

# The Epistle

**THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Gloucester [www.apostles-elca.org](http://www.apostles-elca.org) | [www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA](https://www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA) August 2023**

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



## *A Word from Pastor Jay Do Not Worry*

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about

your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. “So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Matthew 6:25-34

Life happens. In the midst of our human experience, as we pass from day to day and encounter people, events, deadlines, concerns, difficulties, problems, the unexpected, the expected, inabilities, illness, fear and all the other “realities” which cause us to lie awake at night with wandering minds, we recognize that anxiety is a part of life we can’t overcome. Life creates stress. We worry for ourselves, for our family and loved ones, for our community, for our church, for our nation and for our world. We worry about things we know and about things we don’t know. We worry about things we can control and about things we can’t control. We worry about the consequences of past events and we worry about what tomorrow might bring. We even, from time to time, worry about worrying. Anxiety is a part of human life. Some may be better at coping with it than others, but we all face angst and doubt from time to time.

How, then, can we fulfill the direction Jesus gives us not to worry? His beautiful prose invites us to a place we all would like to enter, free from worry and fear. Yet, the mail comes with more bills, the kids (or parents) are having health issues, we watch the news and despair about what we hear, we obsess about the upcoming doctor’s appointment, we compare the church today with the church we grew up in and we feel the anxiety rise within. Where is life leading me? What is going to happen next? How can I feel safe and free from worry?

Jesus was sharing this message with real people like you and me, who worked hard each day and who didn't always know what tomorrow might bring. Often, they felt removed from God's love, almost as if God had forgotten about them. Our worries and anxiety about many things come from a similar place. When we feel unable to be in control of events, as if we were tossed about by things beyond our fashioning, we also feel removed from God's caring hand. Yet, Jesus is very frank in his assessment. God loves creation, and cares for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, providing for their needs. But where is this care when our mortgage comes due, or we face the uncertainty of medical exams? The care comes in the form of promises made to us in the waters of Baptism. I know I talk often about the promises spoken over our lives in Baptism, but I do so because I believe that they are fundamental for our faith. God doesn't promise us an easy life, or that God will take every distasteful event/ possibility and remove it from our lives. What God does promise, however, is that God's care and love and life will be with us every step of the way, and that in the promise given to us in Baptism, God will keep us close forever. Nothing will be able to get between us and the fullness of love and life that God gives us through Jesus.

Life happens. Life happens because God created life to happen. The one who created you to be the unique person you are is the one who will walk with you every step of the way in this wonderful journey. I wish I could say to you, "Don't worry," and you could stop worrying. But what I can share is that in Christ's pronouncement of the kingdom God's love becomes real. This love is more powerful than anything else, even death. And, as St. Paul reminds us, if this love is for us, what could be against us?



## *Apostles Facebook Page*

We welcome everyone to view posts on the Apostles Facebook page which can be accessed by using this website. <https://www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA>. Please note if you do not have a Facebook account you can still view the posts by closing out the account log in request (hit X button). On the page you can find information about Apostles, some upcoming events, community notes, pictures of events, and musing/writings that touch on faith. We welcome your comments on the posts! Facebook administrators are Pastor Jay and Jamie Serafin and Jennie Hawkins.

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## *Welcome New Members!!*



We welcome Rich Bitting, Jason and Cynthia Lowe and Jamie Serafin to our Apostles church family!! They were received into membership on Sunday, July 16th. We will have short bios on our new members in the September edition of The Epistle. Welcome!!!

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## *Happy Anniversary to . .*

Nate and Ingrid Peterson	August 5
George and Sue Turner	August 6
Jerry and Lena Woodlief	August 7

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## *Happy Baptismal Anniversary to . .*

Shawn Jaeger	August 1
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## *From Your Congregation Council President*

As I write this article, I hope it finds you all healthy, safe, and enjoying your summer months. The topic of this article is not an easy one to talk about, but often is

a necessity to remind the congregation that we exist and survive based on the generous contributions from you, the Apostles members, to the church.

Over the past few Sundays, you may have noticed that we have had a paragraph in the Sunday bulletin identifying that we need your help in maintaining our finances throughout the year. As the bulletin paragraph indicates, our finances at Apostles tend to decline over the summer months, as the congregation takes summer vacations and are away from the church proper. The paragraph also identifies various ways that contributions can be made while you are away so that our church finances maintain a constant and even flow of funds and allows us to pay the bills to keep the church operating and open as well as maintain the support of our ministries.

