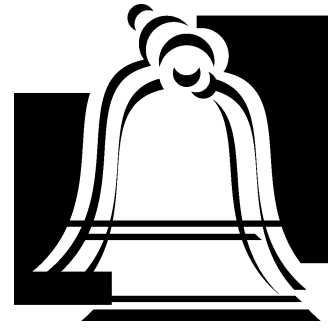
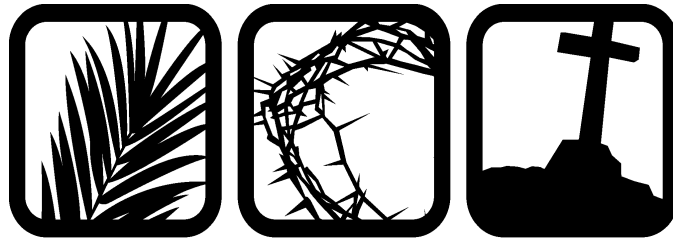


The Bell



Bergstrasse Evangelical Lutheran Church

April 2021



HOLY WEEK

Sunday March 28, Palm Sunday -

Live Stream/Call-in 9:00 am broadcast from Holy Trinity sanctuary.
Blessing of Palms - OUTDOOR at Holy Trinity along Main Street - 10:30 am

Wednesday March 31 - Holy Wednesday -

Holden Evening Prayer - 7:30 pm Live Stream/Call-in
North Lancaster Cluster service – In Community in the Face of Brokenness,
Ephrata Lutheran Ministry (Bergstrasse & Holy Trinity)

Thursday April 1 - Maundy Thursday - Service of Remembrance - 7:30 pm Live Stream/Call-in

Friday April 2 - Good Friday - Traditional Good Friday Liturgy of prayer - 7:30 pm
Live Stream/Call-in

Saturday April 3 - Easter Vigil - OUTDOOR, 7:30 pm at Bergstrasse Grove. Bring lawn chair, flashlight, wear a face mask, social distance.

Sunday April 4 - Easter Dawn - 6:15 am OUTDOOR at Bergstrasse, gather near Old Cemetery Gate. Bring a lawn chair, face mask, social distance. Communion will be celebrated.

Bergstrasse Sanctuary will be open for personal meditation time 6:00 am - 11:00 am.
9:00 am - Resurrection Worship - Live Stream/Call-in

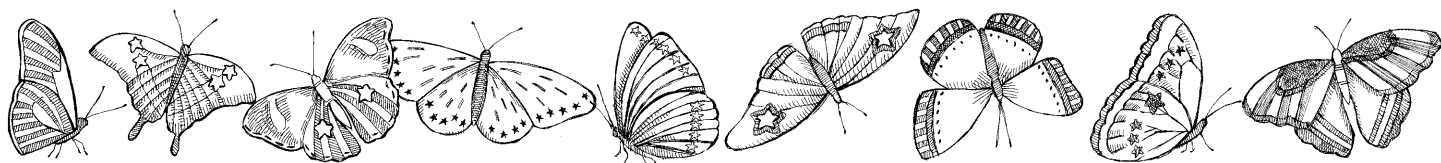
All Live Stream services will be available on the Bergstrasse Facebook page and Bergstrasse You Tube Channel approximately 2 hours after the recording.

GATHERING IN PERSON...IS COMING, BE PATIENT!

I appreciated your responses to the recent survey questions. I am working on a proposal to resume in person gatherings, including worship, to present to the Leadership Council for their consideration. I am well aware that some people will not be comfortable returning for in person gatherings – that is okay. It is important that you make decisions that are best for YOU. We will continue to practice many of the precautions currently in place, practicing social distancing and wearing a face mask indefinitely, or until health officials in conjunction with researchers advise to do differently.

I am glad to hear many of you have received at least a single dose of the Covid vaccine. By the time you read this, I will have had my first dose! Vaccinated against covid is a big step forward to reaching herd immunity or the point two-thirds of the population are vaccinated or have the antibodies to fight the virus. It does not mean we can resume to pre-pandemic time. We must remain vigilant in all efforts to lower the rate of spread of Covid.

My commitment to send \$5 for each completed and returned survey has been fulfilled with a \$50 contribution to Ephrata Area Social Services for their continued work in our community to support persons experiencing the effects of poverty.



