

The Epistle

THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gloucester, Virginia

www.apostles-elca.org

March 2022

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



Irish Blessings From The Ignipotent

"O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day."

~Psalm 96:1-2

Spring is right around the corner, transitioning us into a new season of grace-filled spaces here in the Courthouse. We have much to celebrate. After 39 years, Apostles Lutheran Church has hired an Administrative Assistant. Mrs. Amanda Payne has joined our Christ-centered crew this past February and has risen to the challenge. She and her family will be installed as our Staff sometime this March of their choosing. We welcome her and her family to this community of grace. If we wish for them to continue accompanying this community of grace, then I ***strongly*** recommend that we manage our expectations of what one person can do in but 9 hours a week at only \$13.00 an hour. Speaking of grace, my Beloved Community, I want to affirm that we, the people, are the Church. Our grounds, sanctuary, offices, and building are mere conduits of conducting our ministry together. It is for this reason I am going to call our Church Office, GQ, or Grace Quarters from now on. I invite you to join me because you are the Church. I want to emphasize that you do not have to call our building GQ; I am going to call it that, and you are ***invited*** to join me.

In preparation for the Daffodil Festival this April, we will have a booth here at the Pink House, where I will have lawn furniture set up on the green. I have also started selling handmade animal hats at the Gloucester Courthouse Visitor's Center. My consignment is called *Creatures for Creation*, all proceeds collected will go directly back to ministry of Apostles Lutheran Church. As of late, I have already made a 300% profit off of what I have purchased and labored to create them. A good portion of these hats will be sold via a freewill donation at our booth during the Daffodil Festival. Should any knitters, crocheters, sewers, or providers of needed materials choose to join me in making them, then please let me or our Admin know how best to contact you for service. I have currently made foxes, bunnies, and unicorns. I will make lambs for Easter, cats for Halloween, and mice for Christmas. My next venture is to affix crocheted daffodils to these creatures. If you would like a custom-made hat for yourself, a human loved one, or a pet, then please email oa.apostles@gmail.com with your request. Label the subject line as "Creatures for Creation Request", and someone will get back to you.

COVID-19 is not going away, and we need not move forward with our lives. We will take this time of renewal to navigate how God is calling us to be together. March is Women's History Month. Thus, in response to over 50 years of Women's Ordination in the ELCA, I will be conducting a sermon series on *Eve's Bible*:

A Woman's Guide to the Old Testament by Sarah S. Forth. I have also respectively spoken to our Worship and Administration Teams about our bulletin and hymns this year. We will find a happier medium between cost-effectiveness and user friendly means of maintaining our bulletin. Since we are not singing together during worship, our choir has resumed singing and recording our hymns. The Administration Team had chosen to abstain from printing out the full lyrics to our hymns. The hymn titles and numbers will remain should anyone wish to follow along in our red hymnals. We will also limit our hymns from three to two for the sake of limiting time in our building. The choir will record one song, our Gathering Hymn, which will play over our speaker. The Worship Team has affirmed my course taught during Power in the Spirit concerning Scriptural Influences on our Media. I will be claiming our Sending Hymn to share with you a secular song that has been influenced in some way by our Scripture and Theology. I will also pair the songs that I choose with a theological blurb that will go into our bulletin. Some blurbs will be long, and some will be short. Ware Episcopal Church has invited us to use their outdoor Pavilion for Worship Services during this Lenten Season and beyond. He has agreed that we pay but \$50.00 per use of the Pavilion and \$100.00 should we utilize their outdoor heaters. Rector Scott and I have spoken about a possible collaboration for Wednesday Lenten Worship. We hope to combine Dinner Church with two theological/ biblical discussion options in the Ware Episcopal Fellowship Hall. Each Church is to provide a potluck of soup, bread, salad, and dessert for each Wednesday evening. Each participant within the gathered Assembly has the option to then A) Discuss the 5 Tenants of Baptism with Rector Scott, or B) Learn about the named and unnamed women of the Bible as we draw parallels with the role of women during the Pandemic of 2020 with me. Your Worship and Caring Communities Teams will be in collaboration about what this may mean to us moving forward when we meet. The future is wild with possibilities, which is

both scary and exciting. However, we worship a God of Abundance. We are free to answer the call to adventure that Jesus has provided to us and the Holy Spirit was sent to guide us. I now leave you to ponder the words of Kahlil Gibran (1883–1931).

