The Epistle

THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.apostles-elca.org | www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA | November 2026

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

"Hence, because everything we possess, and everything in heaven and on earth besides, is daily given, sustained, and protected by God, it inevitably follows that we are in duty bound to love, praise, and thank him without ceasing, and, in short, to devote all these things to his service, as he has required and enjoined in the Ten Commandments." (Martin Luther, Large Catechism)

One of the most prominent holidays in the United States is Thanksgiving. While this celebration is not a church liturgical feast day, it is a national holiday in which we are entreated to give thanks to God for all of God's blessings. It follows a long line of tradition, from the Old Testament through the life of the church to the present day to set aside days of thanksgiving which traditionally are called "feast days." Of course, there also are days and seasons set aside for fasting, but that is a different matter. On Thanksgiving, just as on the feast days of Christmas and Easter, we celebrate by giving thanks and by feasting. As Thanksgiving approaches this year, several days in the church year calendar might help us to examine reasons why we may give thanks to God.

For all the saints. All Saints Day, November 1, is a feast day set aside to remember and give thanks to God for those who have carried the faith down through the generations. As a way of celebrating this, we name saints who have been important in our lives and faith development. I have fond memories of the many people who have passed the faith on to me, many who are now part of the Church Triumphant. Without them, my faith, if it even existed, would lack so much texture and depth. We give thanks to God for the saints who have shared the faith with us.

Christ the King. On November 22 we will celebrate "Christ the King" Sunday. This is one of the newest feast days in the church year calendar, set to help us honor Jesus as the one who reigns over God's created order. The Scripture for the day leads us to the cross, touching on themes of crucifixion and resurrection, showing us the lengths God will go to restore relationship with us and to give us the fullness of life God wishes us to have. We see Jesus as the one, sent from God, to restore God's reign over all creation. We give thanks to God for Christ our King.

Advent. On November 29 we will enter into the season of Advent. It is my favorite season of the Church year because it holds the tension of already, but not yet. It is the season of hope and expectation, but also of faithfully living each day in the midst of promise. It is the season of real life. In this season we recognize that life is hard, that God's promises speak to us, that we recognize that life is hard, that God's promises speak to us, that we expect God to bring about

these promises, and that we walk each day redeemed by what has been, what is and what will be. God isn't finished, and God's greatest answer is on the way. We give thanks to God for Advent.

While there are many things for which we can offer thanks, it is good for us not to miss those opportunities we have to be touched by God's story, and to give thanks to God for these blessings.

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World Hunger Sunday

Don't forget your world hunger offering on **Sunday, November 15th.** Did you know that our congregation has given over $1,600 this year to ELCA World Hunger—thank you so much!!

UNTIL ALL ARE FED!!

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Congregation Council Update

The Congregation Council will be having their regular meeting will be on **Monday, November 9th at 7:00 PM.** Anyone is welcome to attend!!

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Congregational Meeting, Sunday, November 22nd

A congregational meeting has been scheduled for **Sunday, November 22nd, after the 10:00 AM worship service (around 11:00 AM) both in-person and via Zoom** to discuss and approve a ministry spending plan for 2027. Please make plans to attend - we need your voice and vote!!! The proposed spending plan will be sent out by e-mail in the coming week from Apostles office. **This meeting will take place after an "agape" worship service in the fellowship hall. Please bring a brunch type dish for the agape male and make plans to stay for the meeting** - thanks so much!!



Welcome Back Pastor *Jay!!!*

Pastor Jay returned to church on Reformation Sunday after ankle surgery on October 7th. Pastor Jay will be presiding at Holy Communion on November 1st and November 8th—Pete Liljeberg will lead worship and preach on November 1st and Ingrid Peterson will lead worship and preach on November 8th. Pastor Jay hopes to resume leading worship and preaching on November 15th. Pastor Jay still has at least 4 weeks before he will be able to resume office hours. As a thank you to the congregation for everything during this time, Pastor Jay and Jamie will donate $5 to ELCA World Hunger for every person who signs his cast!! Welcome back, we missed you!!