S'MORES AND MORE!

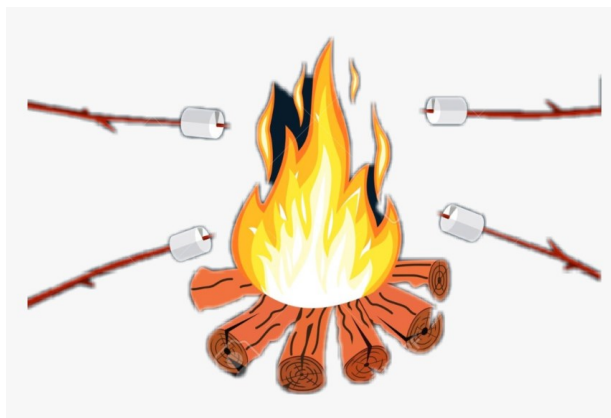
Looking for an opportunity to be outside with friends? Head on over to The Grove at Bergstrasse on the First Friday of each month after 7:00 pm beginning May 7. Bring a lawn chair, sit around the fire, bring a non-alcoholic beverage to share, share stories, and eat s'mores! S'mores fixins will be available! Bring a friend too!

The Bell is published monthly (except a combined July-August edition) by Bergstrasse Lutheran Church
9 Hahnstown Road
Ephrata, PA 17522
(717) 733-7808
www.bergstrasselutheran.com
bergluth@dejazzd.com

Worship - 10:00 AM

The Rev. James Goodyear, Pastor
717-676-3954 (cell)

Due date for the **May** newsletter is
April 18.





FROM THE PASTOR

He is Risen! He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia! Followers of Jesus were astounded to hear of Jesus' resurrection. It was unexpected, even though Jesus said this would happen, and the people were afraid. The first persons to visit the tomb, some of Jesus' closest followers, were uncertain of the events they just witnessed. I wonder if now, nearly two thousand years

later, what would be our response to learning of Jesus' resurrection – doubt, astonished, fear, uncertainty, joy. Would you run to tell others? Or let the local news media, who might have been following the week's events, be the teller of the Good News? Or maybe no response at all and continue as nothing happened? I image the people in Jesus' time had similar responses. Remember, in scripture we only hear of a small segment of the total population who experienced Jesus' life and teachings. Certainly, there were people who knew nothing of Jesus!

Sounds like today! I've met people who speak openly of their relationship with Jesus, while others will say 'I'm not religious' and turn away, and still others quickly say I'm Jewish, Muslim, Agnostic, etc. Like in ancient times, there will be some who want to make sure I know the REAL Jesus according to their beliefs. Is it any wonder the Church, a community of people who follow the life and teachings of Jesus, is struggling to make an impact in the world when there are so many images of Jesus? Can you imagine, a congregation, a smaller portion of the Church, being brave to learn more deeply of God's Word (scripture), engage in fellowship and learning together, to gather for worship offering praise and thanksgiving for God among us, and allowing themselves to be transformed and equipped to go into the local community to serve others a healthy dose of love?

Dear friends, that IS my hope for Bergstrasse Church! YES, you have already begun this work of discipleship, for that I give thanks! In today's world, I believe it is imperative to continually be challenged by God's grace through engaging with Jesus in our world. I get that some who read this might think, "I'm too tired, too old, too busy, already do all I can, feel inadequate, or (*fill in the blank*). I continue to learn that ministry is first about being, then about doing. In my experience, too many people consider first the doing so that you can be. That was how I operated for most of my life! Discovering what you want to 'be', your core beliefs, so that your doing becomes easier and more joy-filled. I believe it is a good time for us to evaluate our 'being' as a community of faith, especially as we discern our future post-pandemic.

My thoughts are when we resume in person worship to engage in dialogue around our being. Who do we want to be as a congregation? What are our key understandings that drive our actions beyond our walls? Before we dive deep into our being, we will take time to lament what we've lost this past year. Each of us have experienced loss in some way, our community experienced loss, how we work through these losses will help us to move forward. I will dedicate at least the first four weeks of returning to engage this process during worship. I will give you a heads up, the opening question will be, "Where did you experience the presence of God in the ordinariness of life?" Sound familiar?

