

The Epistle

THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gloucester www.apostles-elca.org | www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA | November 2024

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

For All the Saints, Give Thanks!

Charlie was as jovial and laid-back a person as you could imagine. He was kind and thoughtful, extremely intelligent and fun to be around. While he didn't have much of an official education, he had a quick mind capable of grasping the subtlety of a piece of writing or an argument being made. He also had a warm heart and a smile which never seemed to end. I got to know Charlie better when I entered 10th grade and began to attend the adult Sunday School class at our church in Nescopeck. Charlie was the teacher. He was the perfect man for the role. Unassuming yet so capable at leading discussion, Charlie made the class interesting for a 14-year-old sitting in the midst of adults, most of whom were 50 years old and above. What made Charlie such a good leader of the group was that he was so authentic. He never tried to be someone he wasn't, and if he didn't know the answer to a question, he openly claimed his lack of knowledge. He was a superb storyteller who could string a yarn with the best of them. But, for a young teenager, what caught my attention and kept me engaged was his ability to let me and everyone else know that he was delighted that you were a part of the gathering, an important part of the class investigation and

conversation. As Charlie taught class or led discussion, he made every individual feel invaluable among the whole of the group, whether you joined in the discussion or simply sat back and listened. Then, when class was over, he would make sure to let me know how tickled he was that I was there. At this point, Charlie was well into his eighties, but engaged everyone with a timeless, eternal heart.

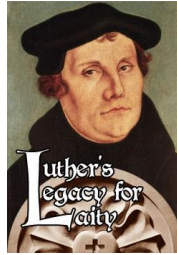
I hope you have had a "Charlie" in your life, someone who let you know how much it mattered that you were present in Sunday School, Church or at a social event. I was exceedingly lucky because I had many "Charlies" in my home congregation growing up. Mary led the Children's Sunday School and was warm and comforting, energetic and caring. Her husband Frank was our church council president over many of my years growing up. He was forthright and earnest, and lived his love for the congregation, his church, openly and without reservation. Both of them were important parts of my church experience growing up. Elizabeth was a retired schoolteacher, who, every Sunday when church ended and folks were leaving, shuffled over to me and, in her formal yet caring way, would share, "Young man, I am so very glad to see you here today." At that point, I was 9 or 10 and didn't see her any other time during the week. I simply knew that each week she would shuffle over to me to make the point that it was important to her that I was present. Marguerite

played the piano in the Children's Sunday School and sang in the choir and knew all the children by name, gracing us with her kindness, patience and attention. Eileen was our energetic 6th grade Sunday School teacher who let us know week after week that we were, are and always will be the church, no matter what our age or no matter where life might take us. She boldly shared with us how important it is that God is a part of our lives. Willie always was around the church. He had a good head on his shoulder and was talented in ways which kept the building in good repair. I can remember sitting in church council meetings as a teenager and listening to Willie and Frank debate (they disagreed on nearly everything) yet hearing in their words and voices how important the church, building and people, were to them. Donald and Harold were my pastors, who shared the love of God in word and in relationship. I still am blessed to count Harold as among the most important people I know. There are so many others I could name who helped me to develop an understanding of what "church" really means and of how much God's love is real in my life. John and Bonny and Bob and Cindy, and childhood friends and classmates who were part of the mix, all helped me, in some way, experience God's love and presence in my life.

I hope that you had such people in your life at some point, individuals who cared and shared enough to let you know that you mattered to them, and that you mattered to God. These "saints" helped pass the faith on to us, but they did so much more. They helped us to imagine and to feel, in some small way, what God's actual, immense love is like. They made God's presence real. No matter where I have been in my life, I have found these same "saints" active in the life of the congregation, constantly sharing God's love. We are inspired by them to be the church at this time and in this place. From their witness to Christ's love we have been shaped to witness ourselves. Now it is our time to reach out to those around us with this

same love, sourced in God's infinite and amazing love, so that others will come to know what we know. God is love. God is life. God is our past, our present and our future. Please take the time this All-Saints Sunday and over Thanksgiving to remember the wonderful people who shared this love with you. Then, make the effort to pass it on.

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Luther's Legacy for Laity

Luther's Legacy for Laity will continue on **Wednesday, November 6th and 20th at 6:00 PM**—we have a sandwich and

fellowship and the study begins at 6:30 PM. Future topics will include, Introduction to Augsburg Confession, Good Works, The Old Catechism and Luther's Catechism with Timothy Wengert; How Active is God in the World, Wisdom to Serve the Neighbor, Luther's Incarnational Understanding, Christianity and Other Religions, Christians and Jews with Darrell Jodock and Christians and Jews; and Luther on Sin and Ethics Part 1 and 2 with Kathleen Kleinhans. Come learn with us!!

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Congregation Council Meeting in November

The Congregation Council will be meeting on **Monday, November 11th at 7:00 PM**—anyone is welcome to attend.

