fully functional and our live streaming needs should fall well within the system capabilities. The new audio mixer is installed and tested and the new wireless microphone system should be delivered and installed shortly. There are still several things that need to be done including moving the copier from the closet in the narthex to the administrative assistant office but we should be ready on Sunday, July 4th. As Ray Scholz said so well, "Our church will be forever grateful for all the work you have completed." If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Gerald Britt at geraldb@cox.net.



Reconciling in Christ Ministry

From our Virginia Synod Bishop: "I bring you greetings on behalf of the Office of the Bishop. We rejoice in this exciting way for Apostle's congregation to witness to God's welcome and the ELCA's commitment to the full inclusion of our LGBTQIA+ siblings in Christ. Virginia Synod Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Kelly Bayer Derrick welcomes the opportunity to represent our Office and work with you to support and celebrate your ongoing commitment and hard work in this ministry and mission.

Peace!

Bob

The Rev. Robert F. Humphrey, Bishop Virginia Synod, ELCA"

The Reconciling in Christ team will be meeting on **Thursday, June 10th, at 8:00 PM** via Zoom—if you would like to join the meeting, please contact Betsy Liljeberg at b4liljeberg@gmail.com.

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Red Flowers for Pentecost

Thank you to everyone who purchased red flowers for Pentecost Sunday!! David and Mary Leunig in recognition of lost loved ones, Lincoln and Elizabeth Moore, Carl and Cloe Leunig, Richard Morre and Kay Moore; Pam Moore in honor of new and only grandchild, Charles Jihou Fang; Irene and Heinz Albert in thanksgiving for our family and for children everywhere; Pete and Betsy Liljeberg in honor of all those who have lost loved ones to Covid.



We Are Church Together



Youth and adults have the opportunity to experience God's love and the beauty of creation at Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center and Hungry Mother Lutheran Retreat Center. From weekend retreats to cabin rentals to summer camp programs, Virginia Synod Lutheran camps provide experiences for youth and adults of all ages. With the help of your generous mission support, the Virginia Synod is able to provide a grant of \$29,445 to Caroline Furnace and a grant of \$12,390 to Hungry Mother each year to support their wonderful ministry. Thank you for supporting Caroline Furnace Camp and Retreat Center and Hungry Mother Lutheran Retreat Center through your partnership with the Virginia Synod.

Pastor John Wertz, Jr.
 Assistant to the Bishop
(From Pete Liljeberg, President of Congregation Council—"Our giving to the Virginia Synod has a real impact on real people and doesn't just support a bureaucracy.")

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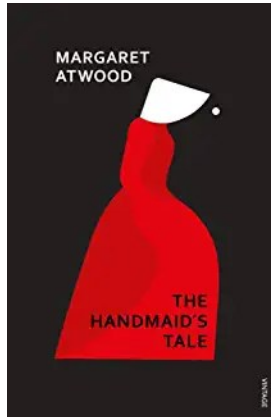
New Heat Pump Installed

A BIG thank you to Ray Scholz and his son, Brad, for the installation of a new heat pump!!

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Ministry Team Meetings

The following ministry teams will meet in April:
 + **Worship** - Wednesday, June 9th, at 7:00 PM
 + **Service and Sharing** – Monday, June 21st, at 7:00 PM



New Book Study To Start

A new book study will be starting on **Thursday, August 5th, at 7:00 PM**—we will be reading Margaret Atwood's book, "The Handmaid's Tale." We hope you can join the discussion!

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Readings for June

Lectionary readings for June are:

- + **June 6th, 2nd Sunday after Pentecost**—Genesis 3:8-15 (God confronts Adam and Eve in the garden), Psalm 130 (wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is steadfast love), 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 (renewed in the inner nature), Mark 3:20-35 (doing the work of God as brothers and sisters of Christ)
- + **June 13th, 3rd Sunday after Pentecost** – Ezekiel 17:22-24 (the sign of the cedar, planted on the mountain of Israel), Psalm 92:1-14, 12-15 (the righteous shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon), 2 Corinthians 5:6-10[11-13] 14-17 (in Christ, a new creation), Mark 4:26-34 (the parable of the mustard seed)
- + **June 20th, 4th Sunday after Pentecost** – Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 (Matthias added to the apostles), Psalm 1 (the Lord knows the way of the righteous), 1 John 5:9-13 (life in the Son of God), John 17:6-19 (Christ's prayer for his disciples)
- + **June 27th, 5th Sunday after Pentecost** – Lamentations 3:22-33 (great is the Lord's faithfulness), Psalm 30 (I will exalt you, O Lord, because you have lifted me up), 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 (excel in generosity, following the Lord Jesus), Mark 5:21-43 (Christ healing a woman and Jairus's daughter)

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Happy Birthday To . . .

