

June 2020

# The Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Ave., Somers Point, NJ 08244—Phone: 609-927-3082

## EASTER GREETINGS

"Always learning" is a devotion on Proverbs 3:5-12 from Pastor Bill Dohle a writer for The Word in Season. Always learning is true for me. Learning to know you members of Grace through telephoning. Learning and relearning to do sermon videos - thank you Jill for your patience

serves up by absorbing these... truths about love, loss, learning, and letting go."

Back to Pr. Dohle, "Learning continues, the writer of Proverbs wrote, as long as we are not wise in our own eyes. Wisdom and understanding come not when we know it all but when we admit that we don't know it all. A spirit of repentance that always admits mistakes and errors becomes the key to wisdom and understanding." I am willing to learn from my mistakes and pray for God to increase my understanding and practice, practice, and practice in my life. An attitude in the making. Pr. Dohle concludes, "we may realize that we will never know everything... we may approach life with the humility that admits there is always something more to learn."

Love to Christ. (*I learned this from a musician who concluded his message with those three words*)  
Pastor Kevin



and insights. Learning ways to cope and stay safe at home by listening to others share their ways to stay positive, active, and hopeful. Thanks to Jim, council president, giving me books to learn "The Pine Barrens" loved "God's Water" story and "300 Years At The Point" which is taking longer to read. I discovered again "Too Soon Old, Too Late Smart 30 True Things You Need to Know Now" by Dr. Gordon Livingston. I bought this to read at a later date. One introductory remark, "Gain the advantage over whatever life



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As a society, we are in a holding pattern due to the pandemic but at here at Grace life goes on. We continue to provide Sunday services, the Food Pantry continues to function, and other activities such as the pastoral call process continue. The Support Team has been making plans for sanitizing the building prior to reopening. Shortly the Church Council and the Call Committee will be having a Zoom meeting with Bp. Tracey Bartholomew as part of the call process.

Sunday services have been made possible by the efforts of Jill Welfield, Scott Breiner, Ruth Bowden, Stephen Gring, and John Staples, Jill's son, Shawn, deserves a special thanks. Without his technical support and expertise, much of this would not have been possible. Pr. Kevin Hildgendorf continues to provide sermons and spiritual guidance. Lauren, Michael, and Alexander Piskun, Jeffrey Toth, Meg LaSpina, Linda Rihl, Mia and Madyn Rihl, Kevin Thomas and Shirley Blankenship have participated in the services. Diana McArdle has not only been part of the Sunday services but has continued to

keep the church running. She is often in the office making sure everything gets done. Andrew McCarrick continues to function as sexton and has provided some technical expertise at times, Heidi Toth continues to pay the bills. Jim Cordery, Ellie Granieri, and Zeke DeAngelis have continued to keep the food pantry running. Many others have also continued their time and effort.

If : "The Church is one foundation,"  
these people are  
the building blocks.  
Jim Foreman



*For I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.*



On Saturday, May 2nd, an abundance of filled grocery bags were delivered to Grace Place Food Pantry by members of St. Joseph Church. This is the second food drive held by the parish, since March, for the pantry at Grace.

The donated food was earmarked to help local families and stock the shelves of the pantry to meet the increased need for those who are without paychecks due to the pandemic.

The pantry is open limited days at this time. The hours are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9:00 am to 11:30 am.

Contact Jim Cordery in the pantry during the hours above at 609-927-9982 if you would like to donate food or give a monetary gift to the pantry.





# Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bettie Cross

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A world-wide pandemic didn't stop the celebration of Bettie Cross' 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. On June 8th, Bettie was surprised by well-wishers with a drive-by parade in front of her Burton Ave. home in Northfield. Bettie has touched the lives of many as a teacher, co-worker, neighbor, and friend; and the turn-out was impressive, to say the least. Participants gathered in the Ace Hardware parking lot off Tilton Road at 3:45 p.m. and proceeded to Burton Ave. lead by the Northfield police and fire departments. Many of the cars were decorated with banners, and participants honked their horns. Neighbors, seeing the fire trucks and long parade of cars, lined the streets along the route. A member of *The Messenger* team, Bettie informed us that she also received over 200 birthday cards from friends and family to help celebrate her day.