What the bulletin does not indicate is where our funds go and what ministries they support. It is my hope that this article will shed some light on that topic and let you know what your donations do for us as a congregation. Just like our homes, Apostles' budget/spend plan, we use to manage the finances of the church, anticipates a monthly income to be available so we can make our necessary payments of bills. Also, just like our homes, we have those regular expenses that need to be paid every month, utility bills, telephone bills, insurance premiums, staff salaries, etc., necessary to keep the church operating and a place for us to worship every week. In addition to those uninteresting necessary bills your donations also support many ministries we provide to the community. Ministries like: under the guidance of the Service and Sharing Team, providing meals for the Gloucester United Emergency Sheltering Team (GUEST), Mission

Outreach fund providing support to both international and local/regional organizations, Ministry Benevolence providing funds to GUEST, Bread for Life, Care Clinic, Lutheran Family Services, and this year adding the Samaritan Group, continued support of Guatemala children sponsorships through Partners in Development, and participation in God's Work Our Hands every fall. Under the guidance of the Caring Community Team, providing periodic educational events for all levels including book studies for adults, sponsoring youth to attend Virginia Synod youth events, and providing Spark bulletins and magazines for younger children. These are just a sampling of the important ministries that your donations support throughout the year! Thank you for your support!

I also understand that your expenses on the home front have also probably increased, due to most utility cost increasing, as the church also experiences those increases making a consistent monthly income even more of a priority. I also understand that this might not be the best time for you to prayerfully consider your options related to giving to Apostles but hope that over the next few weeks you might take the time to pray on and consider how your giving might be more consistently provided to the church in those times that you are away. I know and appreciate that many of you may not have the resources and choose to support the congregation through service and that is very much needed and appreciated as well.

The council is also looking into a more formal stewardship program in the future so all will have an opportunity to look at how they can provide support to the church and its ministries either through giving of time and talents or financially. We all have different life circumstances to deal with and I appreciate all you do for the church now and into the future. Together we can ensure that Apostles Lutheran Church can continue providing a place of spiritual development to all who enter our doors and to continue to reach out to the community with our ministry programs.

Peace,

David Leunig, Council President





## ***Pastor Jay's Installation***

Pastor Jay's installation will be **Sunday, September 24th, at 2:00 PM**—details will be forthcoming. There will be a planning meeting on **Monday, August 7th,**

**7:00 PM**—anyone is welcome to come and help us plan for this wonderful celebration!!

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## ***God's Work, Our Hands!***

**God's Work Our Hands**

**Sunday** will be held in October this year as we hope for some cooler weather. If you would like to order a T-shirt, short or long sleeved, please contact Betsy Liljeberg or sign up in the Narthex. You may also order hooded sweatshirts. If we get 9 orders we can have them customized with Apostles on the back.



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## ***Presentation on Guatemala***

Pete and Betsy Liljeberg, Donna and Chase Ambrose, Linda Hodges and Janet Gomez made a special presentation to Mathews Lion's Club on July 11th on the medical mission trip to Guatemala in March to provide medical care to the people in Xoljoa and Ixtacapa, Guatemala. The Mathews Lion's Club donated all of the reading glasses that were given to the patients. They enjoyed a delicious dinner before the presentation.



## ***Farewell and Godspeed!!***

To all at Apostles Lutheran Church:

Dan and I have sold our house here in Hartfield. The last month and a half we have been busy with selling, buying, packing and moving. We are moving closer to his dad so we can help with his needs at 95 years young! We are temporarily living with him until we can move into our house on July 25<sup>th</sup>. We have found a new church in Midlothian we plan to visit soon, Christ The King Lutheran Church in Midlothian. We have cherished our years with all of you at Apostle Lutheran Church. Your kindness, love and support during some challenging times and joyful blessings will be forever in our hearts. With tears, we will miss all of you, but we know God has given us a new path to settle into retirement. God bless all of you and God bless Apostles Lutheran Church.

Dan and Teresa Grantham

Please come and visit us!

