



The Epistle

THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gloucester, Virginia

www.apostles-elca.org

April 2023

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

Gethsemane, now dark at night,
Is calm before the storm
When footsteps patter on the path,
One single human form
Who stops to pray, alone, upset,
While friends lay down nearby,
And in a fervent questioning
We hear his plaintive cry
That this cup might be removed from
His mission to remain
True to God's plan to surrender
Himself to mortal pain.
Time and again he stops his prayer
To seek strength from his friends
Only to find them fast asleep
As passing time portends
The culmination of this night,
Betrayal and arrest,
Acceptance of a fate now sealed
Through fraudulent inquest.
Standing before the governor
He hears the people cry
"We want Barabbas, free him now,
This Jesus, crucify!"
What turn of events from that day
A week or so before
When "hosannas" were lifted high
As this crowd, with ardour,
Watched him enter triumphantly,
Upon a low donkey,
This city as they spread branches
In fullest jubilee.
His back now striped by flagellum
And wearing thorny crown,
We see him leaving this city
Reversed in his renown,
Carrying on his back the post
Upon which he will be
Nailed high upon a hill that day

For all the world to see.
His followers are scattered now,
Some witness the event
While others flee to ensure that
Their lives are not so spent.
The agony by cross is born
Beyond physical pain,
In such abject, demeaning loss
What could God hope to gain?
As Sabbath rest would soon arrive
They pull him from the cross
And cradle in their loving arms
Their hopes, their dreams, their loss,
But duty bound they wrap him in
A linen shroud to place
Him in a tomb of rough-hewn rock,
His final resting space.
They left his body, fully dead,
Alone inside that tomb,
So, how could they imagine that
This space would be a womb?
For death, our greatest enemy,
The power of the grave
Which held him in its clutches then
Would be the path to save
All humankind in our despair,
Our weakness and our fear,
When on the first day of the week,
The women coming near
Discovered that God will not lose
Anything God creates
But rather overcoming death
God fully demonstrates
That divine vision is beyond
Our own in many ways
And that in weakness God finds strength
Turning nights into days.
When Mary heard her name spoken
And Thomas saw the hand

When two men saw the bread broken
 And Peter swam to land
 They found the risen Christ for them,
 Alive, and understood
 That God could work life from cold death
 And that God always would
 Touch humankind with Easter joy
 And in our pain and strife
 Would transform our own cross from death
 To fullest, brightest life,
 And so, this story, year by year
 Is shared to help us see
 That God is God of light and life
 And calls us all to be
 His Easter people unleashed to
 Share his love joyfully.

Pastor Jay



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Holy Week Schedule

- April 2 Palm/Passion Sunday
10:00 AM**
- April 6 Maundy Thursday
First Communion
7:00 PM**
- April 7 Good Friday
7:00 PM**
- April 8 Easter Vigil
On The Beach at
Watermen’s Museum
7:00 PM**
- April 9 Easter Sunday
Holy Communion
10:00 AM
Easter Brunch
Easter Egg Hunt**

***Christ Is Risen
Christ Is Risen Indeed!***

Easter at Apostles



+ Flowers for the Easter Cross

Don’t forget to bring fresh flowers on Easter Sunday to adorn our Easter cross.

+ Easter Brunch

Please join us for an Easter brunch after the worship service—everyone is asked to bring a “brunch” dish to share

+ Easter Egg Hunt

There will be an Easter Egg Hunt for our children after the worship service—bring your Easter basket!!

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***Have You Scheduled
Your House Blessing?***

Pastor Jay is encouraging members of the congregation to schedule a House Blessing as a way for Pastor Jay to become more familiar with the congregation and its members. All that is needed is your having a candle and a way to light it when he gets to your home. This service works in any type of dwelling and even may be modified for places of business. Pastor Jay will be available at any time of the year, by appointment, to share with you in the blessing of your dwelling. You can e-mail Pastor Jay at j80j84@msn.com or call him at 570-205-7506. *(Editor’s note: This was a very unique experience—Gene and I had never done this before.)*

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Happy Anniversary to . . .

Robert and Krystle McMahan April 19

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***First Communion To Be
Celebrated***

Reagan Jay (daughter of Christina and Brian Badger) will celebrate her First Communion on Maundy Thursday—welcome to the Lord’s table!

Reflections on Guatemala From A Newby

As one of the new members to the Apostles Lutheran Guatemala team, I was asked to reflect on our trip to Guatemala. Though there were so many new experiences during the week, three areas stand out.

- **The first** is the amazing people I met in the villages we visited. The people of Xojola and Ixtacapa were generous with their smiles, hugs, and delicious food. Their friendliness was infectious. The hotel staff were gracious, welcoming and saw to our every need.

