

The Epistle

THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gloucester www.apostles-elca.org | www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA | June 2025

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

**"To each is given the
manifestation of the Spirit
for the common good."
(1 Corinthians 12:7)**

Where is the Spirit of God active in your life? This is a question that, perhaps, we don't think about very often, but it is an important question nonetheless. The Scriptures bear witness to the work of the Holy Spirit in various ways and in many different circumstances, but the overall picture of the Holy Spirit is that this Spirit of God is active in the world, and that the Spirit is active through us. On the Day of Pentecost the Disciples of Jesus were overcome by the Holy Spirit and led out into the city of Jerusalem to begin proclaiming to the world the wonderful story of God's saving activity through Jesus. We call this the "birthday of the Church." From that moment on, the followers of Jesus, caught up in the Holy Spirit, began to take to the world in word and deed the amazing message that God is with us, that God empowers us through Christ to actively share this presence of God with all others. The Disciples, who walked with Jesus day after day, who witnessed his acts of love and healing and who heard him proclaim the message of God's active presence in the lives of all, were supremely positioned to be the wellspring from which this message would flow into the entire world. Their first-hand witness served as a foundation for their proclamation

and their acts of love, all of which communicated to those around them the active presence of a loving God. It was the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Lord and of His resurrection, they would say, who strengthened them and enlightened them and empowered them to risk everything to make Christ known. They shared this message of a loving God active through Christ in words (spoken messages) and in deeds (acts of love). In doing this they changed the world. This dedication to sharing the love of God in word and deed is at the center of our season of Pentecost, a season great in length but even greater in significance. It is the season of the Holy Spirit. It is the season during which we center on what it means to live each day as a child of Christ, a person of the Spirit.

Where is the Spirit of God active in your life? As the gracious love and abiding presence of God is made known to you in your life, how is the Spirit using that message and your talents to make Christ known? One of our core beliefs as Christians is that God has lovingly created each of us, blessing us as individuals with our own set of talents and abilities. Then, when enlightened with the message of the Gospel, the message of life that comes to us through Jesus, the message of God's amazing grace and love and life, we are called upon to use these talents and abilities to share the love and life God has given to us in order to make Christ known. Because we are individuals, unlike anyone else in the world, each of us has a unique

assemblage of talents and abilities to use, to aid us in sharing God's love. I can't tell you exactly how this works in your life. I'm still discerning how it works in mine. But I can let you know what the end result will be. It is as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians, "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." In other words, your acts of love, your sharing of the message, will result in the building up of the body of Christ. It will result in others feeling the presence of a loving God in their lives. It will be a blessing for others in ways you may not even imagine. We cannot control the Spirit. We only can share the Spirit. And when we do, the Spirit of love and life will move as the Spirit wishes. Yet this Spirit always brings light over darkness, wholeness over brokenness, forgiveness over sin, hope over despair, joy over sadness and life over death. God has entrusted you... yes, you... to be an agent of that Spirit. It is important work that we do. So, over the course of the summer, as you find time to relax and recreate, to renew and refresh, please take time to consider the Holy Spirit active in your life. Know that God loves you dearly and always works to bring wholeness into your life. And know that you have been given a gift from God, the gift of the Holy Spirit, so that you may share this life with others.

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Adult Study

The Wednesday night study of Luther's Legacy for Laity wrapped up in May—after a summer break, a study of the New Testament by Mark Allen Powell will begin in September—stay tuned for details!!

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Women's Group Meeting

The women's group will be meeting on **Saturday, June 14th**, at 9:30 AM. We would LOVE to have you join us!!

Happy Anniversary to...

Troy and Betty Hanson	June 16
Gene and Janet Gomez	June 17

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Happy Birthday to...

Ellen Kendzierski	June 3
Preston Higgins	June 6
Karen Johnston	June 21
Janet Gomez	June 29

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Happy Baptismal Anniversary to...

Krystle McMahan	June 15
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Ministry Team Meetings

The following ministry team will meet in June:

+ **Worship**—Monday, June 4th, 11:00 AM

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Power In The Spirit 2025

The Virginia Synod's annual Power In The Spirit event will be held **July 17-19** at Roanoke

College in Salem, VA. *"Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."* Keynote speaker will be **Maryn**

Olson, Director of Lutheran Disaster Response for the ELCA, and **Rev. Bobby Morris**, Pastor of St. Matthew's in Pomaria, South Carolina, will be the Bible study leader.

Registration information can be found at vasynod.org.