Ellen Kendzierski	June 3
Preston Higgins	June 6
Tenley Biggs	June 26
Janet Gomez	June 29



The Amazing Grace Race—A New Tradition

The first annual Amazing Grace Race, a joint event of Abingdon Episcopal Church and Apostles Lutheran Church, was run on Saturday, May 1st. Nine teams and 14 volunteers from

the churches joined in the fast and furious race around Gloucester County. Modeled after the Amazing Race TV show, but with a local twist, teams from both churches solved puzzles and searched for clues in order to reach a series of destinations. The race presented an opportunity to safely gather in an entirely new and creative way; each team took their own vehicle and followed state Covid guidelines during competition. The teams completed tasks that tested their knowledge of Gloucester County, such as an art walk challenge that required team to find clues in the murals and statues along Main Street, with The Gloucester Brewing Company providing safe parking to view the final clues in the TC Walker mural. Several challenges included community service components. For example, teams unpacked boxes and organized cans at the Bread for Life food pantry. In another service-oriented challenge, teams made arrangements of flowers donated by Brent and Becky's Bulbs and brought those arrangements to the residents at Sanders Assisted Living. The final challenge was to build a campfire under the direction of Scout Troop 113. The Amazing Grace Race began at Apostles Lutheran Church and ended at Abingdon Episcopal Church and lasted about 2 1/2 hours. Racers and volunteers enjoyed fellowship on the lawn at Abingdon as they cheered the teams to the finish line. For many, the race was wasn't just about the competition. It was an opportunity to get outside, have fun, and celebrate the impactful gathering of two worship communities. A freewill offering was received and \$99 was sent to both the Bread for Life Food Pantry and Boy Scout Troop 113. **THANK YOU, INGRID!!!**





On-Line Power In The Spirit July 11-15

Join the Power in the Spirit community July 11 to 15, 2021, to celebrate "Advent in July!" Enjoy morning devotionals on your own

time and select from a variety of live workshops each evening. End each day with an Evening Prayer service, celebrated with fellow Christians near and far. God continues to lead us through the COVID-19 pandemic, we are beginning to imagine about what life can look like on the other side of this season. Yet we are still waiting. Through the exploration of Advent themes, texts, and images, participants will be able to reflect on God's presence with them and others in the past as they anticipate what is yet to come. New life made possible through the incarnation of Jesus! More details on how to sign up will come out soon!

(PS - Thursday, July 15 will be Christmas!)
A ministry of the Virginia Synod, Power in the Spirit is an inspirational conference for people of all ages who wish to explore God's call to service through joyous worship, Bible studies, keynote addresses, workshops, games, and fellowship.

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Congratulations To . . .

+ **Pam and Billy Moore** upon the birth of their first grandchild, Charles (Charlie) Jihau Fang, on May 5th—Charlie weighed 7 pounds, 7 ounces.

+ **David and Mary Leunig** upon the birth of a new grandchild, Taryn Elise Leunig, on May 12th—Taryn weighed 7 pounds, 8.5 ounces and was 20 inches long. David and Mary would like to thank everyone again for their prayers and joy in celebrating her arrival.



What Have You Been Up To?

Janice Roe has been quilting up a storm during the past year—her quilts are BEAUTIFUL!!



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Ending Homelessness in Norfolk

Last year, 25-year-old Maya (last name withheld), who lives in Virginia, was expecting her first child. Collecting employment due to COVID-19, she stayed with her parents when she got into an argument with them; they wanted more money to lodge her. After the altercation turned physical, Maya knew she had to leave the home for her baby's safety. Two weeks before her due date, she was sleeping in her car. Maya asked around and soon heard about **ForKids**, a nonprofit and partner of ELCA World Hunger that serves 14 cities and counties in southeast Virginia to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty for families and children. Soon she connected with a caseworker, Lisa Ellsworth, who shared these words of comfort: "After having the baby, you have a room." ForKids set Maya up with emergency housing to come home from the hospital. This year, ForKids received a **Big Dream Grant** from ELCA World Hunger. Larger than World Hunger's typical domestic grants, Big Dream Grants are designed to support ministries with transformative projects that will significantly differ in their communities. (From Betsy Liljeberg—*The Virginia Synod Hunger Team* was instrumental in facilitating this award—Betsy is the Team Leader.)