- **The second** is the amazing team of which I was blessed to be a part. Due to the combined efforts of the staff of Partners in Development and incredible experience of Betsy and Pete Liljeberg, the medical clinics ran smoothly, and the stove team was truly extraordinary—50 stoves installed – incredible!!



- **The third** area was the beauty of the country. The hotel where we stayed was a paradise of lush plants, flowers, and tropical birds. I miss waking up to the sound of tropical birdsong each morning. The villages are a kaleidoscope of colorful houses and shops. I am very happy I decided to be a part of this wonderful team and hope to return next year.

Barbara Runk



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Attendance/Holy Communion Record

Please take a minute and fill out this card (they will be in the bulletin and also in the pew racks) –this will help with the statistics needed for the parochial report that has to be completed once a year—thank you from the Worship Ministry Team!!

HOLY COMMUNION RECORD	
Envelope no. _____	Date _____
Name _____	
Address _____	
Desire pastor to call <input type="checkbox"/>	I am a visitor <input type="checkbox"/>
Home congregation _____	
Address _____	
<i>Please return this card as a record of your Communion</i>	
<small>ISBN 0-8066-0785-8, Code 5-92 Copyright © Augsburg Fortress</small>	

***Please Join Us
for the Easter Vigil***



This a service you won't want to miss—it is **WONDERFUL**—it is held on the beach at Yorktown—7 local Lutheran and Episcopalian churches participate—hope to see you on **Saturday, April 8th, at 7:00 PM** on the beach behind the Watermen's museum.



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Looking Ahead

+ **Sunday, June 4th**—Reconciling in Christ Celebration

+ **Thursday-Saturday, July 13th-15th**—Summer Power In The Spirit at Roanoke College

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Correspondence

“Dear Apostles Lutheran Church, Please accept this \$100 donation. We really appreciate you allowing us to meet at your church. You rock!!

Thanks,
Gloucester Young and Sober AA Meeting”
(Editor's note: Gloucester Young and Sober is one of 3 AA groups that meet weekly at our church—Gloucester Young and Sober meet on Saturdays at 6:30 PM, the other groups meet on Mondays and Tuesdays.)

“The staff of Blessings International extends you a warm welcome! We appreciate your order and thank you for helping others who are in need.
The Blessings Team”
(Editor's note: Blessings International provided all sorts of supplies to the Guatemalan medical mission team.)

7th Day

7th Day is the Virginia Synod's annual youth retreat for youth in grades 5 and 6—it's a 24 hour event filled with lots of activities for the youth. This year, Christina Badger and her daughter, Reagan Jay, attended. The theme was “Broken Chains” based on Acts 16:16-34. Reagan's favorite part was the singing and the music and making new friends with a neighboring church. Christina's favorite was definitely the music and being in the Spirit. The Shepherds and the Assistant Shepherds were given a group that went around to 4 stations—theater and play (acting out scripture), music and movement, arts and craft and games and movement.



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***Happy Baptismal
Anniversary to . . .***

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|-----------------|----------|
| AB Britt | April 18 |
| Margaret Grimes | April 19 |
| Tyler Britt | April 21 |
| Sarah Anby | April 25 |

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Ministry Team Meetings

- The following ministry teams will meet in April:
+ **Reconciling in Christ**—Monday, April 3rd, at 7:00 PM
+ **Worship**—Monday, April 17th, at 7:00 PM



What is Land Acknowledgement?

On Indigenous Peoples Day 2022, Bishop Eaton and the Church Council of the ELCA published “A Declaration of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the American Indian and Alaska Native People”. In this declaration, the church promised to uphold the commitments made in the 2016 document “Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery”. One of the commitments made was to publicly acknowledge the original inhabitants of church land. As Christians, we are called to be reconciled with people of all races, nations, and genders. Land acknowledgement is one way that we can begin the reconciliation process with our native siblings. The ELCA encourages all congregations to name the original inhabitants of the land on which a particular church building sits. This can be done verbally or in writing. The ELCA also encourages all congregations to return the land to its original inhabitants should a congregation close and no longer need the building. Apostles is on the land of the Werowocomoco Nation. The area was the residence of the Virginia Algonquin Chief Powhatan. The Powhatan chiefdom, covering over 6,000 square miles, had one of the most complex native societies of North America in 1607 and had a population of approximately 15,000. (<https://powhatan.wm.edu/history/index.htm>) The Reconciling in Christ ministry team is working on ways to honor the original inhabitants of our land. We welcome your input and questions. For further reading see: <https://goodfaithmedia.org/why-and-how-you-should-practice-the-ritual-of-land-acknowledgment/> In Christ’s service,
Betsy Liljeberg
RIC Team Leader

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Thank you, Thank You. . .

To everyone who helped with the mid-week Lenten worship services and soup and bread meals. The offering collected was designated for earthquake relief in Syria and Turkey.



