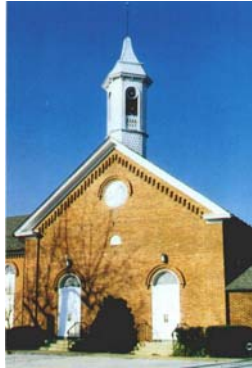


ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Dover & Trenton Roads
Upperco, Maryland 21155
410-239-3456**

The Rev. Melvina Stricklin

August & September 2010



**St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Dover & Trenton Roads
Upperco, Maryland 21155**

To:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Directory



President Sarah Morris
410-526-7598

Vice President Charles Baber
410-751-7511

Secretary Susan Fleming
410-239-1174

Treasurer Richard Harris
410-239-7483

Council Members

John Kelly Rob Holtz

Shriver Foster Derek DuBois

Wade Hilgartner

Committee Chairpersons

OUTREACH
Suzi Lyons
410-239-7656
Sarah Morris
410-526-7598

EVANGELISM
Rob Holtz
410-526-2927

MUSIC & WORSHIP
Susan Fleming
410-239-1174

FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Charles Baber
410-751-7511

MUTUAL MINISTRY
Suzi Lyons
410-239-7656

FINANCE
Bryan Benson
410-526-2817
Richard Harris
410-239-7483

PROPERTY
Leon Fleming
410-239-1174
Shriver Foster
410-239-2663

YOUTH
Derek DuBois
410-374-1133

PARK
Richard Harris
410-239-7483

SHEPHERDS
Ginny Harris
410-239-7483

HOSPITALITY
John Kelly
410-239-9427

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Charles Baber
410-751-7511

CEMETERY
Maidie Brown
410-429-0907

NEWSLETTER
Carol Hunt
410-429-4229
OphirGSP@aol.com



SAINT PAUL'S VOICE August/September 2010

We have a new bishop, The Rev. Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane. He was elected at the Synod Assembly that was held June 10 -12. His current position has been the Assistant to the Bishop as Director for Evangelical Mission since February 2009.

His church membership has been with the Spirit of Life Lutheran Church in Wilmington, Delaware. He is married to a Lutheran pastor and has two grown children.

The Bishop-elect was born in Germany in 1954. He graduated from Rutgers University-Camden College with a BA in Arts and Science and received his MSW in social work from Rutgers University Graduate School. In 2001 he received his M. Div. degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia was ordained in 2001.

For 12 years he was on the ELCA church-wide staff as Mission Director. He was also a voting member of Church-wide Assembly and also a member of Synod Council for the New Jersey Synod. Some of his community activities include: a member of the Baltimore Council of Foreign Affairs, Founder of "Frank's Place" a shelter for the homeless in Camden, New Jersey, and a founding member of Camden Lutheran Housing Corp.

Bishop-elect is very mission oriented. He is a visionary, has good communication skills, and administrative skills. He has drive and energy for ministry and has a passion for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His leadership style is participatory because he says he functions best as part of a team making decisions on factual information rather than emotions.

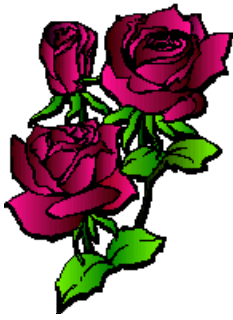
In preparation for his term as bishop which begins September 1, he has scheduled twelve "Mission Conversations" throughout the synod. There will be one at Carroll Lutheran Village, September 25 at 2 p.m. that will last for 90 minutes. Pastors, rostered leaders, lay leaders and members of every congregation are welcome and encouraged to attend. I do hope some of our members will do so. We will hear about his vision for the synod and he will answer questions and offer feedback.

One thing he wants from us is to be prayer partners. As a prayer partner we are to lift up the ministry of the synod bishop and God's mission on this territory once a week on a day we choose. He will give us updates on prayer concerns. His goal is to sign up 1,810 prayer partners, 10 each of the 181 worshipping communities in our synod. I have taken this to council and a decision will be made as to what day our church members will intentionally pray for the bishops' work and our mission.

We congratulate Bishop-elect Herz-Lane and pray for his success in leading us in God's call for the work that is to be done.