FOR

SHORE MEDICAL CENTER

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12<sup>th</sup>** @ 12 o'clock noon

Co-Hosted by

**Grace Lutheran & Epiphany Lutheran Church Women**

**SHOWER GIFT IDEAS!**

**NEWBORN to SIZE 2 Outfits - Receiving Blankets**

**Hand Crocheted or Knitted Items**

**Onesies - Bibs - Diapers**

**Wash Cloths and Towels**



**Unwrapped** gifts for **NEWBORNS** through **SIZE 2** can be brought to the Church Office

The Lutheran Church Women will set-up and display all of the gifts on

**Tuesday, AUGUST 11<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon**

Representatives from Shore Memorial Hospital will join us to accept the gifts,  
then take them to the hospital for distribution.

These items will be given to disadvantaged mothers  
when they take their babies home.

The entire congregation is encouraged to participate.

**RSVP by Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Contact: Dot Crawshaw 398-9478 or  
Bettie Cross 646-4495**







OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
NEW JERSEY SYNOD  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
*God's work. Our hands.*  
1930 Highway 33, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

June 2, 2020

Dear Friends,

I am weary and my heart is heavy. I look around our state, our country, and our world to see we are unsettled by many things. COVID19 has kept us from our regular routines for many weeks, including gathering for in person church activities. We have lost over 100,000 people to this virus (over 11,500 people have died in NJ alone). Unemployment has skyrocketed and lines at food distribution sites have grown exponentially. Justified anger over the murder of Mr. George Floyd has given rise to demonstrations calling for dismantling racist systems. In the wake of these protests, people seeking opportunity to wreak havoc on communities have destroyed businesses through vandalism and looting. There is much to grieve right now.

While our efforts to change the causes of our distress may seem small, we can respond and act in ways that positively contribute to the common good. We can begin by praying for and with each other – for those who are sick, unemployed, grieving, and oppressed; for those in medical professions, first line responders, police officers, and community organizers; for parents, grandparents, teachers, and caregivers; for those against whom we harbor hatred and for those we love; for those in national, state, and local governments; for all whom Christ died; for peace.

I am increasingly concerned about the ways we have divided ourselves over these issues. At a time when we need to come together, we are instead coming apart. Recommendations about how best to contain the spread of COVID19 are followed or challenged along partisan political lines. We are seeing an easing of restrictions in NJ which means local decisions about indoor, in-person worship will need to be made thoughtfully based on what is most advisable for your context (your building, population, capacity for safety measures).

Similarly, reactions in the aftermath of Mr. Floyd's death have given rise to false dichotomies – either you work toward eradicating racism or you support law enforcement personnel; either you support the protests or you denounce vandalism and destruction. As Lutheran Christians, we live in the tension of an “either/or” world with a “both/and” response all the time. We are both saint and sinner at the same time. We need both law and gospel in our proclamation. So it is that we can work toward eradicating racism and support the vocation of police officers. We can support protests for justice and denounce the destruction of local businesses.

In an ELCA Social Message on Community Violence, we read:

*“According to Lutheran theology, society is to be ruled by the civil use of the Law. Government is responsible under God for the protection of its citizens and the maintenance of justice and public order.<sup>1</sup> Just laws and their proper enforcement by police and courts are necessary to restrain violence. But laws and their enforcement are often corrupted by sin. As citizens in a democracy, we have the responsibility to join with others to hold government accountable for protecting society and ensuring justice for all, and to seek changes in policies and practices toward these ends.”*

Holding these seemingly opposite actions together requires work on our part – building relationships with each other across what’s comfortable. And that is only possible because God first established a relationship with us in our baptism. Connected through the life-giving waters of baptism, we can listen to our siblings in Christ who cry out for justice and those called to carry out that justice. Bathed in the same waters of life, we can join those who march for change and echo the words of Mr. Terrence Floyd (George Floyd’s younger brother) to stop tearing up the community<sup>2</sup>. As one family in Christ, we can come together even as we hold differing opinions on how to live out our faith.

