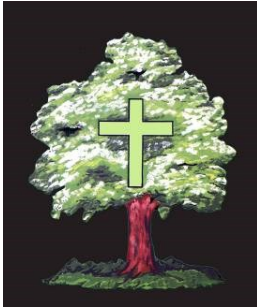


AUGUST 2023



The Leaflet



IT'S A POTLUCK Picnic

Sunday Sept. 17th at Noon

PLEASE BRING A DISH
TO SHARE!
Sign up sheet in church's
Kitchen or on Sign Up Genius (link below)

<https://www.signupgenious.com/go/10C0545A5a92fa6fc1-welcome>

RSVP TO
TOL 302 378 3345



Council

o It's **been** pretty busy around Tree if Life this **past** month. We have a new secretary learning our quirky ways of doing things, and are starting to explore revisions to our bylaws so that our ambitious ideas and our realities will be more **aligned**. We had Bible School in cooperation with a neighboring Methodist church, and we now look forward to cooler days and the excitement of new projects.

n We have a small confirmation class starting in the fall, as well as the return of Kingdom Kids, our Sunday School that magically meets on Wednesday evenings. A new study for adults on Sunday mornings will begin after a brief hiatus, and the OWLS, who took no time at all off from their Out to Lunch format, have a wonderful cruise planned, to eat of course, and to enjoy the beauty of the Chester River.

r To get all of this off to a good start, we are having a *Back to Church* pot luck picnic on Sunday, Sept. 17 right after church. You'll be hearing more about this as the time approaches.

So, be ready to switch into high gear as we begin our fall programs, thanking God for the fellowship of our faith and the beauty of the changing seasons on this, His beautiful gift, our planet earth.

Nicky Zaiser
Council President

PR. ROBBIE AWAY

Pr. Robbie will be out of town from July 31-August 13. On August 6 and August 13, the Rev. Mark Walters will serve as supply preacher. A retired pastor living near Dover, Pr. Walters recently served as interim pastor at St. Stephen's Lutheran in Wilmington. *For pastoral emergencies during the week, the Rev. Linda Ray of St. Paul's Methodist in Odessa will be available. You can reach Rev. Linda on her cell phone at (540) 207-1787.*

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Our vegetable garden behind the church continues to thrive! We have already sent several vegetables to the Neighborhood House in Middletown, where they are available to local families who might otherwise not afford fresh food. Thank you to the Kingdom Kids and their families for tending the garden over the summer, and to John Baker for preparing such wonderful soil and seedlings!

From the Pastor

‘Lex Orandi’

Worshiping God lies at the center of a church’s life. While a church practices social outreach, worship is what differentiates us from a service agency. While a church offers fellowship, worship is what differentiates us from a social club. While a church leads Christian education, worship is what differentiates us from a school. Worship is important! And how we worship can affect all those other aspects of church life. An ancient Latin phrase is “*lex orandi, lex credenda* – the law of prayer is the law of belief.” In other words, how we pray and worship both reflects and influences how we believe and act.

Because worship is so important, a new pastor is wise to embrace the worship that a congregation finds meaningful, rather than trying to change too much too soon. This is especially true at Tree of Life, since we have long been blessed with wonderful worship leaders. Duane prepares amazing music. Our worship assistants are diligent in reading Scripture and helping serve Communion. Our ushers are welcoming and helpful; our acolytes are faithful and mature; our Worship & Music Committee is hardworking and dedicated. When I first visited Tree of Life last year, I was thrilled to experience such strong worship!

At the same time, every pastor is a bit different, with certain beliefs and pri-

orities. So I have talked to the Worship Committee about making a few tweaks. I’d like to explain why I sought four adjustments.

First, some worship language is now a bit more traditional. When planning worship, most Lutheran churches rely on two resources: our hymnals, and a worship guide called *Sundays & Seasons*, produced by the ELCA’s publishing house. The language of our hymnals mostly reflects ancient rites, and is similar to what you’d hear in a Roman Catholic or Episcopal church. *Sundays & Seasons* offers different language for different seasons, to help keep worship from becoming rote or boring.