“Do not love half lovers
 Do not entertain half friends
 Do not indulge in works of the half talented
 Do not live half a life
 and do not die a half death
 If you choose silence, then be silent
 When you speak, do so until you are finished
 Do not silence yourself to say something
 And do not speak to be silent
 If you accept, then express it bluntly
 Do not mask it
 If you refuse then be clear about it
 for an ambiguous refusal is but a weak
 acceptance
 Do not accept half a solution
 Do not believe half truths
 Do not dream half a dream
 Do not fantasize about half hopes
 Half a drink will not quench your thirst
 Half a meal will not satiate your hunger
 Half the way will get you no where
 Half an idea will bear you no results
 Your other half is not the one you love
 It is you in another time yet in the same space
 It is you when you are not
 Half a life is a life you didn't live,
 A word you have not said
 A smile you postponed
 A love you have not had
 A friendship you did not know
 To reach and not arrive
 Work and not work
 Attend only to be absent
 What makes you a stranger to them closest to
 you
 and they strangers to you
 The half is a mere moment of inability
 but you are able for you are not half a being
 You are a whole that exists to live a life
 not half a life”

Take care, be well, and be safe.

In God's Abiding Love,

2 Pastor Jeniffer, M. Div, Miss. Dev.

Open Air Pastoral Care at the Pink House

Please contact Pastor Jeniffer if you would like to be invited to her porch at pastor.apostles@gmail.com for more information. Pastoral care at the Pink House is by invitation only. I look forward to accompanying you!



[This Photo](#)

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A Message from Your Congregation Council President, Doug Dalager

Cradle Lutheran from Minnesota-You Betcha!!
 Sinner: All my life-ask God to forgive my sins and I try and not to do them again. I had been married for 18 years and now separated for 5 years from my wife. Our life's disciplines and habits (including religion) are not in the same direction. I know divorce is committing adultery and a sin. I will ask God to forgive my sin, when my wife can support herself. I want to thank everyone at Apostle's Lutheran Church (ALC) for supporting me in my role as President of Congregation Council. For all members of ALC: We should congratulate ourselves for staying together as a church. During this time of Covid, many churches closed and have still not reopened. We had to learn church is where people come together to worship God. And is not dependent on the physical building called a church. Lastly, Pastor Jennifer had the idea to bring members together using ZOOM conferencing. First with the Congregation Council members, when Covid first closed our church building. Then with Congregation Council on board and church members assisting with the Worship Ministry we had ZOOM Worship. With Apostles Lutheran Church being flexible and adaptive, we will continue to flourish. With the help of a bold Congregation Council backing me, I will do my best to help Apostle's do God's Will
 Thank you,
 Doug Dalager

Welcome To Our New Administrative Assistant!!



Hi! I am excited to be starting a new journey with everyone! I currently live in Gloucester with my husband, Travis, two daughters, Ava and Aubrey, and two dogs.



I graduated from Old Dominion University with my bachelor's degree, but not too long after got married and started my family I have been blessed to be able to be a stay-at-home mom and pause my career. My oldest is now in kindergarten and my youngest is still at home with me. I enjoy shopping, exercising, and spending time at my parents' lake house. I look forward to meeting everyone.

Amanda Payne

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Ministry Team Meetings

The following ministry team will meet in March:

+ **Worship**—Thursday, March 3rd at 8:30 PM

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Happy Anniversary To...

Barbara and Bernie Runk

March 1

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Happy Birthday to...

- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Phil Dunn | March 1 |
| Martha Carroll | March 4 |
| Tina Britt | March 11 |
| Makayla Hess | March 15 |
| Judy Wright | March 20 |
| Steve Hanson | March 22 |
| J. Dillon | March 27 |
| August Good | March 27 |
| Margaret Grimes | March 28 |



Wrapped in Prayer

Lutheran women might not have originally conceived of the prayer shawl, but they were early adopters. Across the church, for at least two decades, women, like our beloved Pam Moore, have been knitting prayer shawls,

working their prayers into the stitches, often for yet-unknown recipients. In the past, we have given prayers shawls upon the death of a loved one, a difficult diagnosis, an impending surgery, the loss of a job or any other challenges people have faced. Chris Raha, a former member of the church, when he was teenager, was facing a very serious heart surgery—he covered himself with the prayer shawl he was given and said that he was wrapped in the prayers of his congregation. Most recently, everyone attending the Blue Christmas service we had in December was given a prayer shawl as they left the church. Thank you, Pam, for your wonderful ministry of making prayer shawls!!!

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Please Keep In Your Prayers

Opal Baker, Luise Buerkert, Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Betty Hauch, Michael Schlemmer, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue and George Turner, and Jerry and Lena Woodlief.

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Happy Baptismal

Anniversary to. .

Kayla Hautz	March 2
Carson Riordan	March 26
Emily Riordan	March 26
Sean Riordan	March 26
Jack and Juliet Baur	March 31

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Administrative Assistant E-Mail

You can now send our new Administrative Assistant, Amanda Payne, e-mails at oa.apostles@gmail.com.