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Mathew's Lions Club Fundraiser

The Mathew's Lions Club is having a fundraiser—they are having a shrimp dinner - 2 pounds of shrimp, coleslaw and corn on the cob for $40.00. The date is **Saturday, November 7th**. If you would like tickets or need additional information, please see Linda Hodges. For several years, the Mathew's Lions Club has supplied eyeglasses for the Guatemala Medical Mission trip.

GUEST Fundraiser

During Advent (which starts on Sunday, November 29th), we will be having a special fundraiser for Gloucester United Emergency Sheltering Team (GUEST) "Change A Life With Your Spare Change." GUEST is working toward purchasing a building that will allow for year-round shelter to people experiencing homelessness in our community. You are asked to take a piggy bank home and fill it with spare change, cash or other contributions during Advent. At the end of Advent, you will return your piggy bank and the funds will be given to GUEST. Every coin represents a small step toward helping GUEST provide year-round shelter. You have the opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of people experiencing homelessness!!

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Women's Group Meeting

Apostles Women's Group will be meeting on **Saturday, November 14th, at 10:00 AM**—ALL women of Apostles are invited to attend. .

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September 2026

Planned Income	*$ 9,194.75*
Actual Income	*$22,249.30*
Delta	*$13,054.55*

Year to Date

Planned Income	*$82,752.75*
Actual Income	*$91,706.74*
Delta	*$ 8,953.99*

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Set Your Clocks Back!!

Remember to set your clocks back on **Sunday, November 1st!!**

All Lutheran Women's Retreat

It's time to register for the All Lutheran Women's Retreat!! The theme is **"Sacred Stores, Sacred Lives"** and will be held at Drury Plaza Hotel in Richmond on **November 5th-7th**. Through storytelling, guided reflection, and gentle conversation, retreat leader, Beth Dunwody, will help participants recognize the sacred in the ordinary and reclaim their own narratives as sources of healing, courage, and connection. You can register at https://alwretreat.org/retreat/.

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Happy Birthday to. .

Michael Crocker	November 2
Nan Duff	November 6
Angie Goetz	November 6
Chris Liljeberg	November 8
Jim Wright, Sr.	November 9
David Leunig	November 10
Matthew Hautz	November 11
John Mayer	November 19
Donna Ambrose	November 23
Reagan Jay	November 25
CK Ambrose	November 27

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Happy Anniversary To. . .

CK and Donna Ambrose	October 8
David and Mary Leunig	October 8
Ray and Ellen Kendzierski	October 10
Samantha and Michael Crocker	October 15

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Please Keep In Your Prayers

Rich Bitting, Don Garfield, Ellen Kendzierski, David Leunig, Cyndi Lowe, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Ray Scholz, Pastor Jay Serafin, George Thomas, Lena Woodlief, Judy Wright and our sponsored children in Guatemala—Amayra, Hugolino, Manuela, and Pablo.

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Thank You To. . . .

Gerald Britt for an OUTSTANDING job of keeping our website up to date—we are so thankful!!! Check it out at **www.apostles-elca.org.**

Jubilee Churches News

The Jubilee Churches of Gloucester, a coalition of several congregations in Gloucester (including Apostles), will be meeting in **on Wednesday, December 9th, at 9:30 AM at Bellamy United Methodist Church).** The Rev. Dr. Ed Walker, pastor of Bellamy United Methodist Church, and Pete Liljeberg are the co-moderators of the Jubilee Churches of Gloucester. Jubilee Churches work together to prevent homelessness crises for our neighbors in Gloucester County. In September, Jubilee helped a young single mother who works locally. She does not get child support because she and her ex have a 50/50 custody arrangement that she described as really good for the kids. She believes the involvement of dad is more valuable to them than child support. Mom drives an older, paid for, car that required significant repairs over the summer. Those repairs put her behind in rent. During one of our conversations, mom was door-dashing food, a job she took on while she didn't have the kids, so she could pay something toward the outstanding rent. Jubilee paid half of the outstanding amount, Samaritan Group paid a portion and mom contributed from her side job. Jubilee Churches had 12 requests in September - 5 people were helped with $4,028.50. The **Jubilee Fund balance is $9,157.** The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be January 18-25, 2027 - there will be a joint worship service as well as daily prayer services held each day during that week.