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Ministry Team Meetings

The following Ministry Team will meet in November:

+ **Worship**—Wednesday, November 20th, at 5:00 PM

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Happy Baptismal Anniversary to . . .

Marina and Nicolas Allen	November 21
Sue Turner	November 25
Emmaleigh Hautz	November 30



Congregational Church Directory

November 12th is the date!! Please remember to come and have your picture taken for the new Apostles Church Directory—if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Irene Albert, 804-824-6733.

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Happy Birthday to . .

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|-----------------|-------------|
| Michael Crocker | November 2 |
| Nan Duff | November 6 |
| Chris Liljeberg | November 8 |
| Jim Wright, Sr. | November 9 |
| David Leunig | November 10 |
| Matthew Hautz | November 11 |
| Tyler Britt | November 18 |
| Conner Badger | November 19 |
| John Mayer | November 19 |
| Donna Ambrose | November 23 |
| Reagan Badger | November 25 |
| CK Ambrose | November 27 |

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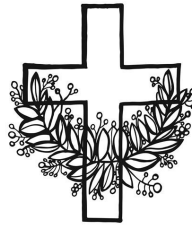
Happy Anniversary To . .

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|------------------------------|-------------|
| Pastor Jay and Jamie Serafin | November 3 |
| Kayla and Matthew Hautz | November 3 |
| Shawn and April Anby | November 18 |
| Jason and Cynthia Lowe | November 23 |

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Congregational Meeting Sunday, November 17th

A congregational meeting has been scheduled for **Sunday, November 17th, 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 2025. 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 meal and make plans to stay for the meeting - thanks so much!!**



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 3rd, 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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Pastor Jay and Jamie’s Pennsylvania Wine Club Visit



Pastor Jay and Jamie had a nice visit with their friends from Pennsylvania and wanted to thank their church family at Apostles for being so welcoming. They all commented on the wonderful hospitality they received. We are blessed by all of you! A special shout-out to Jenny for capturing a great memory for us!!

(Editor’s Note—did you know that Pastor Jay has over 800 bottles of wine? WOW!!)



Jubilee Churches News

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

November 13th at 9:30 AM at Apostles. The Rev. Dr. Ed Walker, pastor of Bellamy United Methodist Church, is the new covener of the Jubilee Churches of Gloucester. The Jubilee Churches recently provided \$750 in rent assistance for a woman who was without a home and was a guest of the night shelter earlier this year. She was able to move into her own apartment after gaining employment; however, she struggles to keep this employment due to mental and physical health issues and was unable to pay her rent for October. She has a history of addiction and a felony charge which causes issues finding and gaining meaningful employment. Her probation level was recently lowered due to good history. She recently applied for SSDI due to her issues that causes struggles to maintain employment. She recently just started working again as a server so this will help her maintain her rent going forward and hopefully she will receive assistance with her disability claim since the mental and physical issues from her past continues to affect her daily living. This client certainly puts in effort and works hard to try and manage life stressors. Thank you to Jubilee Churches for helping maintain housing for a client that has a past but is trying hard to leave that life behind her! **Please check out the display in the fellowship hall for more information about what the Jubilee Churches are doing and ways you can help!!**

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World Hunger Sunday

Don't forget your world hunger offering on **Sunday, November 17th** – **over \$1,200** was given during the special emphasis on world hunger to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ELCA world hunger!



Supplies Needed for GUEST

During the month of November, we will be collecting supplies for the GUEST homeless shelter—a

list of needed supplies will be in the bulletin and also on the special display in the narthex. Please consider picking up an item or two!! Thank you!!

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Blessing of the Animals 2024



After the worship service on Sunday, October 6th, we gathered to ask God's blessings on some important members of our family - our pets. As you look through these pictures know that we pray God's blessings on your pets as well!

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Set Your Clocks Back!!

Remember to set your clocks back on **Sunday, November 3rd!!**



Please Keep In Your Prayers

Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, George and Jewel Thomas, and Lena Woodlief.

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Welcome to the Lord's Table!!

We welcome Ellie, Willow and Autumn Crocker and Matthew and Theodore Hautz to the Lord's table. The children met with Pastor Jay to talk about Holy Communion. We welcome you as communing members of Apostles Lutheran Church and the world-wide Christian community. Together we will explore the mystery and wonder of Holy Communion and accept Christ's gifts of grace and salvation that come to us through this holy sacrament.

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All Saints Worship With Necrology

The Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop

will be sharing an All Saints Day Worship with Necrology on Friday, November 1. This digital service will give thanks for the lives of the rostered ministers of the Virginia Synod who have died since the 2023 Synod Assembly. The video will be shared on Facebook, YouTube, and also through email.