At heart, I am a traditionalist. I don’t want worship to be hollow or rote, but I do find great value in our historic language. There is often strong theology and great beauty in our classic liturgy, and it is a powerful sign of our unity with other Christians today and throughout the centuries. So I try to balance some new wording from *Sundays & Seasons* with the traditional wording from our hymnals. For example, I begin worship “in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit,” as this is how we were baptized. I also usually end a service with the benediction “the Lord bless you and keep you ... and grant you peace,” as this comes right out of Scripture (Num. 6:24-26).

OWLS

(Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors)



At the time of this issue of the newsletter going to print, the Chief Owls were still working and trying to firm up plans for the August outing. As always the OWLS will meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month so keep August 10th open on your calendars and as soon as plans have been finalized, an announcement will be sent via email as well as in the Burning Bush.

Also, don't forget the September outing is Thursday, 9/14 and will consist of a lunch cruise on the Chester River (Chestertown, MD). Lunch is buffet style and includes filet sliders and cold shrimp.

The cost is \$45 per person for a two hour cruise and lunch. Friends and family are welcome so feel free to invite others to join this fun outing (boat holds 100 people). This is a private event and not open to the public; just OWLS and their families and friends.

The boat leaves from the wharf at the end of High Street promptly at noon. There is plenty of room inside the boat with its large picture windows as well as a lovely open top deck with plenty of seating. We will cruise down the beautiful Chester River looking at gorgeous scenery— and maybe some eagles and osprey will show themselves.



Checks should be made out to Chester River Packet Co. and can be given to Gail Russell at church or mailed to Jeff Russell (13970 Pineywood Road, Galena, MD 21635) or payment can be made on line at the website below.

Chestertown is a quaint town which you might enjoy exploring before or after the cruise. For more information check out the website

[Chester River Packet – Cruising the Chester River along the shores of historic Chestertown, Maryland \(chesterriverpacketco.com\)](http://chesterriverpacketco.com)

Treasurer's Report

Expenses for June 2023: \$18,503.17 Year to Date Expenses: \$80,638.59

Income for June: \$7,278.00 Year to Date Income: \$70,603.45

Our building has had some major repairs in the last couple of months. The roof had to be repaired in two places and we replaced one heat pump/ac unit in the sanctuary. As of the middle of July, two more heat pump/ac units were in need of repair/replacement and the furnace (central a/c) unit needed a costly repair.

It does look like a second heat pump will need to be replaced in the near future but in the long run it will be more efficient as one new unit will take the place of 2 ½ old units.

Thank you everyone for your continued support towards the ministry at Tree of Life.

Denise Lindquist, Treasurer

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



AUGUST

Maty Young	August 13
Timothy Lintz	August 21
Carolyn Lewis	August 24
Robert McCord	August 24

Do we have your birthday? If not, please let the office know so we are able to acknowledge and celebrate your special day.



Quilting for Lutheran World Relief

Our quilting group has continued through the summer, but at a more subdued pace. Even so, we have 15 finished quilts, 2 needing the edges stitched down, and 3 we have to tie the knots on. That's a total of 20, which I think is fairly impressive.

We meet on the second Wednesday of the month, which will be August 9 for the next meeting. Arrive at 10:00 and stay as long as you want, though we usually only stay until noon. We need volunteers to join us, so consider adding us to your busy life.



TOL's Annual School Backpack Project is underway; deadline August 6.

You can choose to donate specific school items, or take the entire list from the board in the Fellowship room. Bring back your donated items to the Fellowship Room with the post-it note or list attached by Sunday, August 6.

As part of their mission project, the kids at VBS will also be donating supplies each day during VBS.

A grant from Thrivent will allow us to purchase the backpacks.

After worship service on August 6th, join us at the conference table in the office and we'll stuff the backpacks.

This annual project is coordinated by Neighborhood House for the benefit of struggling families in the MOT area.

Questions? See Pam Nichols.

Thank you in advance for your donations. Helping kids with their educational needs is a blessing to us all.