Love in Christ,

Pastor Mel Stricklin



**THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYER
WE PRAY FOR:**

MEMBERS: Lois Armacost, Hazel Ashe, Kim Boose, Mary Burk, Sue Bosley, Matilda Griffin, Cassie Harris, Shirley Harris, Mildred Hasson, Sydney Henry, Matthew Jones, Oneida Jones, Mary Louise Miller, Sara Moore, Bill Stratton, Shari Underhill, Leslie Vink-Hood, George Walter, Lorraine Walter, and all homebound members.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Genny Casper, Esther Watson, Carol Graff, Debbie Hahn, Bill Peters, Jim Howard, Braylynn, Joyce Rhoten, Pastor Gene Alexander, Bishop Jerry Knoche, Shirley, Ex Officio Bishop Mocko, Becky Norwood, Bill Higgins, Christine Wheeler, Pastor Dick Michael, Georgia Winiecki, Emma Miller, Jesse McGee, Renee Adams, Carly Schulman, Earl Yingling, Eliza Schubert, Tim Underhill, John Ryan, Vicky Hofmeister, Maria Anastasi, Linda Moran, Mickey Derreth, Kate Johnson, Michael Durham, those facing job loss, and those in broken relationships.

WE ALSO PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST LOVED ONES: family and friends of Dr. Douglas Chilcoat and George H. Miller.

THE PRAYER: Merciful God, attend to the needs of all who live in fear, injury, and uncertainty, especially (names). Give them peace by surrounding them with caring helpers who extend fullness of life through their love of God and neighbor. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

+++++

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

You will be happier if you will give people a bit of your heart rather than a piece of your mind.
Author unknown

Ask God's blessing on your work, but don't ask Him to do it for you.
Dame Flora Robson

God gave burdens, also shoulders.
Yiddish Proverb

If you want to leave footprints in the sands of time, don't drag your feet.
Arnot L. Sheppard, Jr.

+++++

BIBLE TRIVIA

1. Who told people to make peace with their brothers before they made a sacrifice on the altar?
2. What are the only books of the Bible named after priests?
3. What crime did the high priest charge Jesus with?
4. In what priest's home did the enemies of Jesus meet to plot against him?
5. Who was not one of the original twelve, though he probably labored harder for the gospel than anyone else?

Thank You

to our youth who faithfully participate in worship each month by being greeters, ushers, lectors, and gift bearers.

to Jayme Folfas for being our church representative at the Synod Assembly.

to all those who generously support our second offerings each month. These funds help our local non-profit organizations and Lutheran agencies and schools.

to all the children who received Sunday School perfect attendance awards.

to all those who participate in our worship services at nursing homes.

to the DuBois family for hosting SPY's picnic and pool party.

to Carol Hilgartner and Patti Schunk for heading up our Vacation Bible School and to all those who volunteered.

to Emily Hilgartner, Glenys Hunt and Carol Hunt for their dedication as teachers to the students at St. Paul's.



ANSWERS TO BIBLE TRIVIA 1. Jesus (Matthew 5:24) 2. Ezra and Ezekiel 3. blasphemy (Matthew 26:65) 4. Caiaphas's (Matthew 26:3). 5. Paul

NEWS

RALLY DAY and CHURCH PICNIC

We will be celebrating Rally Day on September 12. There will be a picnic after worship, followed by games and fun activities. Please bring a covered dish for the picnic.

BAPTISMS

We recently celebrated the baptism of two more of our babies. Jordan Anne Brown was baptized on Sunday, June 20. She is the daughter of Jennifer and David Brown, granddaughter of Steve and Barbara Utz, and great-granddaughter of Anne Durham and Helen Utz.

On Sunday, June 27, Matthew William Harrison Moore was baptized. He is the son of Patrick and Sherry Moore, brother of Carrie and Sarah.

What a blessing to have these two babies to be claimed by Christ forever.

CHANGE OF WORSHIP SERVICE START TIME

Again just a reminder about our summer worship service times. Beginning July 4 through and including September 5, our worship start time is 8:45. Beginning September 12 we will revert back to our normal 9 a.m. start time.

MISSION STATEMENT

This is just a friendly reminder to refresh you about our new proposed mission statement. Pastor Mel frequently uses it in her sermons, in a prayer petition and as part of the benediction. It was approved by the council and will be presented at the next

congregational meeting for final approval: **LOVE, SERVE, AND TEACH GOD'S WORD.**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Everyone who is involved in Christian Education in any way will be installed and blessed during worship service September 12.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School classes will resume on Sunday, September 19. Invite all the neighborhood children to join us. Classes are at 10:15.

