

The Epistle

THE NEWSLETTER OF APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gloucester www.apostles-elca.org | www.facebook.com/ApostlesELCA | September 2025

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel



A Word from Pastor Jay

"By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

There is no law against such things."

(Galatians 5: 22-23)

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul includes in his message to that church something which is typically found in Paul's letters. As part of his exhortation and teaching, Paul shares what may be called a "virtue list" with the Christians living in the province of Galatia. This virtue list follows a "vice list," or a list of attributes and actions a believer in Christ should avoid. Paul encourages the faithful in Galatia to live according to the "fruit of the Spirit," or those qualities which the Holy Spirit works to build in each of us. An example of these virtues is listed in the Scripture verses quoted above, and while this list is not exhaustive, it stands for Paul as an instructive example of what virtues a Christian should possess. While we prepare to greet the coming fall, I thought it might be good for us to recall the words of Paul to those early Christians and realize what importance we may find in Paul's admonitions.

Love. A more complete examination of Paul's ideas on love can be found in the famous "Love

Chapter" in 1 Corinthians 13. This chapter details the traits of someone who follows our Lord's teachings on love, and was not meant for weddings or romantic love, but for the daily love a Christian should embody (although it does work for weddings as well).

Joy. Joy is as much of a decision or style of life as it is an emotion. Paul's understanding is that the life of a Christian, whose faith in God's promises is foundational, is uplifted constantly by these promises and in the many ways God's love flows into the Christian's life. Even in moments when things seem darker, God's promises speak the ultimate reality in which the Christian lives each day and, as Paul writes, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

Peace. Paul was well acquainted with the Jewish concept of "shalom." Shalom is more than what we typically think of as peace. It is the countenance, the reassurance, in which the believer lives his/her life. Nothing can shake the believer's faith that God's care will overcome all obstacles a believer might face. Shalom is the peace that Jesus speaks, "My peace I give to you... not as the world gives." This is the peace which passes all understanding.

Patience. Patience is difficult in today's world. We are accustomed to having what we want when we want it, and patience often seems in short supply, especially when things don't go our way. The old adage, "Good things come to

those who wait," is difficult to live, but the verse "The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him," from Lamentations, helps us to see what Paul means.

Kindness. How much different would the world be if we began every interaction with intentional kindness? Living kindly is a way of giving the other the benefit of the doubt. It is a presumptive way of living that considers the value of each person encountered.

Generosity. Jesus is quoted in the book of Acts as saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It was a crucial marker of the early church, which was made up of many people who struggled to put bread on the table. In a world in which so many people are struggling today generosity becomes a key trait for the building up of the body of Christ.

Faithfulness. There is no community or relationship without some sense of faithfulness. We only can maintain relationship with each other and with God if there is some expectation that this relationship will be honored with a commitment that works for the good of all. We cannot build relationship with God if faithfulness is absent. Neither can we build community with each other in the absence of faithfulness.

Gentleness. Gentleness soothes harried hearts, fevered minds and weary souls. Paul knew that, without gentleness, life as an individual and as a community becomes overwhelming. In our moments of emotional distress, a gentle presence can bring us back to the love and joy we receive from God and each other.

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New Members

We will be taking in new members in the near future – if you are interested in becoming a member of Apostles Lutheran Church, please talk to Pastor Jay.

Happy Birthday to . .

Lorna Hanson	September 3
Nancy Wagner	September 7
Jason Lowe	September 7
Ben Grimes	September 12
Linda Hodges	September 30

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Happy Anniversary To . .

Heinz and Irene Albert	September 14
Donald and Lynn Jaeger	September 16
Steve and Lorna Hanson	September 21
Keith and Juanita Sturdy	September 26
Jim and Judy Wright	September 28

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Happy Baptismal Anniversary To..

Doug Dalager	September 3
Jewel Thomas	September 28

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Please Keep In Your Prayers

Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Kendzierski, Ellen Quirk, Doug Leip, Michael Schlemmer, Keith and Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Lena Woodlief, and Nancy Wagner

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Summer Fun Picnic!!



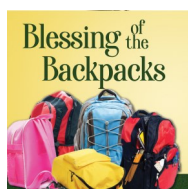
Thanks to everyone who helped with the "summer fun" picnic on August 17th!!

