

The Spirit

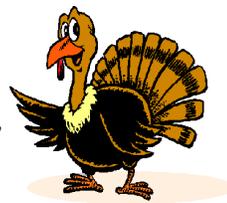
Holy Spirit
Lutheran Church

Volume 8
November 2012

A Note from Pastor Robin



"God is good all the time—All the time, God is good!"



I started out wanting this newsletter article to be different. There might be one or two, but I firmly believe that nearly every pastor will write a newsletter article on "thanks" for the month of November. I don't think it makes a difference what denomination, what size congregation, what location of the congregation. The fact is, this is the month that we focus our attention on giving thanks.

It makes sense! As a nation we do celebrate Thanksgiving Day. We gather with our family and friends around a bountiful table filled with wonderful foods. We share stories and memories of years past, and we thank God for all the blessings God so abundantly gives to us. Yes, it does make sense.

So maybe instead of searching for something different, we need to use this opportunity as a springboard for the rest of the year. Maybe we need to hold onto this "time of thanks" and spread it out month-by-month, week-by-week, and day-by-day until giving thanks feels like something that we automatically do all the time. Maybe if we stayed in this "mode of thankfulness," we would see in both the good times and in the times of struggle, just how gracious, giving, and kind is our Lord and Savior.

With "thankfulness" in our mind and in our heart, maybe every newsletter article should focus on God's graciousness. It is so easy to forget or dismiss all that God does for us each and every day. Some of those things we see and some of those things we don't even recognize.

My prayer for our congregation is that we always live in a state of thankfulness. May you experience all of God's richest bounty this month... and the next...and the next! Because, God is good all the time - All the time, God is good!



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Inside this edition, you will find words from your Pastor, committee reports, ongoing events, upcoming events, and other exciting news. We encourage you to take part and get involved at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church.



Dear Family and Friends of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church,

As we enter the month of November and the final days of this council year, I find I am looking in two directions. I look forward and back. In the backwards glance, I can see the places we've been. Your council has worked hard this year to grow with the needs of our most dynamic ministries and grow them with our time and resources. We tried to understand resources as much more than the wallet, but also the people, the staff, and lay leaders. We called AIM Linda and she has greatly enhanced our education opportunities, and worked continuously to reinvigorate our communications. She and Pastor Robin are leading us into Stephen Ministry, which builds on our traditions of love and care for one another, especially in times of need. We have expanded our education facilities, which not only help our own Sunday School, but increase our opportunity to be present in the community with an expanded and welcoming preschool. We have increased our office spaces and secured our records and archives as well.

Looking forward, we still see Thanksgiving, Advent and of course Christmas to follow. *The Apple Festival is around the corner November 3rd.* With the *Annual Congregational Meeting scheduled for November 18th,* we recognize we still have work to do.

The congregational meeting is the business of the church. We see even more clearly where we have been. It gives us indicators as to our health and general well being in mission. We gather to make very important decisions as to the courses we are journeying for the coming year and it becomes the road map of how we will get there. We select leadership to help guide and shape that course. And perhaps most importantly, it is a time to remember that we must rely on the Spirit to direct each of us.

Please consider your part in mission, and what roles you are inspired to take on in the next bit of church history. Attend the Apple Festival and support ministry at Holy Spirit. Come and vote at the congregation meeting and pray with us as we move ever forward with Christ. Spread the good news of Jesus.

We are saved by Grace through faith! Amen.

Yours in the Spirit,
Beth Gray
HSLC president

School in Need of Coats for Children

College Mentor Program & Cookie Campaign

Thanks to all who have volunteered to mentor our college students through letter writing and to those who have come together to send a box of delicious cookies! It's great for them to know how much we think of them and are keeping them in our prayers!

Winter Coat Drive

As you clean out your closets this season please consider donating gently used, clean jackets and coats. All sizes are needed and will be used for children who are in need of them. Member Sharon Hindman, an elementary school teacher in the Prince George's County School System, will distribute them at her school.



Bag Meal Program

On November 14th bag meals will be assembled in support of Escape Ministries. These meals are provided to the homeless and residents in need of the service in and around Carroll County.