Reconciling in Christ Ministry

The Reconciling in Christ ministry team will be meeting on **Thursday, March 10th**, at 7:30 PM. You are more than welcome to attend—please contact anyone on this ministry team for more information: Pete and Betsy Liljeberg, David and Mary Leunig, Irene Albert, Janet Gomez and Pastor Jeniffer.

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Volunteers Needed for the Daffodil Festival



The annual Daffodil Festival is taking place in Gloucester this year

on Saturday, April 2nd, and Sunday, April 3rd. Apostles Lutheran is going to have a table at the festival this year to share our many ministries with our neighbors. What should people in our community know about Apostles? What makes us special?? Is it our worship, our Lutheran heritage, our music, our designation as a RIC congregation, our mission trips to Guatemala, our work with the GUEST shelter, AA.....?

We have a lot to share! Come help us plan our booth! We will meet after worship on Sunday, March 13th, to brainstorm ideas.

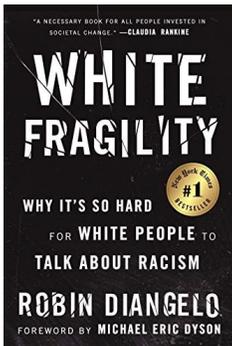
We also need volunteers to sit at our table and talk to our neighbors during the festival. Please let Pete Liljeberg know if you are willing to help.

We have a great church. Let's tell people about it! Pete Liljeberg

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Easter Lilies

We are taking orders for Easter lilies to adorn our sanctuary for Easter—the cost is \$13—if you would like to purchase one, please call or e-mail Janet Gomez at 804-693-5738, thezemogs@gmail.com. There is also a signup sheet in the narthex at the church. The deadline to order is **Sunday, March 6th**—the growers are asking for orders early because of COVID. Thanks!



New Book Study to Start

All are invited to join Pastor Sandy Wisco and Pete Liljeberg as they facilitate a book study of “White Fragility “ by Robin Di Angelo. Come sit with us as we discuss this text and the

current state of racial relations in our country and within ourselves. Beginning: Thursday March 17 at 7 PM over Zoom. The book, a free study guide, and an online quiz about your racial awareness are all available at: <http://www.beacon.org/White-Fragility-P1631.aspx>. Contact Pete with any questions and let him know if you would like a Zoom invite to the study.

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Guatemalan Children Sponsorship Program

“Dear sponsor, this is the little girl Amayra Ester greeting you, I hope you are in good health, you and all your family. Through this letter I want to thank you for the money you've sent me, and for the help you send

me each month, may God continue blessing your life and job. I hope I can count on your support always. May God pour many blessings on you, and thank you. The little girl Amayra Ester Raymundo Juarez bids you goodbye.” Amayra is one of three children that Apostles is sponsoring in rural Guatemala—they are provided education, medical care and nutrition support. The other 2 children are Hugolino and Manuela. 4 other children are being sponsored privately by members of our congregation—one just recently sponsored. If you would like more information about this program, please contact Pete Liljeberg.



Remembering Jim Reinke

Our brother in Christ, Jim Reinke, was called to that other life in the eternal rest with our Savior along with all of the saints and sinners who have gone before us on

February 7, 2022, at the VA hospital in Richmond. He was born in Minnesota to Ervin and Marion Reinke on Nov. 23, 1948. He was raised in Center, N.D. with his siblings. He graduated from Center High and shortly after joined the USAF. He proudly and honorably served in the Air Force for 20 years. During the Vietnam Conflict, he was a gunner on a AC-130 gunship known as Spectre, he was highly decorated at the time of his retirement in 1986. He then became a postal carrier in Newport News, Va. After a few years, he took the leap of faith and started working on the water full-time. He has always enjoyed fishing, and was tired of “working.” He became a commercial fisherman, and loved being on the water every day. That’s where he found his peace. After having some health issues, he started working for a local refuse company in Gloucester where he was able to give back to his community and make lots of good friends over the last 10+ years. He also was very involved with his church as well as a volunteer at the Bread For Life Food Pantry. A Celebration of Life will be conducted at a later date. Take comfort in the words from our scripture from the Gospel of Luke—”Then the criminal said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ Jesus replied, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.’”

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GUEST Meal—March 13th

Apostles will be providing meals for the residents of the Gloucester United Emergency Sheltering Team (GUEST) on Sunday, March 13th—please see Nancy Wagner for additional information.