Indeed, there is much to grieve right now: death, sickness, injustice, prejudice, violence – all cause tears to flow down our faces. But we grieve trusting God will wipe away our tears and make all things new. I pray for that day to come soon. In the meantime, I invite you to join me in witnessing to our faith by:

Praying with our synod at noon every day.

Working for justice and peace in all the earth by engaging your congregation in some form of anti-racism education through a bible study, a small-group dialogue, or a book club. See the list of resources on our website.

Loving all people following the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ – especially those most difficult to love.

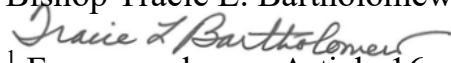
Recognizing those who carry out their vocation to serve and protect their communities with integrity while working with them to demand transformation of unjust systems.

Thanking essential workers who haven’t been able to stay at home, including healthcare professionals, delivery and postal workers, janitorial staff, trash collectors, and restaurant employees.

Thank you for being God’s hands and heart at work in the world!

Your sister in Christ,

Bishop Tracie L. Bartholomew



<sup>1</sup> For example, see Article 16 of the Augsburg Confession

<sup>2</sup> As heard on Good Morning America, June 1, 2020.

**CDC.GOV/COVID-19      Updated June 15, 2020**

Jurisdiction of Occurrence	COVID-19 Deaths	Deaths from All Causes	Percent of Expected Deaths	Pneumonia Deaths	Deaths with Pneumonia and COVID-19	Influenza Deaths	Deaths with Pneumonia, Influenza, or COVID-19
United States <sup>6</sup> 6/8	92,922	1,072,100	101	104,699	40,479	6,379	162,594
<b>Update 6/15/2020</b>	101,291	1,144,371	103	111,690	43,993	6,413	174,470
New Jersey 6/8	11,410	40,806	147	7,728	5,592	116	13,648
<b>Update 6/15/2020</b>	12,358	43,443	150	8,326	6,069	116	14,717

## **Grace Lutheran Church**

### **Planning committee for reopening the church after shutdown from Covid 19.**

**Members** – Jim Foreman, Stephen Gring, Jill Welfield, (executive committee), Charles Bowden (Support), Pastor Kevin Hilgendorf, Ellie Granieri (Facilities Rep), Diana McArdle.

We met on 5/25/2020 to lay out a plan of reopening the church facility. Below are the guidelines we will follow for possible opening as soon as State of NJ Governor Murphy rescinds executive order 107. When this happens, we would like to be ready.

Our capacity is 250 including the sanctuary and side hall. – 25% is 50 people.