Preschool Gives Thanks

The Preschool children will be talking about the first Thanksgiving, families, and what they are thankful for. Each child will decorate a T-shirt to wear to his/her Thanksgiving celebrations. Stories about Pilgrims and Native Americans will be read every day. All of the classes will make T-shirts that will be filled with Native American symbols.

We are working on evaluations to prepare us for the end of the month conferences. We continue to study our colors, shapes, letters, numbers, and handwriting skills.

The preschool families have been working hard to get Silent Auction items for our annual Apple Festival on November 3rd. We will be hosting this event with the Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. Please come out to support us and the church in this event.

The Preschool is sponsoring our annual Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 1st. This year we will be having our annual Breakfast with Santa at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. Please watch for more information to follow soon. We will invite the whole church family to participate.



Y A Q M

Matt in Szarvas

October 2012

Szia! Szervus! Jo Nappot Kivanok! Csokolom! Hello! Greetings!

A lesson in Hungarian

Szia

Pronounced like "See ya," it means Hi or Hey. It's used amongst the under 40 crowd as the standard greeting.

Szervus

Pronounced like "Sehrvus." It literally means "slave." It is a more old fashioned informal hello. It is popular amongst the over 40 crowd, and is slightly more formal than Szia.

Jo Nappot!

Pronounced like, "Yo Nappot." It means good day, and is slightly more formal than Szia / Szervus.

Csokolom

Pronounced like "chok-koh-loam," lit: I kiss you. It is an old and formal greeting - rooted in the Habsburg Monarchy. It is the most formal greeting. With it, young men address elderly women, older men address younger women, students address teachers, and employees address bosses (sometimes).

Hello!

Pronounced more like Hallo! It means hello and good-bye (like Szia and Szervus), especially amongst the 30 and under crowd. It's really weird for me when someone says hello as they're leaving.

What exactly do I do?

Good question, I'm still figuring that out myself. The short answer is that I teach English at the Lutheran Upper-Primary School (like middle school) and Lutheran Religion in English at the Lutheran High School (Gymnasium). And yes, teaching Lutheran Religion in English to Hungarian High Schoolers is indeed as easy as it sounds! In addition to teaching I am figuring out ways to be a part of the ELCA's and



Hungarian Lutheran Church's mission to address anti-gypsism in Hungary. Right now that means improving my Hungarian skills in order to build meaningful relationships with the non-english speakers of Szarvas.

Speaking of learning Hungarian, it's coming along slowly but surely. One of the English teachers at the primary school also teaches Hungarian grammar and speaks Russian. That means she knows how to teach Hungarian, and we share two common languages (English and Russian) which has been really helpful in language acquisition. In addition to Hungarian lessons, I go and volunteer at the senior center, spending time and speaking with the clients in Hungarian, since they don't speak english.

In the past two months I have also attended a conference on anti-gypsism put on by an organization called Phiren Amencia and the Council of Europe. Needless to say, I've been trying to keep myself busy.



Fall in Szarvas

This fall I've been wondering a lot about how Institutionalized Racism manifests itself in Hungary.

What is Institutionalized Racism?

Solid Ground, a grass roots community based development non-profit in Seattle provides a good working definition: "the systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in society to the benefit of people who are white and the exclusion of people of color."

In the case of Hungary one could substitute white with non Roma and Black with Roma.

Why is it important?

It helps explain why minorities and people who have historical been oppressed are disproportionately impoverished and in positions of disprivilege, and how people who have

historically been in power and positions of power are disproportionately wealthy and powerful. For example, in the context of the US, ask yourself, "does congress represent the demographic diversity of the US?"

In Hungary, it is a good umbrella term to explain the complex reasons Romani populations experience discrimination, disproportional poverty, and outright discrimination (e.g. harassment from far-right nationalist movements).

Some Reflections:

I don't think that people in power, and people in privileged positions necessarily actively will or want Institutionalized Racism.

Rather, it has become society's default setting (as David Foster Wallace might say). It is dangerous because the people in power fail to acknowledge the complicated reasons the institution favors them over other people, yet every day people suffer because of it.