In this upcoming Holy Week, I encourage you to dwell with God's Word, open to the depth of God's love for you and for all people. There are Live Streamed & Call-in worship opportunities throughout the week. You might also consider coming to the Bergstrasse Campus on Saturday April 3 at 7:30 pm and Sunday April 4 at 6:15 am to experience an Easter Vigil. Saturday evening's worship will set the stage for the resurrection celebration, while Sunday's worship welcomes the risen Christ into the world. I do hope you will be able to join as you are able.

He is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor Jim



Easter Vigil – At Bergstrasse Campus

Saturday April 3, 7:30 pm - outdoors in The Grove

Sunday April 4, 6:15 am – outdoors at the Old Bergstrasse Cemetery Gate

In Christianity, especially the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions, a vigil is often held when someone is gravely ill or mourning. Prayers are said and votives are lit. Vigils extend from eventual death to burial, ritualistically to pray for a loved one, but more so their body is never left alone. For many Protestant traditions formed during the Reformation, they too adopted the practice of a vigil. The Easter Vigil as we know it today began in the 7th Century. During Lent, the early Christian Church prepared new catechumenates (confirmands) to be welcomed in the faith at the Easter Vigil. It is a celebration of 'new life' raised up at the community resurrection service.

The first Easter Vigils began at sunset Holy Saturday using the first known elements of life – fire, wind, water, earth. A new fire was set ablaze as teachers of the faith and new catechumenates gathered. The beginning liturgy is a prayer service inviting participants to welcome the Holy Spirit (wind) into the setting. Next, the gathered people sit around the fire, with individually lit candles of their own, and listen to the stories of their faith.

After the story telling, we move to the Rite of Baptism. Here new believers experience the refreshing waters of baptism. Today, the Easter Vigil includes the Affirmation of Baptism rite for all persons. You can expect to get wet, or at least feel a few sprinkles.

This year, Ephrata Lutheran Ministry is offering an Easter Vigil Liturgy. It will include the elements of the ancient liturgy, held over two days. Both services will be held **OUTDOORS** on the Bergstrasse Campus. Saturday April 3, 7:30 PM as the sun is setting, we will gather around a bonfire in prayer, and hear the stories that shape faith in the Grove. A lighted pathway will guide you into the worship space.

We again gather Sunday April 4 at 6:15 AM, by the Old Gate on top of the hill of Bergstrasse Cemetery as dawn begins to break in the Eastern sky. Here we will affirm our baptism, announce the Easter proclamation, celebrate the Resurrection and share in communion. In my experience, the Easter Vigil is one of the most moving liturgies I've ever experienced. It is the backbone of our Christian identity – Gathering, Word, Baptism, Meal, Sending.

What you need to know as you participate in the Easter Vigil:

1. Both services are outdoors. Dress accordingly. Bring a lawn chair and a flashlight.
2. Social distancing will be practiced, and face masks are expected.
3. Communion will be with wafer only, again social distancing.



God on Tap – Tuesday April 27 on ZOOM!

Don't forget your favorite beverage. ZOOM Room opens at 6:30 for check-in, conversation topic begins at 7:00 PM.

*Conversation topic and zoom link will be available two weeks in advance.

Thanks from:

Thank you for the prayers, cards, concerns while I was away.

Carolyn Hibshman

Thank you for the beautiful bouquet of flowers and for all the help and support you have given us these past few weeks. Neil and I are grateful for all the caring shown by so many.

Thank you.

Inez Hare

Thank you so much for your generous donation of \$450 to Luthercare! Because of you, we're able to come together in community to help families throughout Lancaster and Lebanon Counties.

Ryan Fisher, Director of Philanthropy

Thank you for choosing to support us in 2021 with your \$500 donation to Ephrata Area Social Services.