Worship In The Park—2025



Please make plans to join us for our annual “Worship in the Park” at the beautiful Beaverdam Park (Whitcomb Lodge) on **Sunday, September 7th at 10:00 AM**. We are changing things up a bit this year – we will worship outside (weather permitting) so please bring a lawn chair. After worship, we will enjoy a meal together – **please bring a dish to share**. We hope you can join us as we worship in God’s beautiful creation!!

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Blessing of the Backpacks

Blessing of the Backpacks

Students of every age are asked to bring their backpacks to worship on **Sunday, September 14th** for a special blessing—we will also have a special gift for all students. “God, bless this bag and the one who will use it. Let them not be scared, be with them as they learn and grow this year. In Jesus name. Amen.”

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A Prayer for Back To School

“O God, source of all goodness, we give you thanks for the gift of reason and the opportunity for education. Bless our schools, that they may be places of learning and safety where teachers challenge the minds and nurture the hearts of students. Grant that those who teach and those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth and that together we may know and follow your ways; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.”

Sunday School Resumes



Sunday School will resume on **Sunday, September 14th** after the worship service. We will continue to use a dynamic curriculum, **Bible Song - Faith 5**. This curriculum is an engaging program that incorporates song, humorous skits, and signing as we learn about the Bible Narrative. Most importantly this curriculum relates these stories of old to today’s world. The Faith 5 part is where the role of parents/family is incorporated. To assist in building “reflective, resilient children and solid family relationships” we will incorporate 5 easy steps for families. This includes families sharing their highs and lows each day. This is a curriculum for all ages; it does include some reading of prayers and skits, however if your child cannot yet read, they are still welcome as there is much learning occurring from the songs and signing and parts of the skits that everyone can participate. For more information, please contact Linda Hodges at 804-694-9111. Linda is **looking for people to help—if you would be interested in doing this, please contact Linda.**

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Choir Resumes in September!!

Choir will resume in September—they will be singing during worship on **Sunday, September 21st**—practice is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 10th at 7:00 PM**—we would LOVE to have you join us!!



Jubilee Churches News

The Jubilee Churches of Gloucester, a coalition of several congregations in Gloucester (including Apostles), will be meeting

again in October on October 8th at 9:30 AM at Newington Baptist Church. The Rev. Dr. Ed Walker, pastor of Bellamy United Methodist Church, is the covener of the Jubilee Churches of Gloucester. If you would like to learn more about Jubilee Churches, please contact Pete Liljeberg or Janet Gomez.

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GUEST News



+ Needed supplies at the GUEST day shelter include a grab bar for the shower, creamer for coffee, a small vacuum and a broom and dust pan. There is a bin in the fellowship hall to place your donations—thanks!

+ Apostles will be hosting the GUEST winter shelter the week of February 23rd—stay tuned for ways to help!

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World Hunger Sunday

Don't forget your offering for World Hunger Sunday—we collect a special offering for world hunger on the 3rd Sunday of the month—**Sunday, September 21st. UNTIL ALL ARE FED!!**



ELCA World Hunger

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Mathew's Lions Club Fundraiser



The Mathew's Lions Club is having a fundraiser—they are selling pork butts and coleslaw on **Saturday, October 11th—the cost of tickets are \$45.** If you are interested in getting tickets, please see Linda Hodges. For several years, the Mathew's Lions Club has supplied eyeglasses for the Guatemala Medical Mission trip.

A New Way of Look at "Teaching a Man to Fish"

(From "Decolonizing Volunteers" - a seminar hosted by Lutheran Disaster Response)

You know there's a maxim that says give a man a fish and you've given him a meal. Teach him how to fish and you give him many meals. What we need to say instead is that you need to come and fish with us. So that's not a matter of you teaching us how to fish. Come and fish with me in the river. As we are fishing, you understand why I don't catch as many fish as you think I should because I have to watch out, one eye is in the water looking for the fish, the other eye is looking for crocodiles – there are some seasons when I cannot fish at all, because it's too risky. Don't go out as volunteers and teach the people in the margins how to fish. Go and fish with them and you will become aware of their difficulties. And then of course, it will make us less judgmental of other people who are at the margins and it will make us view them less as separate to us.

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Caring Community Ministry Team

Your Caring Community Ministry Team has been busy planning for the summer and fall—here is what they have been working on. . .