2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Pr. Robbie will be in the office Tuesdays & Fridays 10 AM - 1 PM Secretary Maria will be in the office Mondays & Fridays 1-4PM	1 Pr. Robbie	2 On Vacation	3 July 31 thru	4 August	5 August	13
6 10:30 Worship Service (Pr. Mark Walters)	7 on	8 6:30 PM Council Mtg Vacation	9 10 AM Quilters July 31 through	10 12PM OWLS Outing 6 PM Worship & Music Mtg.	11 August	12 13th
13 10:30 Worship Service (Pr. Mark Walters)	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship Service	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10:30 Worship Service	28	29	30	31		
All Sunday worship services are live streamed at 10:30 AM and there after can be found on YouTube to view at any time. Find the link on our website www.treeoflifechurchde.com						



Date	Usher	Acolyte	Worship Assistant	Altar	Fellowship	Offering Counter
Aug. 6	G. Matz	A. Fratta	J. Pileggi	G. Zaiser	N. Zaiser	G. Zaiser
Aug. 13	B. Lindquist	E.J. Kruah	E. Kruah	M. Campbell	B. Bullock	E. Kruah
Aug. 20	C. Lewis	L. Yetsko	G. Zaiser	N. Zaiser	C. Fiske	G. Zaiser
Aug. 27	M. Campbell	K. Yetsko	J. Adams	S. Vertrano	C. Lewis	M. Campbell

Want to volunteer ? Contact ~Gene Zaiser, Coordinator~

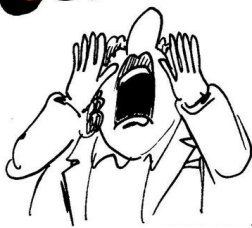


Calling All Singers!

The Choir is restarting and you're invited to participate!

Rehearsals will be held after the service bi-monthly and once a month on Wednesday night. No prior experience is necessary—just a willingness to share your talents with the congregation. Recordings of music will be provided so you can practice on your own time as well. Please contact Duane if you are interested or have any questions. duanedillard@gmail.com

First rehearsal Sunday, September 10th.



Calling all volunteers!

Experiences can be so much more meaningful when you also participate. The only way you can find out if this is true is to volunteer yourself. Ask any worship volunteer if they feel their effort is meaningful.

If you want to give this a try, see Gene Zaiser or a Council member.

Thanks to all volunteers and also to those who will risk sharing.

Gene Zaiser
Volunteer coordinator

DELAWARE LUTHERAN OFFICE FOR PUBLIC POLICY, A HISTORY

After five years of service as the Public Policy Officer for the Synod in Delaware, I'm going to retire (again!), and at this juncture I thought it might be helpful to leave behind a history of the organization.

The ELCA and its predecessor the LCA have a long history of supporting an Advocacy Office in Washington, DC. Funds for these efforts have come from some designated World Hunger Appeal monies. This office has tried to sponsor similar efforts in various states. (There are about twenty of them now.)

This work in Delaware started in the mid 1980's when Pastor Chuck Staddler was called as the ½ time associate pastor at St. Mark's in Wilmington and ½ time as the Public Policy Officer. He began this work in Delaware and set a tone for what would follow in the years to come.

Staddler was followed, in succession, by two lay women: Theda Blackwelder and Shirley Siebert. Blackwelder was the wife of a Lutheran pastor who was providing counselling services in Kent and Sussex County, and Siebert, who began her work in 2000, was, like Staddler, a member of St. Mark's.

These women left behind a record of church newsletter articles that testify to the active role they played in encouraging members of congregations to get involved in advocacy. They provided specific information about bills before the Legislature and encouraged members to be in contact with their Legislators. Child welfare, criminal justice, and hunger issues always seemed to be at the top of their lists. On several occasions "Lutheran Days at the Capitol" were organized.

With guidance from the ELCA, national issues were also lifted up. When President George W. Bush was considering launching a war in Iraq, Siebert encouraged parishioners to send letters of opposition to the White House.

Pastor John Rainey retired from Reformation Church in Milford in 2008 and by that time Siebert had left the advocacy work so Rainey stepped in. Already with many contacts among the Legislators after decades of work in the state and appointment to state commissions by the former resident of Milford, then Governor Ruth Ann Minner, Rainey continued the public policy work until he was sidelined by a stroke in 2012.