- 1. DIRECTIONS FOR ENTERING CHURCH ARE TO BE GIVEN TO USE SIDE ISLES TO ENTER AND FILL THE CHURCH FROM FRONT TO BACK**
- 2. DIRECTIONS FOR LEAVING CHURCH WILL BE FROM BACK TO FRONT AND ALTERNATING SIDES TO FILE OUT SO THERE IS NOT A LINE AT THE DOOR. PLEASE LIMIT YOUR INTERACTIONS WITH ANY MEMBER WHO IS NOT MASKED.**
- 3. MASKS MUST BE WORN WHILE ENTERING OR LEAVING THE BUILDING.**
- 4. ONE FAMILY PER PEW, NO MORE THAN 2 SINGLE PERSONS PER PEW AT OPPOSITE SIDES.**
- 5. THE BULLETIN WILL INCLUDE SERVICE AND MUSIC TO AVOID HANDLING OF HYMNS. PLEASE PICK-UP YOUR BULLETIN AS YOU ENTER THE SANCTUARY. BULLETINS WILL NOT BE HANDED OUT BY USHERS.**
- 6. PARISHIONERS WILL BE ASKED TO TAKE THE BULLETINS WITH THEM (AND ANY TRASH) TO AVOID HANDLING BY OTHERS. USHERS WILL NOT BE CLEANING THE PEWS.**
- 7. COLLECTION PLATES WILL BE PLACED AT THE ENTRANCES TO THE SANCTUARY AND THE SOCIAL HALL AND WILL NOT BE PASSED TO PARISHIONERS BY AN USHER.**
8. Church will be cleaned by Service Master using recommended CDC/DOH guidelines (fog) for the downstairs area / pantry, kitchen and sanctuary prior to reopening. Support team and Council approved. they will be contacted once we have an official date.
9. Hand sanitizer stations will be/have been purchased to be located – 1 free standing unit at narthex of church, 3 wall units – by the pantry, by the office door, and the side door to the sanctuary.
10. We will utilize the sanctuary and open the doors to the social hall with limited seating.
11. We will block every other pew and alternate the blocked pew from side to side.
12. Rear and side doors will remain open while people are within the rooms.
13. We will place signage with several key points to notify parishioners of the procedures.
14. The elevator may be used by 1 person with 1 immediate family member, only if required for assistance.
15. Hymnals, bibles, communion cards, and prayer cards will be removed. Any prayer requests should be emailed to the church secretary to be included within the bulletin.
16. We will suspend sharing of the peace.

17. Communion will be done once per month until safe to commune at the rail.
18. We have single serve communion cups – (wafer and juice [no wine] individually wrapped)<sup>8</sup> When communion takes place, each parishioner will take a cup as they enter the sanctuary.
19. We have postponed coffee fellowship until safe to resume closer proximity.
20. Scott Breiner will try to incorporate solos, duets, small groups for choir to actively lead our music program.
21. Choir members will need to be distanced as well as parishioners, six feet between non family members. we will reserve the first set of pews for additional choir members.
22. The current pre-recorded service will stop and a video of the actual service will be done and posted on the website and Facebook by Sunday afternoon for those who can not make it to church. (we believe this will work but have patience with us if it does not)
23. We will have only one service at 10:15 am. No early service is possible because several rooms will not be in use.
24. Counting teams will require masks and gloves to complete the deposits.
25. Outside groups may restart their meetings two (2) weeks after our reopening.
  - ◇ new agreements must be completed prior to the first meeting, please contact Diana to obtain the paperwork
  - ◇ new agreements will detail social distancing requirements
26. Any person that has entered our building for any use (worship or group meetings) that then has a report of positive COVID will be required to contact the church office or group leader to advise. A cleaning will then be ordered for the areas that may have been involved.
27. Worship at your own risk. If you feel uncomfortable about attending church services, or group meetings, we understand. we want to keep you safe and keep us safe.
28. Please use the bathrooms in the Social Hall during worship services.
29. Wash your hands when you get home.

### In Our Hearts and Prayers

**Servicemen and Servicewomen Serving Our Country:** Members & Friends of Grace:  
Matt Bilello, ANG; Daniel Casner 3rd, USN; Sgt. Joshua McArdle, USMC; Cainan Johnson, USAF

**Hospitalized - or in need of healing:**

Ruth, David, Ric & Steven Alburger, Mary Ellen Bartholomew, June Becker, Shirley Blankenship, Carol Campbell, Dr. Robert Carlson, Ed Carpenter, Lynn Carroll, Christine Carter, Roy Cole, Deb & John Connelly, Patricia Crowley, Tad Dildilian, Kimberly Frawley, Kathy Gabriel, Michael Giovanielli, Daniel Honda, Chris Hinnant, Bob & Dona-Lee Hughes, Darryl Kashey, Carol Traa Keates, Nancy Keirse, Jim Kohl, Judith & Roger Landis, Deborah Laury, Crystal (Truman) Lively, Susan Marich, Quinn Meldrum, Anne Moore, Tom Ostrander, Tommy Parker, Renee Pugliese, Indigo Rose, Alan Sisson, Dana Sisson, Bob Traa, Carol-Ann Tracy, George Walters, Joan Wisdom, Lucy Dildilian Yannis