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Please Keep In Your Prayers

Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Linda Hodges, Ellen Kendzierski, Ellen Quirk, Doug Leip, Michael Schlemmer, Keith and Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue Turner, Lena Woodlief, and Nancy Wagner



Pride Sunday—June 1st, 10 AM!!

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation we are called to invite and include all people from all genders, sexualities, and races. This month we take the time to celebrate the diversity of God's creation and give thanks for the LGBTQ+ people who dwell amongst us. Please wear your brightest, boldest colors to join in the celebration. A special offering will be collected for ReconcilingWorks, the organization that accompanies congregations in their reconciliation.

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Symphony Under the Stars 2025

Please join us for this annual concert on **Saturday, June 7th**. We

will start gathering around 5:30 PM at the corner of Main Street and Walter Reed Way – the Liberty Dolls will be performing at 6:00 PM and the Virginia Symphony concert will start at 8:00 PM. Please bring a snack or two to share and a lawn chair.

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World Hunger Sunday June 15th

More than 820 million people - that's about 11 percent of people in our world today - are hungry.

Your gifts to ELCA World Hunger make it possible for the ELCA to respond, supporting sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty. Please remember your offering on the third Sunday—June 15th.

UNTIL ALL ARE FED!!



Virginia Synod Assembly 2025

The 2025 Virginia Synod Assembly will take place from Friday, June 13 through Sunday, June 15 on the campus of Roanoke College.

The Assembly Theme is Intertwining Hope—*John 15:5 – “I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you abide in Me and I in you, you will bear great fruit. Without Me, you will accomplish nothing.” – The Voice Translation* God's love is the source of our life, both as individual sprouts of God as well as in the vine of Christ. Virginia Lutherans are intertwined by God through our baptisms into the singular hope of Jesus. The hope of Jesus is provision, forgiveness, and beauty in this life, and reconciliation and resurrection in the life to come. The hope of Jesus is new life out of death. This year's Synod Assembly theme embraces God's connection with us as Vine and the branch and the unimaginable mission and ministry that could be possible as God works within and through us to accomplish God's purpose. As baptized believers, we have that hope-filled, confident support to know that our gracious and faithful God is with us. Our theme, Intertwining Hope, emphasizes the connectedness of our spiritual relationship with the Creator, Redeemer, and Guide. As our physical bodies continually need nourishment to sustain life and livelihood, our spiritual dependence on the nourishment we receive through our Holy Connection helps us to be strong in our relationships with each other, courageous in our mission and ministry to others, and fearless in our following wherever the Holy Spirit may lead. The Virginia Synod gathers at assembly to experience and express what it means to be church. Together, as the Body of Christ, we care for necessary business, participate in and experience corporate worship, and engage in fellowship and faith formation. Please keep Pastor Jay and our delegates Chris and Jennie Hawkins in your prayers as they attend the Assembly. We look forward to hearing about their experience!!



Jubilee Churches News

The Jubilee Churches of Gloucester, a coalition of 17 congregations in Gloucester (including Apostles), will be meeting again in June on

June 4th, at 9:30 AM at Bellamy United Methodist Church. The Rev. Dr. Ed Walker, pastor of Bellamy United Methodist Church, is the covener of the Jubilee Churches of Gloucester. In April, Jubilee Churches helped change the life of a father navigating unimaginable loss. After the sudden passing of his child's mother, this father was granted full-time custody of his young child. In the midst of grief, legal changes, and added responsibilities, he also had to miss work and contribute to funeral expenses—leaving him at risk of eviction. With nowhere else to turn, he was referred to Jubilee Churches by United Way, who offered to help with a portion of his rent. For the first time in his life, he reached out for help from community resources. Because of the Jubilee Churches support, we were able to step in and provide the critical assistance needed to keep his family housed during a time of crisis. He was overwhelmed with gratitude and asked us to extend his heartfelt thanks to the Jubilee Churches—he was given not only financial relief but also hope in a very dark time. The Jubilee Churches provided **\$2,049.10** in assistance to our neighbors in need in April - \$425 for rental assistance and the rest to Dominion Power bills.

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GUEST Winter Shelter Lessons Learned Meeting

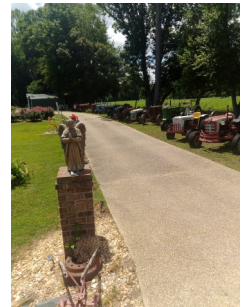
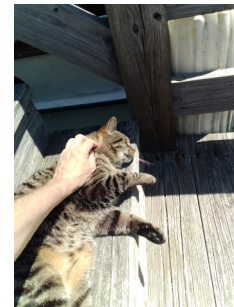
We have scheduled a "lessons learned" meeting to talk about the GUEST winter shelter that Apostles and Ware helped host at Apostles for 2 weeks this past GUEST winter shelter season. The meeting will be at **Ware Episcopal at 11:30 AM on Sunday, June 8th.** You are invited to come and talk about what worked, what didn't work and recommendations for changes in the future.