***Welcome to The Winter Edition
of Seasons of Stewardship
Featuring
The Caring Community Ministry
Team's Amazing Grace Race!!***

The Race continues!!! In February, Phil (aka Nate Peterson) continued giving with our 2 teams (the Golden Girls and the Blue Women Group) more challenges, roadblocks and detours that are designed to help you get to know what the Caring Community Ministry Team is all about. In Episode 2, the teams encountered a detour and had to choose between "Cooking is Caring" or "Planning is Patience." In "Cooking is Caring", the teams had to make a king cake and in "Planning is Patience", the teams had to decorate a table for Mardi Gras. In Episode 3, the teams faced their next challenge - "All We Need Is A Little Love" - they had to deliver Valentine packages to several of our members—the packages included cards, dinner (ziti and bread), dessert (a cupcake) and a plant. In Episode 4, the teams had to figure out which activities were part of Caring Community. If you missed seeing the any of the episodes, you can watch it on our website at apostles-elca.org. You won't want to miss the final episode on Sunday, March 6th, "God is Calling" and see who wins The Caring Community Ministry Team's Amazing Grace Race!! We will celebrate the work of this team on **Sunday, March 20th**, with fellowship, games, a special raffle and a box lunch. Your entry for the raffle will be your Time and Talent sheet.

The **Caring Community Ministry Team** is responsible for encouraging and supporting the growth of members' faith and for strengthening the congregation's sense of Christian community. the team:

- (1) **provides** on-going opportunities for learning about the Bible, the Lutheran faith, and Christian spirituality (Sunday church school, Vacation Bible school, Bible study, study groups, small spiritual growth groups, synod-sponsored programs and retreats, and the like);

- (1) **coordinates** the congregation's caring ministries to members in time of need;
- (2) **fosters** the congregation's sense of community through fellowship activities (Sunday fellowship hour, special events & programs, family game and movie nights, and the like);
- (4) **encourages** members' growth in generosity as a grateful response to the abundance of God's blessings in their lives;
- (5) **supports** the growth of our youth through a program of activities that help develop a sustaining faith marked by joy in living, mutually supportive relationships, compassionate service to those in need, and growth in understanding of God's purposes for life.)

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***Some Additional Thoughts On
A Caring Community***

"In his 2001 book, "Bowling Alone," Robert Putnam traces the collapse of American community. He shares all sorts of polls and studies which chronicle the increasing loneliness of most Americans as well as the decline of traditional forms of community; e.g., bowling leagues. It is my belief that the future of the church rests on its ability to rearticulate the importance of community in people's lives; and to offer communities of hope, healing and hospitality, grounded on grace and love. Those who have been made God's people by faith are joined at a deep level. We must understand ourselves as a deeply connected community and the first step in living this out is having a deep curiosity about the people around us—the collapse of community has left a lot of people lonely, confused and in pain but people rarely share that with others. We need to take a profound interest in the people around us—listening more than talking—caring for others first and foremost. We need to trust in God's grace to sustain us and put our neighbors first—it is the state of profound connectedness for which we were created."

(Reprinted from St. Stephen's newsletter, The Quill, by Pastor Jon Nelson.)



Ahh....Water!

And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the

waters.” Water warming your daily shower..... water dripping in your coffee pot.....water quenching your thirst on a hot summer’s day.....water washing your laundry, and dishes, and hands..... How often we use water freely from our faucets? How often do we give thanks for the abundance of water?

Would we appreciate our water more if we had to walk 2 or 3 miles to get it? In many places around the world water contains harmful contaminants and must be boiled before consuming. Water is a precious gift from our Creator!

World Water Day is March 22 this year. Here are some ideas for appreciating and giving thanks for the water we use every day.

+ Drop a dime in a jar every time you turn on a faucet and collect the money for one of the ELCA water Good Gifts: <https://goodgifts.elca.org/water> .

+ Remember your baptism when you wash your face each morning.

+ Pray for those who walk miles to obtain water and consider how you might implement water saving measures in your home. https://thewaterproject.org/water_conservation_tips

+ Give thanks daily for the water in your life: that you gaze upon at the shore, that falls in a gentle rain, that is delivered to your house through something as convenient as a faucet! This message was brought to you by the Virginia Synod Hunger Team.

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Directory Changes

Please change Kayla and Matthew Hautz’s address to 145 Riverboat Ln E, Hartfield, VA 23071.



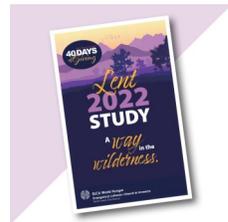
Lent Begins March 2nd

The Season of Lent will start on Wednesday, March 2nd, with an in-person worship service and via Zoom that will include imposition of ashes.

The service will start at 7:00 PM. On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

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Resources for Your Lenten Journey



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is offering a Lent 2022 Study Guide that is available for download at <https://www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-World-Hunger>—you can also subscribe to a weekly email

during Lent at <https://community.elca.org/40-days-subscription?>.

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Soup and Bread Suppers Offered During Lent

The Caring Community Ministry Team will provide soup and bread to take home on Wednesdays during Lent starting Wednesday, March 9th—all you have to do is stop by the church starting at 6:00 PM to pick up your soup and bread—we ask that on subsequent Wednesdays through Lent you bring back your container(s) to be refilled.