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The Christmas Musical is Back!!



"Away from the Manger" is an original play about those who didn't visit the manger due to a variety of excuses. It is a musical with solo and ensemble parts for children and adults. Linda Hodges is coordinating the production for a December performance. Stay tuned for details!!

News From GUEST

+ **There is a BIG** need for volunteers at the day shelter—if you are interested in helping, please contact Barbara Runk or Janet Gomez.
+ **Needed supplies** include Lysol spray and wipes, Pinesol or similar floor cleaner, trash bags AND the shelter is ready to accept those warm weather clothing donations you have been holding on - long sleeve shirts, pants, sweats, etc. You can drop off supplies at the Day Shelter located at 6536 Moose Drive on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9-5.
+ **SAVE THE DATE**—Apostles will be hosting the GUEST winter shelter the week of February 15th, 2027. Stay tuned for opportunities to help!!

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Sunday School—First Friday of the Month!!

We are trying something a little different this year—**we will be meeting once a month** on the **first Friday** of the month—the next gathering will be **Friday, November 6th from 6:00 PM—8:00 PM**. Dinner is part of the program. This gives parents 2 hours of free time in addition to the opportunity for children to participate in Apostles' children's ministry. We are using the "Faith 5"curriculum—Share, Read, Talk, Pray and Bless. **Linda is looking for people to help with the program and also provide the meal**. If you would like to help or need more information, please contact Linda Hodges. Many thanks to Linda for leading our children's ministry—we appreciate you!!

Welcome New Members!!!!!



Doris Bacon-Elsea

Doris has three children, ten grand-children and ten great-grandchildren spread out across the USA. Doris moved to Gloucester in 2019 after spending the majority of her adult life in Florida. She was Public Relations and Fund Development Director for Citrus Council of Girl Scouts in Orlando, Florida for 15 years then served as Public Relations Director and aide to the Superintendent of Schools of Volusia County (Daytona Beach area) for 18 years. Doris volunteers at Riverside Walter Reed Hospital twice a week and enjoys yoga classes twice a week. She loves to read and travel.



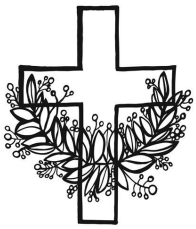
Kim and Mary Rudisill

Kim and Mary met in 1971 in Philadelphia while attending college. An Amway meeting brought them together and they have been together ever since, married on a Friday the 13th. Best friends for fifty-five years and counting. Kim and Mary worked at several companies, Kim as an accountant and Mary as a real estate agent and very successful Relocation Director. They owned two restaurants and formed three companies during their careers. Since retiring Kim and Mary like to work in the yard, travel a bit and relax. They keep busy making crafts and vended at numerous local and regional craft shows for at least six years. They moved to Mathews about four years ago after purchasing a house on the water, something they often talked about while they were still working. We are pleased to have joined Apostles and look forward to making even more friends while enjoying activities of the church. They operate an Airbnb. If anyone has guests visiting over the holidays they can easily house up to four persons in a two-bedroom one-bath house. Just give them a call.

Prayer Chats with Pastor Jay

Until Pastor Jay can resume office hours (it will be at least 4 more weeks before he can), Pastor Jay will have a Thursday evening "Prayer Chat" at 7:00 PM on Zoom—there will be readings from scripture, a prayer and time to catchup with him and one another. The Zoom invitation will be sent to everyone on Thursday morning.

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All Saints Sunday

Who are the saints, and what do they have to say to us? What makes someone a saint? Rather than being perfect Christians, the saints are people who have been made whole by the grace of God, through baptism into Christ. On All Saints Day, we remember that saints are not just people of the past, like St. Patrick or St. Nicholas. They are people of the present. Some saints we see every day. Some saints we have never met in person. All saints inspire us to be closer and more faithful to God in the way we live, serve, and pray. This is because saints are ordinary people like you and me by the grace of God. **For the worship service on Sunday, November 1st, you are invited to bring in pictures of the saints in your life who are no longer with us to adorn the sanctuary.** We will celebrate the victory won for all the faithful dead, but we grieve our beloved dead as well, knowing that God honors our tears.