NESAP NEWS

The 20th Hampstead/Manchester area CROP Walk will be held on October 17th from 2:00pm-4:00pm at Cape Horn Park (2500 Cape Horn Road, Hampstead MD 21074). Registration begins at 1:30pm at St George's Episcopal Church, just past the park on Cape Horn Road. There will be live music and free refreshments. Crop Walk benefits Church World Service, which in turn helps stock the NESAP food pantry.

By donating to NESAP, you have helped 496 households in the first half of the year. This assistance includes:

| <u># of households</u> | <u>type of assistance</u> |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 171 | food |
| 28 | medical |
| 32 | rent |
| 147 | utilities |
| 18 | fuel |
| 40 | clothing |
| 37 | transportation |
| 23 | other |

THANK YOU!!

ST. PAUL'S T-SHIRTS FOR SALE!!!

For those that have outgrown their t-shirts or don't have one, we are going to make them available in order to have them in time for our bingo. T-shirts are available in regular style for \$10 and Polo (men or women) for \$18 in all sizes. Children sizes are \$6. They will be the same color as we currently have - Cedar which is a shade of maroon. The FINAL deadline will be Sept 12th. Call Carol Hilgartner with questions (410)790-9931.

The Lord's Laughter

From the *Joyful Noiseletter*, August- September 2010 edition

Sign outside Struthers (OH) Presbyterian Church:

"Honk if you love Jesus – Text while driving if you'd like to meet him.

via Maria White
Struthers, OH

A church put up a huge banner above the front door to celebrate Christianity. The banner read, "Open wide the doors to Christ."

Directly below, taped to the door, a smaller sign was posted: "Please help us conserve energy. Use other doors."

unknown

A preacher's sermon went on endlessly. One man got up and walked out of the church. He came back near the end of the service.

The pastor greeted him on his way out. "Clarence," the pastor said, "I noticed you left during my sermon and then later came back. Are you feeling okay?"

"Sure", Clarence said, "I'm okay. I just went out to get a haircut."

"Why didn't you do that before you came to church?" the pastor asked.

"I didn't need it then," Clarence replied.

via Mildred Katzell
Medford, NJ

A Sunday School teacher said to a little boy in her class:

"So your mother says your prayers for you every night at bedtime. That's very nice. What does she say?"

"Thank God he's in bed!" the little boy replied.

unknown

A grandfather was driving his young granddaughter to her softball game when she asked, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, indeed, God made me," her grandfather replied.

"Did God make me too?" she asked.

"Yes, He did and He did a good job," the grandfather answered.

For a few minutes, the little girl seemed to be studying her grandfather, then looked at her reflection in the car mirror. "You know, Grandpa," she said, "God's doing a lot better job lately."

Via Bart Van Giessen
Texas Township, MI

Highlights

2010 Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly

Herz-Lane elected bishop on fifth ballot

"Brothers and sisters, I want you to go out with me into the neighborhood and do mission and ministry on the street corners." With that call to action, the Rev. Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, currently serving as an assistant to the bishop and director of evangelical outreach for the Delaware-Maryland Synod, accepted the call as bishop.

Herz-Lane was elected to a six-year term on the fifth ballot Saturday morning at the Synod Assembly, held June 10-12 at the Eisenhower Conference Center, Gettysburg, Pa. His opponent on the fifth ballot, the Rev. John D. Ranney, a retired pastor from Delaware, garnered 224 votes to Herz-Lane's 255.

A bishop is elected using a procedure called the ecclesiastical ballot, in which the first ballot serves as the nominating ballot. Some 98 names of ELCA pastors were proposed on that first ballot, taken Thursday afternoon as the assembly began.

The second ballot contained 43 names, from which the top seven vote getters went on to the third ballot. Those pastors were the Rev. James Cobb (Ascension Church, Towson, Md.), the Rev. Michael Dubsy (St. Luke Church, Hampden, Baltimore), Assistant to the Bishop Mary Miller-Zurell, Assistant to the Bishop Virginia Price, the Rev. John Sabatelli (Christ Church, Inner Harbor, Baltimore), Ranney and Herz-Lane.