Happy Baptismal Birthday To . . .

Krystle McMahan June 15

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Happy Anniversary to . . .

Gene and Janet Gomez June 17

Phil Dunn and Joan Podd June 19

Karen and Art Stark June 23

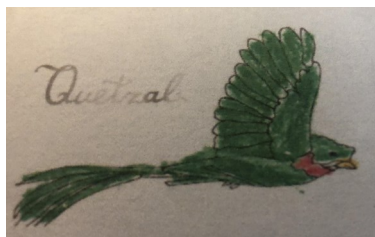
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Greetings From Our Children in Guatemala

+ **From Amayra Ester Rumundo**—"Little Amayra Ester greets you wishing that you are in good health and by this letter thanking you for the assistance that you gift to us each month and for this money which comes to our hands. May God shed many blessings on your lives and on your work. Little Amayra Ester says goodbye to you all."

+ **From Hugolino Choc**—"This economical help you send me really helps me, really helps me a lot. I am greatly thankful for the money you sent me. May God bless you always. Thank you so much."

+ **From Manuela Elvira Tziquin Yzoc**—"I hope you are healthy. I am thankful for your help you send me. It helps me out a lot. God bless you and thank you for the money."



(Included in each letter was a picture of the Quetzal bird colored by the children—the Quetzal bird is the national bird of Guatemala.)

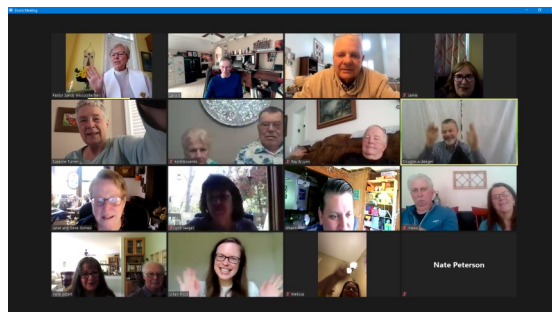
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Please Keep In Your Prayers

April Anby, Opal Baker, Luise Buerkert, Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Betty Hauch, Michael Schlemmer, Keith and Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue and George Turner, Lena Woodlief, and Judy Wright

Correspondence

"Dear People of Apostles,
It was a joy to worship with you. Shawn managed the process well for an inexperienced pandemic-era retired pastor. I celebrate your RIC status and your efforts to be inclusive. It really matters! With love and gratitude,
Pastor Sandy Wisco"



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Save and Date!!



God's Work, Our Hands
Our annual day of service in the community will be **Saturday, September 11th.**



Guatemala Mission Trip Kick Off
The kick off for our 2022 mission trip to Guatemala will be in **October.**

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"Trinity"

Trinitarian doctrine tries to condense teachings from the Bible about how God is revealed and how we experience God. Christians cannot conceive of having a full address to God that does not begin with Creator. God does not reach us except through the Son. The Holy Spirit reaches us through the Scriptures. . .the important point is to see Father, Son and Holy Spirit perfectly united, not to be confused with each other, all equal, and—this point was always important—indicating that within the deity there is relationship, a model for all of our existence. (From *Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers* by Martin Marty)

Congratulations to Our High School Graduates!!



Watch the 2021 Synod Assembly Online!



Sarah Anby
Sarah plans to attend Radford in the Fall and study early childhood education.



Nick Biggs
Nick plans to attend James Madison in the Fall and major in physics.



Alejandra McCurry
Alejandra received her associates degree and will receive her high school diploma on June 5th. Her plan is to travel before attending college.

The 2021 Virginia Synod Assembly will take place online on **Saturday, June 12th** from 10 AM to 4 PM. The entire Assembly will be broadcast live on the **Synod's YouTube Channel**. To make it easier to follow along with the Assembly, the Synod has gathered all the information you will need on one page: <https://www.vasynod.org/watch-the-2021-va-assembly/>. On this page, you will find the links to the YouTube page, the Bulletin of Reports, Synod Social Media platforms, and links to information from Virginia Synod Mission Partners. The YouTube link for the Assembly won't go live until the day of the event, but you can check out the page today to familiarize yourself with the site.

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Just a Few More Amazing Grace Race Moments!



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Summer 2021 Reading List

The Virginia Synod is offering book studies this summer—the first will be June 21st at 7:00 PM via Zoom—the book being studied is “Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man” - details can be found on the Virginia Synod website.