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Preparing for Advent

There will be a short meeting after worship on **Sunday, November 8th**, to talk about preparations for Advent, in particular the Advent wreath. Anyone serving on Altar Guild is asked to attend as well as anyone interested in helping! Advent starts on Sunday, November 29th.





Pasta With A Purpose–Celebrating Our Impact

On October 14, the Virginia Synod Hunger Team gathered on Zoom to celebrate the impact of Pasta with a Purpose. Over the summer, 23 Virginia Synod congregations donated 16,169.45 pounds of food–the equivalent of approximately 13,475 meals! Congratulations to the three top-donating congregations, each receiving a $250 grant for their local food pantry!

- 1st Place: Grace and Glory, Palmyra - 60.3 pounds per average attender
- 2nd Place: St. Paul's, Hampton - 46.9 pounds per average attender
- 3rd Place: St. John, Norfolk - 46.33 pounds per average attendance.

God is Good!

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Reformation at Apostles–2026



We celebrated Reformation Sunday with the help of Janet, who shared with us some great insight into Martin Luther and his theological thought. We also were guided by liturgies Pete, who led worship, and a choir who touched us with wonderful music.

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News from the Virginia Synod

Attention Youth–Registration is open for "Lost & Found" being held on November 20-22nd at Eagle Eyrie for youth in 7th and 8th grade. Information can be found at vasynod.org

From Your Caring Community Ministry Team

The Caring Community Ministry Team is making plans for a cookie exchange in December as well as a visit to the Mathews Convalescent Center to sing Christmas Carols–stay tuned for details. What a GREAT evening for the Fall Festival on Friday, October 30th!!! Caring Community partnered with the local chapter of P.E.O.–it was WONDERFUL–thank you so much!!





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Honoring Sue Turner

Sue Turner was recognized at the worship service on Sunday, October 11th, for serving as Adult Choir Director for many years A big THANK YOU to Irene Albert for the delicious black forest cake!!

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Did You Know???

Did you know that Linda Hodges and Apostles' former member, Carol Wolf, designed and made the banner we displayed on Reformation?

There is Still Time to Sign Up to Serve on a Ministry Team!!

There is still time to fill out Time and Talent surveys for the Ministry Teams of Apostles—Administration, Caring Community, Service and Sharing and Worship. We hope you will let us know where your interest and talent meet God's Spirit at work at Apostles. As Pastor Jay said, St. Paul is very clear that as we receive God's grace through Baptism and through the proclamation of the Word of God, we are graced also by God's Holy Spirit with gifts, talents and time which we can use for the "common good." As we move forward into the future, we greatly appreciate the talents of our members here at Apostles and look forward to the many ways, new and old, we can manifest God's love in our ministry here. This can happen only with the generous service of our members who step forward to share of themselves through time and talent for the building up of the body of Christ. Please prayerfully consider how you might use the gifts God has given you to serve in the ministry and mission we share.






Administration Caring Community Service & Sharing Worship

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"Faith Five" First Gathering!!



A big THANK YOU to Linda Hodges and Betsy Liljeberg and to all of the children!!

God's Work, Our Hands—2026







What a GREAT day!! Comments from the residents of Mathews Convalescent Center. . .

+ "This is Dr. Power. Thank you to everyone who came to visit Saturday and thank you for all the food gifts. Everything was delicious. The tuna sandwiches and soup were so good. I am saving my cookies for later today."

+ "It was so nice to have visitors. I loved seeing Linda and meeting new people. Daniel was wonderful. Having visitors makes me feel better and I can't wait to go home."

+ From Marilyn "I had a great birthday. It was so much fun in the dining room and everyone celebrated with me."

+ From Daniel (a Mathews legend) "I saw a lot of people I know. I had a good day. "