Too often discussions around institutionalized racism some how become about avoiding blame. But it's important to remember it is not one person's fault. As one of my favorite literary characters, Charlie, from *Perks of Being A Wallflower* says, "So, I guess we are who we are for a lot of reasons. And maybe we'll never know most of them. But even if we don't have the power to choose where we come from, we can still choose where we go

from there." That is to say, not one person put into place this oppressive system, but now that we know about it, we can choose to dismantle it. Yes, a lot of progress has been made with regard to racism, but as Dr. King said, "we must always make the pledge to march ahead."

In Hungary, I have had the privilege of discussing ways to break down institutions of racism with Phiren Amencia, an organization committed to bringing together Roma and Non-Roma. There Roma and Non-Roma pledged to be a part of liberating all of us from institutionalized racism. That is, creating a society where the diverse image of God is respected and exalted.

Thy Kingdom Come.



VOTE Today!

Nominations Being Accepted for 2013 Elected Positions

Nominations are being accepted NOW for several positions, which are elected by ballot during the **2012 Annual Congregational meeting to be held November 18th**. Positions with openings include:

- ◆ Two Congregational Council seats for two-year terms
- ◆ Two Synod Assembly Representatives and an alternate, to the Synod Assembly, to be held May 30th through June 1st, 2013 in Ocean City, MD
- ◆ Three nominating committee seats for one-year terms

If you are interested in serving in any of these positions, or would like to get more information about these positions, please call the church office, or contact any council member. Also, you can email or call Will Stecher at (443) 791-1741 or williamstecher@comcast.net

To everyone who put
together the lunch after
Linda Dudley's service,
thank you so much for taking
such good care of us
after the service. It was so
nice to come to a familiar,
lovely place and be given
ourishment, both for our
stomachs and our hearts!
You really are a special
group of people. Thank you
again. The Passa Family
The DeBardi Family



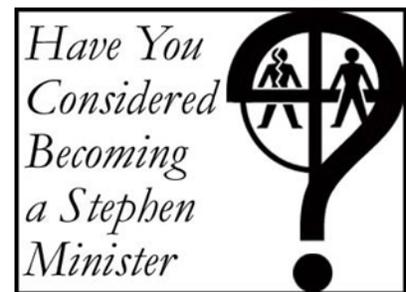


Who Wants to be a Stephen Minister?

Caring ministry at Holy Spirit will be expanding soon as we will be choosing our first group of Stephen Ministers. Their training, which will begin in January, combines sound theological principles with contemporary psychology. The skills that the participants will learn and practice prepare them to provide a very high level of Christian caregiving. The training is intense because it explores some serious life issues, but it is also a growth-producing and enjoyable experience. Since 1975, more than half a million people in over 11,000 churches worldwide have completed Stephen Ministry training.

The 50 hours of Stephen Ministry training is broken down into 20 2½-hour sessions. Among the training topics are:

- * Feelings: Yours, Mine, and Ours
- * The Art of Listening
- * Distinctively Christian Caring
- * Assertiveness: Relating Gently and Firmly
- * Maintaining Boundaries in Caregiving
- * Confidentiality
- * Ministering to Those Experiencing Grief
- * Caring for People before, during, and after Hospitalization



As we prepare for this step forward, please pray for our efforts to find people who are willing to become Stephen Ministers. If you feel that God is calling you to this ministry, please see Pastor Robin or me as soon as possible and we can talk about how you can get started.

- AiM Linda

**Holy Spirit
Lutheran Church**

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Sunday Worship Service: 8:30, 10:45 am
Sunday School: 9:30 am

Visit us online at
www.hslceldersburgmd.org

**“Our purpose is to love God
and to bring people into a
growing relationship with
Jesus and His church.”**



For newsletter updates, please send your electronic version to Lindsay Holbig at Lpodobnik@yahoo.com, or contact the church office at (410) 795-6333, or leave your printed copy in Ami O'Hara's church office mailbox.

Updates are due the 15th of each month.



*** November 8 - Bea Grant**

To be added to the monthly Birthday and Anniversary List, please contact the office at (410) 795-6333 or Hslc.eldersburg@comcast.net.