Farewell and Godspeed



We bid Doug Leip "Farewell and Godspeed" during the worship service on May 11th—we will miss him!! A big THANK YOU to Irene Albert for the delicious black forest cake—Doug requested it! We have received a couple of updates from Doug—he arrived in Tappahannock on May 11th.



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Remembering Don Malkemus



Don Malkemus, a long-time member of Apostles, died on April 30th—he was 97. Don and his wife Lorraine moved to Bolivia, North Carolina, in 2019, to be closer to their children. Don's wife of 70 years, Lorraine, died in 2023.

Don was an absolute joy—he loved ushering and was very involved in the local Lion's Club. Don cherished the time spent with his nephew, Preston Higgins, and his adopted nephew, Thom Butcher. A graveside service with Military Honors, officiated by Pastor Jim Larsen, was held on Thursday, May 8, 2025, at Gloucester Point Cemetery. *Well done, good and faithful servant!!* We will miss you!



Fund Raiser to Support GUEST

Divine Dining, LLC, a ministry of Morning Glory Baptist Church, will be having a fish fry

with all proceeds going to the GUEST Shelter. It will be held on **Saturday, June 21st, from 11:00 AM–3:00 PM** in the Gloucester Library parking lot. Chicken will also be available—dinners are \$17 and \$30 for two. Please make plans to come and help raise money for the GUEST shelter!!

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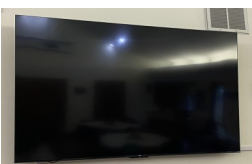


June is Pride Month

June is the month we celebrate the diversity of God's creation. We celebrate people of all colors, genders, abilities, ages, and sexual orientations. We give thanks to God for creating us all in God's image. As Lutheran's we welcome all people into full participation in the worshiping body. Some people may challenge us on this saying, the Bible states that God created man and woman in God's image, not trans people or gender fluid people. A good answer to this challenge might be: the Bible also states that God created the heavens and the earth and the sea and dry land, as well as day and night, but we still believe that God created the things in between such as swamps, fog, twilight. We have the luxury of erring on the side of loving all people and letting God worry about the details. Let's celebrate Pride Month with enthusiasm and abandon!

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Look What's New at Apostles!!



A new TV has been installed in the fellowship hall—thanks to Ray Scholz for doing the work to do this!!

Presentation on the Mission Trip to Guatemala

The team that travelled to Guatemala in April will be making a presentation about their trip on **Sunday, June 22nd**, during the coffee fellowship. We've had an update on the mother and baby who the team helped during the trip—the baby is doing much better—thank God!!



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From Your Treasurer, Doug Dalager

April 2025	
Planned Income	\$ 9,610.42
Actual Income	\$ 9,113.16
Delta	\$ (497.26)
Year to Date	
Planned Income	\$ 38,442
Actual Income	\$ 32,122
Delta	\$ (6,320)

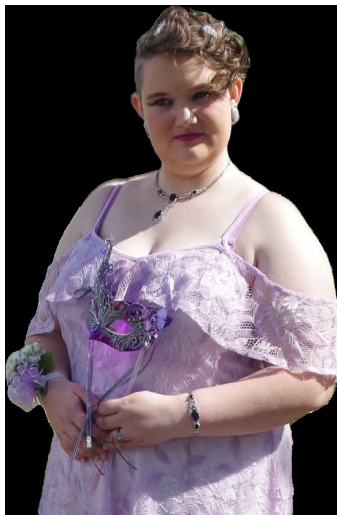
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Announcement from Pastor Kelly Bayer Derrick

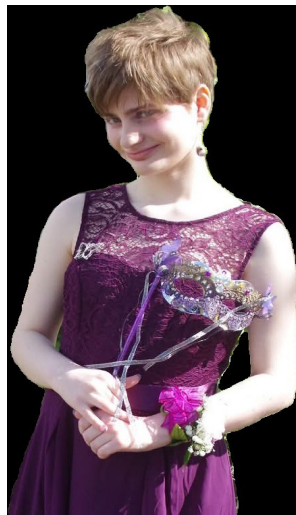
Pastor Kelly has announced that she will be resigning as Assistant to the Bishop of the Virginia Synod for Ministries of Leadership Formation, Belonging, and Justice, effective July 25, 2025. She will be missed!!