- + **Worship In The Park** will be held at Beaverdam Park on **Sunday, September 7th**—please make plans now to attend this wonderful worship service and fellowship in the beautiful Beaverdam Park!!
- + **Quarterly Theme Event** will kick off in October with a viewing of the movie "Luther" and a mini-Octoberfest—tentatively scheduled for **Friday, October 24th.**
- + **Adult Theological Discussions** will be held on the **second and fourth Wednesdays of the month starting on Wednesday, October 8th**—we will have a sandwich and fellowship at **6:00 PM** and the study will start at **6:30 PM.** The study will focus on how Lutherans interpret scripture. The sessions will be led by Pete Liljeberg and Pastor Jay.

*From Your Treasurer,
Doug Dalager*

*God's Work,
Our Hands*



Saturday, October 25th

Get ready! Apostles Lutheran will once again be helping our friends and neighbors in and around Gloucester. As in years past we will be doing yard work and

power washing for folks in our community in need. We will meet in the parking lot at 9:00 AM on October 25 and head out to do the work. We plan on finishing by 1:00 PM and return to church for lunch. We need volunteers for the outdoor work team as well as some folks to make lunch for all the workers. Keep your eyes open for the sign up sheet in the narthex! Jesus commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves. This is your opportunity to answer God's call!

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Church Mortgage Payoff

If you would like to contribute to our mortgage payoff plan, you can (1) place your contribution in an envelope and mark the envelope with the words "mortgage payoff", (2) use one of the envelopes found in our narthex entrance already noted as "mortgage payoff campaign", or (3) if you contribute electronically, make a note on the annotation line directing the contribution to the "mortgage payoff fund." A special thank you to Doug Dalager for making the ship visual that will document our progress in paying off the mortgage!

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What Does My Offering Do?

The ELCA recently released a new video sharing how your generous offerings make a difference in your community, around the Synod, and across the world. The Virginia Synod gives thanks for all the ways that God's people support our shared ministry! You can view the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hb3uDWP-qoQ>.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

July 2025

<i>Planned Income</i>	<i>\$ 9,610.24</i>
<i>Actual Income</i>	<i>\$13,457.97</i>
<i>Delta</i>	<i>\$ 3,847.55</i>

Year to Date

<i>Planned Income</i>	<i>\$67,273</i>
<i>Actual Income</i>	<i>\$63,793</i>
<i>Delta</i>	<i>\$(3,479)</i>

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Congregation Council Update

Congregation Council will be meeting on **Monday, September 8th at 7:00 PM**. Anyone is welcome to attend.

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An Update on Kiva!!



Kiva is an organization whose mission is to expand financial access to help underserved communities thrive. This is accomplished through Microloans which are repaid. This then allows the funds to be reinvested. Apostles has a KIVA account. Since January, Apostles has helped 21 people in 6 countries through life-changing loans. If you would like more information about this, please contact Linda Hodges.

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Theologian in Residence



Please join us for a Theologian In Residence program at St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Williamsburg on **Saturday, September 20, 2025 at 9:00 AM**. The theologian is The Rev. Dr. Leah Schade and she will be speaking on "The Church and The Public Square: Pathways for Putting Faith Into Action." Dr. Leah Schade is the author of "Preaching in the Purple Zone." If you would like additional information, please contact Janet Gomez.

Prayers for All Who Serve Our Community of Faith at Apostles

During the prayers of intercession on Sunday, August 31st, prayers were offered for all who serve our community of faith at Apostles—in case you missed them, we thought we would repeat them here. A special thanks to Pete Liljeberg for putting them together!!
“Loving God We give you thanks today for all our members whose dedication and work make our worship here possible. We lift up Pastor Jay, members of the worship committee, choir members, musicians, acolytes, assistant ministers, readers, ushers, altar guild members, bread makers, the technology team and most especially all who come and worship you in this space. We give you thanks for all who serve our church members making this place truly a community of believers. We lift up this who serve on our caring community team, those who setup, prepare food, and clean after fellowship, Sunday school teachers, bible study leaders, those who visit and prepare meals for our sick or shut in members, those who create prayer shawls, and all who pray for our members in need. We give you thanks for all who help support our building, that we might have a place to gather and to worship you. We lift up members of the administration team, our tellers, cleaners, gardeners, mowers, office workers, and all who help support our ministry through their gifts of time or money. We give you thanks for all who serve your children outside the walls of this church. We lift up all who work at the food pantry, GUEST shelter, Rural Housing Partnership, the Gloucester Mathews Care Clinic, the Guatemala mission team, world hunger, and all who have volunteered for God’s work our hands projects. May we continue to serve and to love your neighbors as ourselves. Amen.”