The third ballot narrowed the field to three names to appear on the fourth ballot: Herz-Lane, Ranney and Sabatelli. Results of the fourth ballot showed that Herz-Lane received 224 votes, Ranney 168 and Sabatelli 116, which meant that Herz-Lane and Ranney would go on to the fifth ballot.

Interest in this year's election ran so high that the assembly attendance was record setting. As of Friday night, 642 people were in attendance: 548 voting members and 114 visitors.

Assembly approves \$3 million FSP

The election of a bishop was far from the only business on the mind of voting members. Over the course of three days, they discussed at length an array of resolutions and the proposed 2011 Faith Spending Plan (FSP), or budget. The assembly...

- approved, by a vote of 297 yes, 36 no, and 19 abstain, the **2011 Faith Spending Plan** as proposed by the Synod Council. The plan authorizes expenditures of slightly more than \$3 million.
- designated Nov. 21, 2010, Christ the King Sun-day, as **ELCA World Hunger Appeal Sunday** in the Delaware-Maryland Synod. Congregations were further encouraged to make support of the Hunger Appeal a year-round emphasis, with recognitions given annually at the Synod Assembly by the Hunger Mission Force to model congregations for their support of the appeal.
- designated July 18, 2010, as **Lutheran Volunteer Corps Sunday** in recognition of the 30th anniversary of that group.
- conferred upon the Rev. H. Gerard Knoche the honorary title of **Bishop Emeritus** of the Delaware-Maryland Synod.
- received the proposed **African Descent Strategy** for review and study and authorized that it be placed on the 2011 Synod Assembly agenda for adoption with financial support provided in the 2012 Faith Spending Plan.
- affirmed and celebrated the partnership between congregations and the synod as evidenced through **annual mission support** (benevolence), expressing its conviction that the level of mission support is best determined as a percentage of unrestricted, regular giving in the local congregation and should fall within a range of 10% to 30% of such offerings, with a tithe (10%) being the expected minimum contribution in most cases.

□ affirmed and celebrated the partnership between the Delaware- Maryland Synod and the church-wide expression, directing the Synod Council and Budget Development Committee to **move the synod from its current 53% mission support to 55%** over several years, reaching 55% in 2015. This means that, beginning in the 2015 fiscal year, 55 cents of every dollar the synod receives in mission support will be shared with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

□ **condemned a rally to be held by the white supremacist group, Aryan Nation**, at the Gettysburg battlefield on June 19, calling for "continued prayer on the part of the church to boldly proclaim God's work of changing the hearts and minds of those who spread hatred and terror" and for "continued action on the part of the church to promote racial justice." The assembly's actions are to be communicated to several groups, among them local media, the National Park Service, the mayor, and the Aryan Nation.

□ referred to the Synod Council for action two resolutions: one calling on the synod to continue its **anti-racism work** in a number of ways and one dealing with **casino gambling at Gettysburg**.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The VBS is collecting school supplies for NESAP as their Outreach this year. Even if your child wasn't able to participate in VBS or your children are grown, you can still participate with us! Please bring wide-ruled notebook paper, graph paper, glue sticks, black composition books, markers, 3 prong folders with pockets, small pink erasers etc to Church Sunday, July 25th. These things can be purchased at Wal-Mart pretty inexpensively. After this week donations can be made directly to NESAP.

Please help NESAP and our VBS! Thank you!!

St. Paul's Vacation Bible School was held July 19 through July 23rd with twenty three young people from 3 years through 5th grade attending. A fun and learning experience was had by all sharing the good news of God's Love in an African environment. Students learned how to Trust, Love, Care, Share, and Follow the Lord through Bible stories, crafts, music and science.

We thank Diana Guthall who made all the wonderful animals and to everyone who helped this year to make our VBS a big success.