By this time, the Synod, continuing to experience declines in income, discontinued the position. It sat vacant until 2019 when I stepped in as a volunteer and began the work. I live in Dover (Legislative Hall is only a short six-mile bike ride away!) and went to work. I tried to establish relationships with Legislators, to become acquainted with issues, and to stay close in touch with our congregations. Over the last five years I have usually made annual Sunday visits to congregations across the state. Although our people are not in agreement on every issue, I found a strong commitment to the kind of advocacy reflected in the ELCA's social statements. This Office will not be filled, at least for a while, but I hope you will continue to follow the issues, and to SPEAK UP! We live in a world that belongs to God!

--Gordon Simmons, DE Lutheran Office for Public Policy
delutheranpublicpolicy@gmail.com

Cont'd from page 3

Second, the Apostles' Creed now has a bit more traditional wording. When our red *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnals replaced the green *Lutheran Book of Worship*, the editors changed the English translation of the Creed. The Creed in the LBW and older Lutheran hymnals said that Christ "descended into hell;" the ELW says that Christ "descended to the dead." The rationale for the change was that the original Latin could be translated either way, and that ancient Judaism did not have our concept of Heaven and Hell. But the *Book of Concord*, the official compilation of Lutheran beliefs, specifically addresses the importance of Christ's descent into Hell. The early reformers wrote that Christ's "entire person, God and human being, descended to hell after his burial, conquered the devil, destroyed the power of hell and took from the devil all his power." I tend to believe, with our early reformers, that remembering Christ's victory over Hell is both true to the Creed's original language and important to our faith.

Third, our worship assistants are no longer reading the introductions to Bible texts that you see in your *Celebrate* insert. The *Celebrate* is written by the same folks who do *Sundays & Seasons*, and the introductions are meant to offer background on the Bible text. While helpful, these introductions are from a scholar or minister, and are *not* the same as the Scripture itself! By reading the introduction from the pulpit alongside the Bible, these human insights could be conflated with the Bible. So I encourage you to read the introductions for your own devotion or learning, but to also focus on God's Word as spoken by our worship assistants in worship!

Finally, the Prayers of Intercession are

sometimes a bit different from what you see in *Celebrate*. These prayers, led by the worship assistant, are meant to address the concerns of everyone at Tree of Life. Ideally, someone in the congregation would write these each week. But in many churches, it's easier to use the suggested prayers in *Celebrate*.

Even before my arrival as pastor, we would tweak these prayers, such as by saying the names on our prayer list and by praying for other Lutheran churches. I've sometimes made additional changes. The prayers in the *Celebrate* can sometimes become rather opinionated, and seem like mini-speeches more than prayers. I firmly believe that prayers on behalf of the congregation should be prayers to which *everyone* can say "Amen," regardless of one's own opinions. So in addition to adding petitions for local needs and happenings, I seek to ensure language that everyone can pray, rather than have the prayers be a stump speech in disguise.

Again, these are simply my tweaks, and they are *not* absolute! The term "liturgy" means "work of the people," so worship should be a way for *everyone* to praise God! If you have your own thoughts on these or any other worship matters, I'd love to talk. If you'd like to help make worship as meaningful as possible, you are welcome to be part of the Worship & Music Committee. If you'd like to help lead worship as a reader or usher, it would be wonderful. But most of all, I hope that you will make worship a priority in your life, so that we can all center our lives on praising and experiencing the Lord!

Blessings to you all,

Pr. Robbie+

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www.treeoflifechurchde.com
www.facebook.com/TreeofLifeLutheranChurch/



We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

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Duane Dillard, Music Director
Maria Gue, Office Manager

Nicky Zaiser, President
 , Vice President
 Sylvia Schill, Secretary
 Denise Lindquist, Treasurer
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 Dirk Schulze

Altar Guild
Christian Ed— Analise Fratta
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Property— Dirk Schulze
Stewardship—
Worship & Music— Sylvia Schill

Altar Guild—Maxine Campbell
Facilities—Dirk Schulze
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Quilting Circles—Nicky Zaiser
Volunteer Coordinator—Gene Zaiser
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