As of July 25<sup>th</sup> our new address is: 835 Dogwood Dell Lane, Midlothian, VA 23113

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## ***July 4th Cookout***

Thanks to everyone who helped with the cookout on July 9th to celebrate July 4th!! A special thank you to Heinz and Irene Albert for getting all of the hamburgers and hot dogs and other fixings, to Ray Scholz for cooking the hamburgers and to Ingrid Peterson for taking care of all of the things needed to tie-dye T-shirts.



## Power In The Spirit– 2023

What a wonderful conference!! Barbara Runk, Betsy Liljeberg and Gene and Janet Gomez spent 3 days on the beautiful campus of Roanoke College in Salem for Power In The Spirit 2023. We had bible study, keynote presentations, informative workshops and great fellowship and worship!! Barbara and Betsy spent one workshop working with Habitat for Humanity on a house in the area. Stay tuned for details on the on-line Mid-Winter Power In The Spirit coming in January 2024!!



## Still Time to Join The Book Study

The Caring Community Ministry Team started a new book study on Wednesday, June 21st. Nate Peterson is leading the study – we will be meeting again on **Wednesday, August 30th** – we are reading “Standoff” by Jacqueline Keeler - **you will need to read the introduction and chapters 1-4.** Bring a sandwich to eat at 6:00 PM and the study still start at 6:30 PM. The book looks at the Standing Rock Oil Pipeline Protest from a current and historical lens. This was the probably THE defining moment of a generation for Native peoples. The book goes through "how did we get here" part of native history and it also compares it to the Bundy standoff in Oregon, and how that situation was handled differently. We hope you can join the discussion! The book is available on Amazon for \$14.

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## Our Reconciling in Christ Ministry

The LGBTQ+ community is under attack in many places in the world and in our own country. Many of their rights are slowly being taken from them. Prejudice and discrimination are resurfacing in all areas of community life. As a congregation who has made an intentional welcome to our LGBTQ+ siblings in Christ we need to speak up when we see injustice. Just as Jesus included and spoke for the marginalized in his society, we need to advocate for those who often have no voice. Even laughing at a joke can be hurtful. Jesus calls us to love extravagantly. As Pastor Jay says, judgement is a higher pay grade than what we have! Love boldly! Leave judgement to God.

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## Jubilee Churches to Meet

Representatives from a coalition of churches in Gloucester (Apostles is one of them) will be meeting at Apostles on **Wednesday, August 9th, at 9:30 AM.** This coalition of churches called “Jubilee Churches” are working together to respond to needs in our community. Gathering under the banner of “Jubilee Churches of Gloucester,” we are looking to support local non-profits in their work to support the more vulnerable citizens of Gloucester County. Anyone is welcome at attend. If you would like more information, please talk to Pastor Jay, Pete and Betsy Liljeberg or Janet Gomez.





## Update on Our Seminarian!!

Ingrid Peterson is set to begin classes at Luther Seminary in St. Paul Minnesota in the Fall. Ingrid is in the Master of Divinity Distributed Learning Program; this means that a majority of her coursework

will be done online but she will have to travel to Minnesota occasionally for on-campus requirements. Ingrid will be on-campus at Luther from September 16th-22nd to start her fall semester; she begins with two courses: Thinking Theologically and Confessing Publicly and Christian Public Leader. Recently, Ingrid was invited to join the Region 9 'Basic' Boundaries Planning Team. Region 9 hosts boundaries ed offerings together online for all rostered ministers in VA, NC, SC, Southeastern, Florida-Bahamas, and Caribbean Synods.



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## Remembering Elva "Lorraine" Malkemus

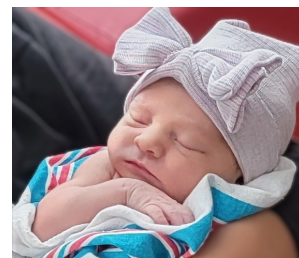


Lorraine Malkemus died on July 9, 2023 - she was 88 years old. Lorraine and her husband Don were long-time members of Apostles - they moved to North Carolina in 2019 to be near their son. Lorraine absolutely loved making quilts with the quilting group at

Apostles. A graveside service, officiated by Pastor Jim Larsen, was held at Gloucester Point Cemetery on Friday, July 14th. If you would like to send a card, Don's address is 784 Creekway Circle SE, Bolivia, NC 28422-8268.