**At Home** - Bonnie Condliff, Joan Glenz, Barbara Johnson, Dot Reichelt, Lois & Dan Reardon

**Shores@Wesley Manor:** Dot Crawshaw, Eleanor Guire

**Woodview Estates:** Dot Progin & Lorraine Moore



## JULY

7/1 Francene Ramogasse  
7/5 Juliana Friedrich  
7/6 Ty Rosas  
7/10 Kai Dawley  
7/11 John Dunn  
7/12 Dan Marks  
7/13 John Neupauer  
7/16 Eleonore Guire  
7/17 Patrick Carney  
7/22 Walter Foerst, III  
7/24 Scott Marks  
7/26 Lillian Young  
7/27 Nathan Bilello  
7/27 Zander Bilello  
7/31 Barbara Johnson

## AUGUST

8/1 Jill Welfield  
8/2 Ty Connor  
8/2 Matthew Panait  
8/4 Diana McArdle  
8/5 John Bradley  
8/8 Gazela Randrasana  
8/11 Jane Thompson  
8/13 Linda Rosas  
8/14 Julia Reynolds  
8/17 Jack Foster  
8/18 Amy Ruffenach  
8/19 Bruce Hoelter  
8/19 Mackenzie Miller  
8/19 Micah Miller  
8/19 Tristan Miller  
8/20 Morris Gbolo  
8/23 Gay Blohm  
8/23 Lisa Merce  
8/28 Ingeborg Carlson  
8/28 Pr. Bob Hughes  
8/30 Reagan Miller

Happy Birthday!



  
*Anniversaries*

Bob & Dona-Lee Hughes  
6/3/1961 - 59 years  
Meredith & Holly Henry  
6/4/1977 - 43 years  
Jeff & Heidi Toth  
6/5/1993 - 27 years  
John & Betty Neupauer  
6/8/1957 - 63 years  
Mike & Sandy Piskun  
6/9/2001-19 years  
Todd & Dominique Davison  
6/11/2011 - 9 years  
Dick & Else Fetter  
6/15/59 - 61 years



## No July Anniversaries

Charles & Ruth Bowden  
8/8/1985 - 35 years  
Timothy & Diane McManus  
8/16/2008 - 12 years.  
Larry & Cheryl Rusiecki  
8/17/1974 - 46 years.  
Tom & Michele Myers  
8/22/1993 - 27 years

Is your Birthday or Wedding Anniversary date missing from the list ? Contact the Church Office (927-3082) and your birthday and/or anniversary will be listed.

In the uncertainty of these changing times, one thing has stayed the same, your giving, loving nature. I cannot find the words to express my gratitude for the awesome birthday “drive-by” surprise, the flowers, the cards-oh the cards-over 200 and still coming in from all over the country- and everyone with a personal message. This certainly was a birthday to remember. All I can say is thank you. God Bless you.  
Love and hugs, Bettie Cross





# Welcome back to worship... Sunday, June 28th! 10:15 am

Website: [www.gracelutheranspnj.org](http://www.gracelutheranspnj.org)

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**Further information regarding returning to worship is located on pages 7 & 8 in this newsletter.**

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## MESSAGE FROM PR. KEVIN.....

Let us pray, God of compassion, you have opened the way for us and brought us to yourself, pour your love into us, that we may freely share the blessings of your realm and proclaim the good news of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

We received a note card Love matters from the Office of the Bishop, New Jersey Synod:  
"Dear Kevin and Congregation Council Members, we are sending this card to let you know that you and the congregation of Grace, Somers Point, were remembered in our morning prayers as we gathered by zoom for our weekly staff meeting. This day we particularly give thanks for the ways you all are keeping in touch with the congregation members in creative ways to reduce feelings of isolation. Blessings New Jersey Synod Staff.

**Side note added:** Even though we are still not able to gather the prayers of the whole staff are tucked inside this card. Luann (printed verse: Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. *1 Thess. 5:16-18.*