Congratulations to our 2025 High School Graduates!!



Jade Hawkins



Kiera Anby

Jade Hawkins, daughter of Chris and Jennie Hawkins, and Kiera Anby, daughter of Shawn and April Anby, will graduate from Gloucester High School on **Saturday, June 7th**. Following the ceremony at the high school, family and friends are being invited back to Apostles from **2:00 PM–5:00 PM** to a join the girls in celebrating with Taco Fiesta and board games—all are welcome. If you wish to volunteer to help, please reach out to Chris, Jennie or Jade.

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2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly



The ELCA Churchwide Assembly will be held in Phoenix, Arizona on July 28th–August 2nd. The Churchwide Assembly is held every 3 years. The Assembly is the primary decision-making body of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. There will be additional information in the July edition of The Epistle about the Assembly—most importantly, a successor to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton will be elected.

Summer Fun Picnic Sunday, July 6th!!



Join us on **Sunday, July 6th**, after the worship service for our 4th of July Summer Fun Picnic - there will be games, food, fun and fellowship. We will have both outdoor (weather permitting) and indoor activities. **Your help is needed!!**

- * A food sign up sheet will be available in the narthex beginning June 8.
- * Bring games - yard games; e.g. croquet, corn hole, etc. and indoor games for kids attending.
- * Helping hands are needed the day of the picnic.
- * Tents/umbrellas are needed for to provide shaded areas.
- * Please share any ideas you have for a successful event—you can talk to Karen Johnston, Jennie Hawkins or Irene Albert.

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News From The Pews



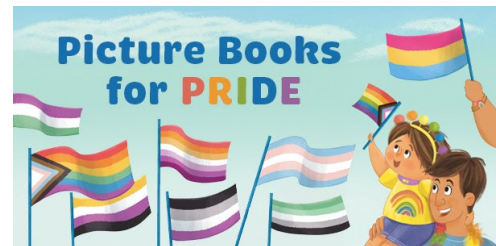
Linda Hodges and Janet Gomez recently travelled to Chattanooga, Tennessee to visit Jenny DeSha and her family—husband, Nick, and daughter and son, Olivia and Chance. Jenny is the daughter of John and Heidi Lucier.

Virginia Synod “Do Justice!”

+ On May 21, the church commemorates Helena, mother of Constantine, died around 330. Wife of the co-regent of the West, Helena (or Helen) was the mother of Constantine, who later became Roman emperor. Influenced by her son to become Christian, Helena lived an exemplary life of faith, particularly through acts of generosity toward those who were poor. She is also remembered for traveling through Palestine building churches on the sites she believed to be associated with Christ's life. Let us pray for those in civil authority: *Almighty God, our heavenly Father, bless the public servants in the government of this and every country, that they may do their work in a spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice. Help them use their authority to serve faithfully and to promote our common life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



+ New LGBTQ Picture Books from Beaming Books for Queer Families, Communities, and Allies have recently been published. Discover joyful, colorful stories featuring LGBTQ representation that all kids will love. Pride is a great time to remind kids both in and outside the LGBTQ+ community that our differences are special and worth celebrating. Beaming Books is proud to publish two new picture books that are perfect for Pride! Go to Beaming Books' Pride page for the full list of inclusive titles plus downloadable activities and resources. These books remind our youngest readers that no matter how they identify, they are valued and loved.



+ Join Global Refuge's Advocacy team on June 5th at 2:00 PM EST to learn about Temporary Protected Status, its impact, and where it stands today. Find out how you can advocate for this important status. As of September 30, 2024, over 1 million foreign-born individuals in the United States were beneficiaries of Temporary Protected Status and protected from deportation. This designation is granted to certain foreign-born individuals in the United States who are unable to return safely to their home country due to in-country conditions like violent conflicts or natural disasters. Please join the Advocacy and Policy team and our special guests to learn more about this status, its impact, where it stands today, and how you can advocate. You can register at https://globalrefuge-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VgiUCge3QG-IX2csQfpJrA?mc_cid=32533b12a3&mc_eid=3a3329de6b#/registration.

+ In partnership with Paraclete Post, a ministry of the Southern Ohio Synod, ELCA, an educational resource for families has been developed to talk to children about immigration. In this resource, you will find a discussion of a children's book on immigration, prompts and further reading recommendations for family conversation, and suggestions for spiritual play. You can download the resource to talk to you children about the work of welcome at https://globalrefuge.tfaforms.net/123?mc_cid=32533b12a3&mc_eid=3a3329de6b

