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July/August 2020 LMD NL news will be due June 17, 2020. E-Mail any information to me at lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com.

**Lehigh Mission District
Ascension of Our Lord
Announcement**

~~On Thursday, May 21, 2020, at 7:30 PM the Lehigh Mission District is providing an Ascension of Our Lord worship service that will be streamed via ZOOM. The preacher for the evening is The Reverend Dr. Samuel Zeiser, Bishop of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Christ Lutheran Church will host the ZOOM platform. Codes to join the service will be distributed close to the date of the worship service to the pastors to share.~~

~~On behalf of the Lehigh Mission District Council, I want to thank Bishop Zeiser and Christ Church for hosting the ZOOM worship. Thank you to St. John's Lutheran Church, Fogelsville, St. John's Lutheran, Allentown, Christ Lutheran Church, Allentown, and St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Allentown for planning this collaborative worship service opportunity and for your participation.~~

~~The Reverend Nelson Quiñones, LMD Dean~~

Save the Date, please:

Remember the surveys (at the three Info Gathering meetings throughout the Synod in February, and online) that were completed in advance of the next NEPA Bishop election? Well, given COVID-19, we've adjusted plans FROM in-person meetings to summarize survey results and develop preliminary questions for the Bishop candidates TO Zoom sessions that you can connect to from home.

Those meetings are now set for:

Saturday, 11 July 9 AM to Noon

Saturday, 18 July 9 AM to Noon

Registration for these Zoom meetings will be communicated shortly.

The Information Gathering Team

COME AWAY TO A QUIET PLACE... A Brief Pause for Prayerful Renewal in Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is a particular form of quiet, receptive prayer as taught by Father Thomas Keating and Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault. A portion of each one-hour gathering will include some discussion about centering prayer. So, whether you never heard of centering prayer, are a beginner, or an experienced pray-er, All Are Welcome. **First Friday of each month**, led by Ferd Piccuiro and hosted by Pastor Maritza Dolich via Zoom, **10:30 - 11:30 AM** (Sessions held via **Zoom** temporarily until we can all meet together again in person at the Center for Spiritual Awakening). **Please contact Ferd to be placed on the email list with the Zoom information.** ferdpiccuiro@ptd.net / Cell: [908-310-4228](tel:908-310-4228), Home: [610-737-7871](tel:610-737-7871)

SUSPENDED - St. Luke's ELL and Naturalization Test Study groups have been **SUSPENDED** due to cautions regarding large gatherings during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Please contact Leslie Talago at [610-434-3943](tel:610-434-3943) for more information.

Save These Dates! Greater Allentown **CROP Hunger Walk: Sun., Oct. 11, 2020**, 1:30 p.m., with registration beginning at 1:00 p.m. at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown, PA 18104. **CROP Recruiters' Pizza Party/Kick-off: Sun., Aug. 30, 2020**, 1:30-2:30 p.m. (to receive materials, ideas, and inspiration for yourself and your congregation) at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown, PA 18104. For more information about Church World Service/CROP, go to www.crophungerwalk.org

Happy
Father's
Day

HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 (coronavirus)

As per the Pennsylvania Department of Health they recommend the following:

- Wear a mask in public
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching your face
- Clean surfaces
- Practice social distancing

For complete information please check out the PA Department of Health website: www.health.pa.gov

Greetings!

Many churches continue with their building doors closed as we approach The Day of Pentecost due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. **As of Wednesday, May 13, 2020, the Centers for Diseases and Control Prevention (CDC) reported 82,246 deaths from COVID-19 in the United States.**

Amidst these deaths' churches prepare to celebrate yet another festival of the Church from the safety of their home. Plans to reopen church doors for worship continue to be pushed to the distant future, but were the doors of the Church ever really closed?

Certainly, church building doors were closed to minimize the spreading of the Coronavirus between parishioners. However, did we really stop worshipping because of closed doors? In the words of the Apostle Paul, "By no means!" Worship was not going to stop.