Celebrations for August & September

August Birthdays

2 Daniel Binebrink
4 Edith Nuse
5 Ann Durham, Jr.
8 Sara Singer
Cheyenne Kelly
10 Ashley Durham
12 Spencer Bauerlein
13 Cassandra Harris
14 Shawn Singer
15 Patti Graff
Oneida Jones
Heather Panagakos
16 Matilda Griffin
22 Jesse McGee
Steve Utz
Rachael Mountcastle
24 Kimberly Hale
Kelly Mountcastle
26 Peter Meadowcroft
28 Claudia McGee
29 Alex Panagakos
30 Teri Hoffman

August Anniversaries

10 Bob & Sarah Morris

September Birthdays

1 Debbie Hogarty
3 Lois Armacost
4 Cindy Durham
5 Jennifer Hann
10 James McGee
Natalie Wickline
11 Brad Mountcastle
12 Tim Brown
15 Katie Binebrink
16 Sandy Baber
Katie Graff
Wade Hilgartner
17 Mary Ann Hoffman
19 Bob Bare
20 Chris Hale
21 Ruth Bare
Meg Jones
23 Mary Letts
24 Kaye Hancock
29 Carliana Folfas

September Anniversaries

6 Gus & Jenny Siperko
9 Brad & Kelly Mountcastle
13 Bill & Linda Hale
16 Steve & Barb Utz
18 John & Debbie Hogarty
Bill & Mary Jane Peters
24 Lee & Ruth Hardesty

August

| <i>Sun</i> | <i>Mon</i> | <i>Tue</i> | <i>Wed</i> | <i>Thu</i> | <i>Fri</i> | <i>Sat</i> |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 845am – Worship Food Collection | 2 | 3 1000am-1200pm Treasurer’s Office Hours 300 pm – 430pm Pastor’s Office Hours | 4 730 pm AA | 5 | 6 | 7 1200 pm -130pm Pastor’s Office Hours |
| 8 845am – Worship | 9 | 10 1000am-1200pm Treasurer’s Office Hours 300 pm – 430pm Pastor’s Office Hours 700pm –Council | 11 730 pm AA | 12 | 13 SPY – Bengies Drive-in | 14 1200 pm -130pm Pastor’s Office Hours |
| 15 845am – Worship Second Offering Interfaith Housing Fellowship after service 115am Worship at Long View Nursing Home | 16 | 17 800am Sandwich Making 1000am-1200pm Treasurer’s Office Hours | 18 730 pm AA 645 pm Healing Service at Christ Lutheran | 19 | 20 | 21 1200 pm -130pm Pastor’s Office Hours 800am-400pm Flea Market |
| 22 845am – Worship | 23 Pastor Mel vacation | 24 1000am-1200pm Treasurer’s Office Hours Pastor Mel vacation | 25 730 pm AA Pastor Mel vacation | 26 Pastor Mel vacation | 27 Pastor Mel vacation | 28 Pastor Mel vacation |
| 29 845am – Worship Pastor Mel vacation | 30 Pastor Mel vacation | 31 Pastor Mel vacation | | | | |

September

| <i>Sun</i> | <i>Mon</i> | <i>Tue</i> | <i>Wed</i> | <i>Thu</i> | <i>Fri</i> | <i>Sat</i> |
|---|--|---|---|---|------------------------------------|--|
| | | | 1 Pastor Mel vacation | 2 Pastor Mel vacation | 3 Pastor Mel vacation | 4 Pastor Mel vacation SPY camping Cowan's Gap |
| 5 845am – Worship Favorite Hymn Sunday Food Collection SPY camping Cowan's Gap Pastor Mel vacation | 6 Pastor Mel vacation SPY camping Cowan's Gap | 7 1000am-1200pm Treasurer's Office Hours Pastor Mel vacation | 8 730 pm AA Pastor Mel vacation | 9 Pastor to return to work | 10 | 11 1200 pm -130pm Pastor's Office Hours |
| 12 900am – Worship Installation of Christian Ed teachers and helpers Rally Day & Church Picnic Second Offering Seminary students | 13 130pm Worship & Music Committee | 14 1000am-1200pm Treasurer's Office Hours 300 pm – 430pm Pastor's Office Hours 700pm -Council | 15 730 pm AA 645 pm Healing Service @ St. Paul's | 16 | 17 | 18 800am-400pm Flea Market 1200 pm -130pm Pastor's Office Hours |
| 19 900am – Worship Sunday School classes begin Fellowship after service 115am Worship at Long View Nursing Home | 20 | 21 800am Sandwich Making 1000am-1200pm Treasurer's Office Hours 300 pm – 430pm Pastor's Office Hours | 22 730 pm AA | 23 700 pm- Confirmation Class with parents | 24 | 25 1200 pm -130pm Pastor's Office Hours Blood Drive |
| 26 900am – Worship | 27 700pm-Bible Study | 28 1000am-1200pm Treasurer's Office Hours | 29 | 30 | | |

Basket Bingo

St. Paul's 5th Annual Longaberger Basket/Pampered Chef/Vera Bradley Bingo is quickly approaching. Meg Jones & Sandy Baber are again co-chairing this year's event.