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September 2024	
<i>Planned Income</i>	\$ 9,102
<i>Actual Income</i>	\$ 8,406
<i>Delta</i>	\$ (696)
Year to Date	
<i>Planned Income</i>	\$ 81,919
<i>Actual Income</i>	\$ 77,330
<i>Delta</i>	\$ (4,589)

Faith in Action: Our Call to Civic Engagement

God calls us to care for our neighbors and actively shape a just and compassionate society. Civic engagement, including voting and public service, is a meaningful way we live out our faith in the public sphere. The ELCA encourages everyone to engage in the political process with integrity, advocating for justice, peace, and the common good. The ELCA has prepared and gathered resources for this election year—elca.org. Informed voting is a vital first step in our faithful civic engagement. As highlighted in the ELCA's social message, Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy, "Lutherans recognize government as a gift from God to serve the common good" (p.1). By voting, we act as responsible citizens called by God, seeking that everyone benefits from the government's good. During this election season and as we prepare to vote as part of our civic responsibility and commitment to the Gospel, Bishop Eaton reminds us, **"We are not defined by our political affiliations but by our shared baptism and our commitment to the Gospel."**

VOTE FAITHFULLY!

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The ELCA's Truth & Healing Movement is an opportunity for our church to increase our understanding of our colonizing impacts on Indigenous people in the past and present. Over

the next several months, there will be opportunities to learn, raise awareness and engage in other ways to impact hearts and lives across this church. We believe that the truth, and our knowing and embracing it, is the first step toward healing for all of us. Visit the Truth and Healing Movement page (<https://elca.org/indigenous>) to learn more, get involved and share the Truth and Healing movement with others.

Sunday School News!!

Apostles Lutheran is resurrecting our Sunday School Program this year. Sunday School will be held after worship on **Sunday, November 3rd, 10th and 17th**. We will be using a dynamic curriculum, **Bible Song - Faith 5**. This curriculum has been used in past years and is an engaging program that incorporates song, humorous skits, and signing as we learn about the Bible Narrative. We will begin with the Old Testament stories. Most importantly this curriculum relates these stories of old to today's world. The Faith 5 part is where the role of parents/family is incorporated. To assist in building "reflective, resilient children and solid family relationships" we will incorporate 5 easy steps for families. This includes families sharing their highs and lows each day. This is a curriculum for all ages; it does include some reading of prayers and skits, however if your child cannot yet read, they are still welcome as there is much learning occurring from the songs and signing and parts of the skits that everyone can participate. For more information, please contact Linda Hodges at 804-694-9111.

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A Look Back

Twenty-three years ago in November 2001, the congregation unanimously approved funding Courthouse Construction to develop a Site Plan and final construction grade drawings for the new sanctuary (the building where we worship now). Agreements for the site plan and drawing package were signed and a down payment of \$2,000 was given to Courthouse Construction.

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Responding to Hurricane Helene

Lutheran Disaster Response is working with its partners to provide immediate relief (such as water, food, clothing, gift cards, tarps and other needs) to people affected by Hurricane Helene. You can donate to help at <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/Our-Impact/Hurricane-Response>. Gifts will be used 100% to help those affected.

News From The Pews



On Sunday, October 20th, several people from Apostles attended a special dinner to honor Monique Raposa, who has stepped down as Executive Director of the Bread for Life Food Pantry. It was a

wonderful event—it was held at Newington Baptist Church and Scoot's Barbeque catered the event.

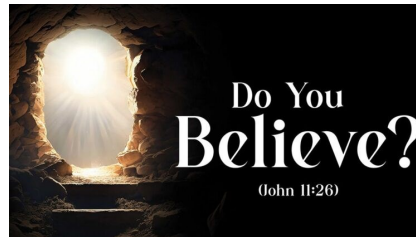
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Virginia Synod Youth Events

- + **Lost and Found—November 22nd–24th at Eagle Eyrie**—this is the youth event for youth in 7th and 8th grade—our very own Reagan Jay and her mom, Christina Badger will be attending—watch for pictures in the December edition of The Epistle.
- + **Winter Celebration—January 24th-26th at Eagle Eyrie**—this is the youth event for youth in 9th-12th grade.

Registration information is at vasynod.org.

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Save The Date!!

The Jubilee Churches are planning a Week of Prayer for

Christian Unity service on **Thursday, January 24th, at 7:00 PM** at the Church of St. Therese Roman Catholic. Please save the date and make plans to attend!

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Don't Forget To . . .

- + **Sign Up to Sponsor a Bulletin**— there is a signup sheet posted in the narthex.
- + **Sign Up to Provide Flowers for the Altar**— there is a signup sheet posted in the narthex.

God's Work, Our Hands—Outdoor 2024!!

The outdoor part of God's Work, Our Hands 2024 was held on Saturday, October 26th. Service and Sharing Ministry Team leader, Pete Liljeberg, and Ray Scholz scoped out the projects before the work day and then did some preliminary work (mowing, etc.) the day before on October 25th. We worked with Joedey Bell from Bay Aging for projects as well as working with member George Thomas on his yard. Everyone enjoyed a pizza lunch after the work. Thanks to everyone who helped with God's Work, Our Hands 2024!!



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