Joy N. Ashley, Executive Director

Financial Update:

Ending February 28, 2021

	MONTH	2021 YTD	2020 YTD
Net Operating Income	(\$44.03)	\$737.00	\$1,255.01
Operating Income	\$13,550.66	\$24,985.82	\$24,780.94
Operating Expense	\$13,594.69	\$24,248.82	\$23,525.93
Net Other Income	\$2232.20	\$512.20	(\$7,808.24)
Net Income from all sources	\$188.17	\$1,249.20	(\$6,553.23)



Bergstrasse Lutheran Church Council Meeting – March 8, 2021

Present were Nevin Rutt, Almanara Buffenmyer, Peggy Rushton-Witmyer, Ben Gunzenhauser, Cathy Feather, Dave Wilhelm, Lisa Conway and Pastor Jim.

Lynn Hibshman reported that monetary donations were slightly less than usual, but a stock donation compensated for the difference. We have a new representative at Edward Jones Investment Company. A financial audit was discussed because grant proposals often require one. Nevin, Dave and Lynn will set a time to meet in June.

Pastor Jim feels that a financial report should be presented to the congregation in keeping with our goal of transparency in our circumstances. Information about our cemetery, unexpected expenses such as snow removal costs, and the upcoming loss of rental income will be shared. A question and answer time during the worship service is being considered.

Nevin made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and Ben seconded it.

February's secretary's report had a misspelling of attorney Stewart's last name. Nevin made a motion to accept the revised report and Peggy seconded it.

Ben made a motion to accept Cleone's request to use the fellowship hall on April 3rd. She and her guests will clean up afterwards without Wanda's help. Nevin seconded the motion.

Coordination of musical talents with Holy Trinity Church will be under consideration when we return to in-person worship services. Pastor Jim can broadcast from Bergstrasse via Facebook Live with his computer. We reviewed the safe protocols for meeting in person but wondered if there will be volunteers to perform the roles of ushers, greeters and counters.

Gladys Horvath is to be commended for her 20 hours of volunteer service in updating cemetery information and providing photographs.

Our vision for the future of Bergstrasse does not include a homeless center but we'll consider other uses for our building and consider starting the process to become a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation. The first RIC Lutheran congregation in Lancaster County was Saint Paul's in Penryn. They may offer their insights to us.

We will continue to support the Ephrata Area Social Services organization as they celebrate their fiftieth- year anniversary.

No one volunteered to be a delegate for the synod assembly, but Pastor Jim will attend virtually.

The music and worship committee will be given our recommendation to consider Grady Daub as a summer organist, since he attends Susquehanna University.

The American flags on veterans' gravesites in our cemetery will be stored during the winter months next year. Worn ones will be replaced and they will all be put on display before Memorial Day each year.

Ben made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Peggy seconded it.



About Home Communion

Know this, your relationship with Jesus is NOT determined by the number of times you receive communion. Rather, it is about how you nurture your relationship by engaging in worship (individual or communal), an active prayer life, continued learning of God's presence in your life, building life-giving relationships with others, living generously by sharing your time in serving others and/or giving financially. In these times of wanting to be safe in the presence of each other, God is at work within your soul. For some, the practice of receiving Holy Communion is important. In those cases, please contact Pastor Jim directly so that we can arrange a time for that to happen safely (Wearing face masks, being socially distanced, limiting our time together).

Shepherds will gather Sunday April 18 10:30 am at Bergstrasse for a time of checking in and to update any contact information.

Memorial Day Service - being planned for Sunday May 30 1:00 pm at Bergstrasse Church.

If you would like to help plan this service, see Pastor Jim.

For Healing: Deb Burkholder, Inez Hare, Samuel Birnie, Joe Conway, Shirley Slauch, Donna Willingham (Debbie Stone's sister), health care workers, our homebound members.

For Grieving: family of Marian Burkhardt, Tim Leonard (friend of Alice Krahl), Patricia Houch (Deb Burkholder's sister)



Congratulations to those with April birthdays:

- 12 Cathy Feather
- 16 Carolyn Hibshman
- 18 Pastor Jim Goodyear

Anniversaries

- 2 Nevin Rutt and Gladys Horvath
- 15 Glenn and Almanara Buffenmyer



The following items are needed by the food bank:

- Jelly
- Syrup
- Cereal
- Tissues
- Canned pasta

The Bell

Bergstrasse Evangelical
Lutheran Church
9 Hahnstown Road
Ephrata, PA 17522

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

**Our mission at Bergstrasse is to widen the
community of people who know, love, and follow God.**