## Congratulations To:

+ Jason and Cynthia Lowe upon the birth of their new granddaughter, Amelia Grace, on July 6th—parents are Adam and Kala (King). Little Amelia weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces.



+ Morgan Wymer-Hess, Linda Hodges and Barbara Runk for winning the Worship Ministry Team's raffle for the pocket edition of the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal,

+ Nate Peterson for completing a 56-mile ultra marathon on July 29th in North Dakota—way to go, Nate!!



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## Please Keep In Your Prayers

Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue and George Turner, and Jerry and Lena Woodlief.

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## What Are Your Favorite Hymns??

The Worship Ministry Team wants to know your favorite hymns so we can sing them during the worship services—just fill out a form that is on the table in the narthex. Every month, the Worship Ministry Team selects hymns based on the scripture readings for the day and the theme for the day; e.g., Pride Sunday. If your favorite hymns go along with these, we will use them. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Worship Ministry Team.

## Meetings in August

- The following meetings will be held in August:
- + **Installation Planning**—Monday, August 7th at 7:00 PM
  - + **Worship Leader’s Meeting**—Thursday, August 10th at 7:00 PM
  - + **Congregation Council**—Monday, August 14th at 7:00 PM
  - + **Service and Sharing**—Tuesday, August 15th at 7:00 PM
  - + **Worship**—Monday, August 28th at 7:00 PM
  - + **Caring Community**—Thursday, August 31st at 7:00 PM

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## Correspondence

We received 3 beautiful cards from our sponsored children in Guatemala—Hugolino, Amayda and Manuela—they are posted in the narthex.

*(Editor’s note: When the PDF cards were copied into the newsletter, they were illegible.)*

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## Save the Date!!

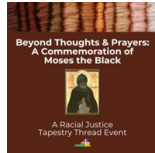
- +**Saturday, September 2nd**—Lutheran Visit Day at Roanoke College—see the flyer posted in the narthex.
- +**Sunday, September 10th**—Worship in the Park at Beaverdam
- +**Saturday, October 21st**—Installation of our new Virginia Synod Bishop, The Reverend Dr. Phyllis Milton at First Presbyterian Church in Waynesboro at 1:00 PM.

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## Happy Birthday To . . .

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Keith Sturdy    | August 2  |
| Bern Runik      | August 3  |
| Betty Hauch     | August 3  |
| Ingrid Peterson | August 5  |
| Emmaleigh Hautz | August 6  |
| Samantha Good   | August 11 |
| Donald Jaeger   | August 12 |
| George Thomas   | August 15 |
| Savannah Anby   | August 19 |
| Lena Woodlief   | August 24 |
| Chase Ambrose   | August 28 |
| Sean Riordan    | August 29 |

## Beyond Thoughts and Prayers A Commemoration of Moses the Black



Moses the Black lived in the 4th century. He was, before his conversion, known as a robber and scoundrel. He was considered a worthless blight in his society. Hiding from local authorities, Moses appealed to Scetis monks to give him sanctuary. Observing their peace, contentment, and faith practice, Moses was baptized and became a dedicated member of their monastic community. Moses the Black became an example of faith through his actions even beyond peers and elders. His faith inspired his martyrdom, which saved his community. Moses the Black is commemorated for his life of faith on August 28th. To coincide with his commemoration, Tapestry invites you to gather to consider initiatives of Faith and Action. There have been 248 tragedies characterized as mass shootings in 2023. Sympathies for the victims and their families have been expressed by a call for our thoughts and prayers. Tapestry invites you on **August 28th at 7:00 PM** to join in brainstorming initiatives for our congregations, conferences, and synod that may support our communities with actions of faith beyond sympathies of thoughts and prayer. You can register at [vasynod.org](http://vasynod.org).

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## World Humanitarian Day

The United Nations has designated August 19 as World Humanitarian Day. This is a day to lift up and celebrate the volunteers who do so much to make our world a better place. Around the world and here at home people are getting their hands dirty and going the extra mile for the sake of God’s people.

Prayer: Good and gracious God, we give thanks for the hands and hearts that are your presence in our world. We praise you for the gift of willing people who volunteer in so many places doing so many tasks. Grant these volunteers perseverance, good health, and the strength to continue your work in the world.  
Amen.