

The Rev. Nelson Quinones, Dean 610-653-5858
The Rev. Kurt E. Garbe, Assoc. of the Bishop 610-266-5101

Elizabeth Leibenguth, Mission District Chair 484-550-0057
Mrs. Linda Smith, Newsletter Editor 610-437-9927

February 2021 LMD NL news will be due January 14, 2021. E-Mail any information to me at lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com.

St John's Lutheran Church in Emmaus has 32 gently used black and white choir gowns that are available free to a good home. If anyone is interested, please contact the church office at [610-965-9885](tel:610-965-9885) or email to officemanager@stjohnsemmaus.org.

Clothes Closet - In NEED of Volunteers – St. Luke's, 417 N 7th Street, Allentown, PA 18103. They have gradually lost all their volunteers since they have had to close for Covid. Volunteers needed to come in **1 or 2 mornings a week for two hours** to help sort and organize the backlog of clothing for its upcoming reopening this fall. And also, **volunteers to staff it on Thursday mornings** when they open to the public. There is a great need for at least one bi-lingual volunteer. For more information please contact Leslie Talago at [610-434-3943](tel:610-434-3943).

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.

*May our Precious Lord bring
peace, love, joy, happiness, and
good health to
His children in 2021*

OPERATION SUNSHINE

1933 Hanover Ave.

Allentown, PA 18109

Phone: 610-435-9155

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.

WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT DUE TO CANCELLATIONS OF PERFORMANCES BY OUR VENUES, AND FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR TRAVELERS, ALL OPERATION SUNSHINE DAY TRIPS FOR 2020 HAVE BEEN CANCELED.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO TRAVELING WITH YOU AGAIN IN 2021. LOOK FOR NEXT YEAR'S SCHEDULE EARLY 4TH QUARTER OF 2020.

SAVE THE DATES!

MAINE – JUNE 7-10, 2021

Includes Kennebunkport and the Portland Lighthouse 3 Nights lodging, 3 full course dinners including a "Downeast" Lobster Bake, Narrated Harbor Cruise of Casco Bay, Boothbay Harbor Tour, Eartha Revolving Globe, Maine Narrow Gauge Railway, LL Bean and Dexter Factory Outlets, Nubble Lighthouse, taxes, and gratuities included.

Call the Skelly's at [610-433-6878](tel:610-433-6878) for a complete itinerary and pricing.

WELCOME TO 2021 CREATIVE REFLECTIONS

These are indeed very difficult times in which we are living. Obviously, there are a number among us who can remember our parents and grandparents sharing their memories of the Influenza Epidemic of the early part of the last century but, contrary to initial expectations, concerns surrounding COVID-19 have superseded those experiences. Indeed, as we move into a new year, the number of people from all over the world who are involved with this pandemic is staggering. Hospitals are overwhelmed and the world's medical staff is exhausted. Hopefully, even as this piece is being released, the vaccines designed to offset this dilemma are being released. Unfortunately, however, it is known that it will be as late as mid-year before they will have had a significant impact. Furthermore, we are all well aware that there are significant financial issues associated with this concern. Obviously, our thoughts and prayers are concentrated on facilitating a positive response to this dilemma.

And, even as we have been dealing with this overwhelming concern, we have necessarily had to work our way through a change of leadership in our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Following two terms as our Bishop, The Rev. Dr. Samuel Zeiser has reached the point where he needs to respond positively to the retirement invitation. There is no question that we are very grateful for the genuine and dedicated service which he has provided, and we wish him release and satisfaction in the foreseeable future. Now, obviously, the process of selecting a new Bishop was much more complicated than had ever previously been experienced. It would normally have involved a series of elections in the context of a Synod Assembly, but obviously no such event could happen while the COVID issue is overwhelming us. So, our very skilled synod leadership took the

steps to develop a very appropriate Virtual Assembly which included, of course, a virtual election process. During the course of two weekends in mid-October a virtual assembly transacted the normal synod business. And through that process The Rev. Christopher deForest was elected our new Bishop. He will begin serving at the turn of the year but, due to the continuing issues with the virus, his official installation has been postponed to the future.

Obviously, we are all involved in bringing these two worlds together in our congregations. We give thanks for the leadership of our dedicated Dean, The Rev. Nelson Quinones, and for the pastoral and lay leadership which have partnered to maintain some semblance of life in our congregations since almost a year ago. At this point there are those congregations which are involved in some level of indoor worship which involves very restricted seating and the absence of such things as singing and responsive readings which, unfortunately, facilitate the spread of the virus. In other cases, at least up until now, there have been various forms of outdoor worship. This will certainly need to be re-evaluated as we move into the heart of winter. Please be reminded that there is material available on line at [Http://nepasynod.org/virus-resources/](http://nepasynod.org/virus-resources/) which serves as a resource to providing worship involvements under these restricted circumstances.

Welcome to 2021! Obviously, we are hoping, indeed expecting, that our worlds will improve dramatically as we move on into the new year. Meanwhile, we grateful to all those who have dedicated themselves to helping us get through this crisis. We thank God for all of your loving efforts.

God Bless!
Pastor Stough