We are looking for individuals & businesses to sponsor games which defray the cost of the Longaberger baskets, Vera Bradley bags and the Pampered Chef items. We have items ranging from \$25 to \$100, and your sponsorship will be noted in the evening's program. If you are interested in helping out, Sandy will have a list of available games and amounts in church (it is also posted on the overflow room bulletin board) or you can give her a call.

In addition to game sponsors we are also asking for door prize donations. Please solicit local businesses to get suitable door prize items. If you have questions about businesses or items please see Meg.

Also, tickets are now available, so see Carol Hilgartner if interested!

We greatly appreciate everyone's help with this event! It is wonderful to see our Church family come together to make this event such a success!

LONGABERGER® BASKET, PAMPERED CHEF® & VERA BRADLEY® BINGO

**TO BENEFIT THE PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES OF
ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, UPPERCO**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2010

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 PM

FOOD SERVED

HOMEMADE SANDWICHES, SOUPS & DESSERTS

GAMES START AT 7:00 PM

Location: ARCADIA FIRE HALL

TICKETS ARE \$12 IN ADVANCE \$15 AT THE DOOR

LARGE RAFFLES, SPECIALS, AND LOTS OF DOOR PRIZES!!!

Bring a non-perusable item to be donated to NESAP and be entered into a special raffle!

FOR TICKETS: CALL Carol Hilgartner @ (410)374-8827 or (410)790-9931



June 28, 2010

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is both heartbreaking and infuriating. It causes deep sorrow, both for the initial loss of human life and for the deep and lasting damage to an ecology that provides life and livelihoods for so many of God's creatures. At the same time we grieve that the natural beauty of this region, a sign of God's marvelous creativity, has been defiled.

Moving to indignation and anger over the neglect and carelessness that led to this disaster, both in private industry and in government regulation, is understandable. However, to do so without recognizing the responsibility we all share -- as consumers of petroleum products, as investors in an economy that makes intensive and insistent energy demands, and as citizens responsible for the care of creation -- lacks credibility and integrity. An honest accounting of what happened (and what failed to happen) must include our own repentance.

Nonetheless, God remains faithful in restoring the creation and human community. Among the voices that despair and condemn, we have a witness of hope to proclaim.

First, God, who made the creation and made it good, has not abandoned it. Day after day God sustains life in this world, and the powerful vitality of God's creation, though defiled, is not destroyed. The life-giving power of God's creative goodness remains at work, even in the Gulf of Mexico. The Spirit will continue to renew the face of the earth (Psalm 104:30, as we just sang at Pentecost). All who care for the earth and work for the restoration of its vitality can be confident that they are not pursuing a lost cause. They serve in concert with God's own creative and renewing power.

Moreover, the human family need not drown in a flood of suspicion and recrimination that is more toxic and more lasting than the oil that floods the Gulf can ever be. The cleansing waters of baptism in Christ -- who died not for the righteous, but for the unrighteous -- bring forgiveness and reconciliation with God. In this reconciled life with God we have the freedom to move beyond mutual condemnations and hostility to give a powerful witness of a reconciled community that lives in service of the creation and the neighbor. By refusing to surrender to the toxicity of recrimination, we can convince others that they can join us safely in the life and service of this community.

Responding to a challenge of this size and complexity will call upon countless insights and skills, embodied in hundreds of occupations and trades, and upon the collective strength and will of us all. God's Holy Spirit has abundantly blessed the human community with the gifts needed to do this work. We can do it with sober confidence, good will and even joy.

There are times for mourning and for repentance, as well as for reconciliation and commitment to the creation's care. They come at different moments for different people. As you serve in your communities, I commend to you resources for [worship](#), [study](#) and [action](#) that express the hope of Christians who see God's creative goodness, Jesus' forgiving reconciliation and the Spirit's abundant gifts for service. This is a moment when the human community needs to hear a word of true hope, and we have one to speak.

The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.

- Psalm 145:8-9

In God's grace,

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America