Have you noticed the social media venues local Lutheran churches have taken to provide an alternative worship service? The doors to worship God were never closed even when the doors of a church building appeared locked. What gave us the impression that worship was going to stop?

From Lent through Holy Week this pandemic caught pastors and church members off guard. Did we ever think that we were going to be celebrating Easter in our homes? Still, that didn't stop pastors and church members and congregations from worship. I never thought I would be leading a worship service via Facebook Live.

Overnight pastors, musicians, and lay leaders began to navigate the waves of social media—Facebook Live, ZOOM, Skype, YouTube. These social media platforms became the streams to open doors to worship services with the church community. In the process, another door was open to the virtual public where we found another community waiting for the church to open its doors wider.

I've heard pastors excited to see larger numbers of people visiting their virtual worship service. Some pastors confessed with a laugh that they had more people visiting their worship page than when the doors of the church building were open.

Ecumenical worship services streamed in collaboration by St. Luke's Lutheran, Cedar Lutheran, and Christ Church-Old Swedes Upper Merion; by St. Peter's Union and Zion's Evangelical at Old Zionville, and by the West end collaborative group of St. John's Allentown, Christ Lutheran, Redeemer, and St. Timothy Lutheran Churches.

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod created the page Church Resources for a Time of COVID-19 where I counted 29 congregation links that stream their worship service. There are many more with open doors proclaiming their worship to God in public to the virtual world.

The doors of the church were never closed to worship. Virtual worship came from inside of empty church pews, home offices, basements, and kitchen tables.

In the mist of the unknown and uncertainty of these times, let our worship be "*filled with the Holy Spirit.*" Acts 2:4

Thanks be to God,

The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, LMD Dean

OPERATION SUNSHINE

1933 Hanover Ave.

Allentown, PA 18109

Open: Mon 11-3 and Wed. 11-3

E-mail: LMDopsunshine@aol.com

Web site: www.LMDopsunshine.com

Paula & Dick Skelly Co-Trip Coordinators

Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers. Please join us and invite your friends as we enjoy a variety of venues together.

DUE TO COVID-19 OUR TRIPS TO DUTCH APPLE, BRISTOL AND THE REVERE TAVERN HAVE CHANGED AS FOLLOWS:

DUTCH APPLE – GRUMPY OLD MEN

RESCHEDULED TO JULY 8

****NEW – Fulton – Jersey Boys**

RESCHEDULED TO NOVEMBER 5

BRISTOL – CABARET

CANCELLED

REVERE TAVERN – LAST WRITES

RESCHEDULED TO SEPT. 3

11 SEATS REMAINING

July 8 (Wed.) – Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre – GRUMPY OLD MEN,

THE MUSICAL - Don't miss this laugh-out-loud story of family, friendship, love and romance in a fresh new musical that's guaranteed to delight! The story of two aging men, Max and John, neighbors, who have been feuding for most of their lives. They are re-united in friendship through the love and compassion of their new neighbor across the street, the beautiful, eccentric, and charming Ariel. Lunch is buffet style with loaded dessert tables!

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 10 AM

Cost \$92 Payment Deadline: July 1, 2020

July 23 (Thurs.) – SIGHT & SOUND THEATRE – QUEEN ESTHER –
Everyone has a story.

Set in the opulent yet perilous Persian Empire, **QUEEN ESTHER** is a captivating tale of beauty and bravery. Esther's ordinary life changed forever when she was taken through the palace doors, entering a new world of royalty and risk. With a crown on her head and a secret in her heart, can she find the courage to trust in God's plan and believe that she was made for such a time as this? Experience one of the most riveting Bible stories of the Old Testament as it comes to life with magnificent sets, special effects, and live animals in this brand-new, original stage production! Lunch at the Shady Maple Buffet.

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 10 AM

Cost \$110 Payment Deadline: Thurs., June 11

****NEW MULTI-DAY TRIP ANNOUNCEMENT****

MAINE – 4 DAY/3 NIGHT – SEPT. 22-25

Includes Kennebunkport and the Portland Lighthouse
Call the office for a complete itinerary and pricing.