World Malaria Day April 25

For decades, the celebration of World Malaria Day has been a positive event to update and educate the public on the status of malaria in our world. The World Health Organization’s (WHO) Malaria 2022 Report (1) shows some positive news while highlighting growing concerns about the treatment of malaria. Malaria-affected countries have a lot of challenges, including disruptions arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, long-running humanitarian crises, limited funding, and the effects of climate change. Although hard hit, most countries were able to maintain services to prevent, detect and treat malaria; however, more than 600,000 people die of malaria every year – most of them children. There are declines in the effectiveness of malaria-fighting tools such as resistance to insecticide-treated nets and to anti-malarial drug regimens. WHO recommends expanded use of a malaria vaccine among children in areas with moderate and high malaria transmission. If implemented broadly, the vaccine could save tens of thousands of lives each year. On April 16th, our World Hunger offering will go towards fighting Malaria. Please prayerfully consider this offering!

Betsy Liljeberg

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The Three Days



For something as ancient and as central to the Christian faith as the days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter are, they generate a surprising amount of questions and misunderstanding. These days are at the very core of Christianity. Through our worship we actually become involved in—a part of—the stories they tell. No longer are they just something that happened thousands of years ago—they are now living, active and urgent events—we are no mere passive bystanders—we are part of the story. Look forward to Seeing you as we journey through Holy Week!

Happy 42nd Anniversary, Apostles!!

Gloucester Lutheran Church, began in 1981 as a satellite of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Yorktown, Virginia. The first worship service was held on April 26, 1981 at the Botetourt Masonic Lodge in Gloucester Courthouse by the Reverend Ralph W. Spears. In September 1983, the congregation became chartered and subsequently approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia as an Independent Lutheran Church. On May 13, 1988, Apostles Lutheran Church became a congregation of the Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. The Reverend Theodore M. Schulz was called as Apostles' first ELCA pastor in October 1988 and was installed on December 4, 1988.



New Treasurer Needed

After 20+ years, Tina Britt will be stepping down from serving as our Treasurer at the end of 2023. What an amazing job Tina has done—we are so very thankful! We are looking for someone to take her place—if you are interested in serving, please contact David Leunig, Congregation Council President—training will be provided.

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Breakfast for Faith Leaders

Apostles hosted the Faith Based Breakfast on Wednesday, March 15th. Representatives from churches in the area gathered for networking and information sharing. The guest speaker was Investigator Holt from the Gloucester County Sheriff's Department. He did a presentation on Human Trafficking of minors. The next breakfast will be in a couple of months at Transforming Life Church on Main Street in Gloucester. Anyone is welcome to attend.



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Happy Birthday to . . .

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|-----------------|----------|
| Ann Albert | April 3 |
| Ray Kendzierksi | April 5 |
| Jennie Hawkins | April 5 |
| Pam Moore | April 5 |
| Jack Baur | April 5 |
| April Anby | April 6 |
| Barbara Runk | April 7 |
| Carson Riordan | April 9 |
| Doug Dalager | April 10 |
| Jamie Serafin | April 18 |
| Marina Allen | April 19 |
| Shawn Anby | April 21 |
| Mary Leunig | April 25 |
| Willow Crocker | April 27 |

Welcome to The Spring Edition of Seasons of Stewardship The Worship Ministry Team



Spring (April, May and June) will be dedicated to the work of the Worship Ministry Team. The **Worship Ministry Team** is responsible for encouraging and supporting the growth of members' worship of our triune God and focus on the Word. To meet this goal the team will:

- + plan the setting, liturgy and music for all worship services;
- + provide and maintain appropriate resources (bulletins, worship folders, worship books, music, devotional materials);
- + train and empower members to participate actively as worship leaders (assisting ministers, communion assistants, acolytes, crucifers, lectors, preachers, ushers, music leaders, choir members, altar care servers);
- + enrich the worship experience through preparation and care of appointments reflecting the liturgical calendar and sacraments (paraments, altar linens, communion vessels, baptismal vessels, banners, robes, flowers and appropriate seasonal adornments such as Advent wreath, Chrismon tree, palms);
- + recommend policy with respect to care and use of the worship space (weddings, funerals held at Apostles);

The month of April will be "presentation", the month of May will be "invitation" and the month of June will be "celebration." Check out the special display in the narthex.

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Please Keep In Your Prayers

Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Heidi Henderson, David Muse, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue and George Turner, and Jerry and Lena Woodlief.

Fellowship Activities

The Caring Community Ministry Team would like your input on what you would like to do for fellowship activities—things like board game night, casino night, karaoke night, talent night, live music night, bingo night, movie night, craft night, trivia night to name a few. There is a display in the fellowship hall—just write down your choice and put it in the basket—we'll see what people would like to do. Stay tuned!

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Just A Few More Guatemala Memories!