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Apostles Women’s Group to Meet

Apostles Women’s Group will meet on
Saturday, September 13th at 9:30 AM—
ALL women of Apostles are invited!

Ministry Team Meetings

The following Ministry Team will meet in September:

+ **Worship**—Monday, September 8th at 6:00 PM

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Lay Ministry Academy Applications Now Open

Applications for the 2026 Lay Ministry Academy cohort are open now through **September 15**. This is the formation process for Commissioned Lay Ministers, including lay preachers and Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs), for the Virginia Synod. The Lay Ministry Academy offers to those discerning a call to serve in worship and ministry leadership a community, and the education, training, support, supervision, authorization, and continuing education to enable them to serve. Applicants can indicate whether you feel called to serve as a lay preacher, SAM, or if they are unsure. Commissioned Lay Minister is the updated and inclusive term for those who serve as lay preachers, SAMs, and in other roles. Commissioned Lay Preachers are persons who have been equipped and formed through the Lay Ministry Academy to formally proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in the congregations of the Virginia Synod. They serve at the endorsement and commission of the bishop, after completing training and practicum work. They provide occasional worship leadership and preaching to congregations and worship communities; not serving as the essential pastor or deacon of the congregation. Lay preachers may share their gifts in both their home congregations and in other worship settings. Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs) are identified and equipped persons for service in congregations SAMs are assigned by the VA Synod bishop and authorized for certain leadership functions in specific synod-related locations for a specified length of time. SAMs are paired with a supervising pastor for as long as they serve. SAMs must attend annual boundary training, complete continuing education, and abide by ELCA guidelines.

News from our Sponsored Children in Guatemala Amayda, Hugolino, Manuela, and Pablo

Sponsor: Apostles Lutheran Church

Child Name:

Manuela Elvira Tziquin Tzuc

52 10



GUATEMALA



Para en pesar quero de ciste
buenos dias o buenas tardes
por que no se cuando o que
hora lleque esta carta quero
darte un abrazo en la dista-
cia que no se nemos y tambien
quero dar te las gracias por
tus apelos y es pero que as
pasado un lindo semana
santa como llelo pase y
yo lo que comi es pan con-
miel, carne con frijoles y mi-
mama me iso un pan de muerca
y lo pase muy bien y eso
estodo Madrina si Dios quise
la oportunidad de vernos adios

Dear Sponsor: I'd like to start this note by saying good morning or good afternoon because I don't know what time it is over there. I'm also sending you a hug from afar, though I wish I could give you a real one to thank you for all your support. I hope you're having a wonderful time. I want to tell you that during Holy Week, I ate very well—my mom cooked deliciously. I had bread with honey and beans. I also ate Easter bread, and everything was delicious. I hope you had a lovely Easter as well, and I hope we get the chance to see each other soon. Goodbye.

THANK YOU!



Sponsor: Apostles Lutheran Church

Child Name:

Amayda Ester Raymundo

272



GUATEMALA



Hola querida madrina
por este medio le saluda
su ahijada Amayra
decidiendole que se encuentre
bien de salud y su querida
familia. Pues yo por la
bendición de Dios estoy
bien de salud pues le
cuento madrina que hacava
de pasar la semana santa
y yo me fui a las procesiones
con mami y mis hermanitos
y tambien le cuento que
entre 3 dias estamos por
celebra el dia de todas
la madres de mundo se
despide de usted Amayra bendiciones

Hello dear sponsor, I, Amayda, your sponsored child, greet you through this means, wishing you good health with your loved ones. By God's blessing, I'm doing very well. I want to tell you that during Holy Week, I went to the processions with my mom and siblings, and in May, we celebrated Mother's Day. I bid you farewell, wishing you blessings. From Amayda.

THANK YOU!



Sponsor: Apostles Lutheran Church

Child Name:

- Pablo rogal Emiliano
Solarsano Quino 4165



GUATEMALA



- padrinos los saludos
por medio de esta carta
esperando que se encuentren
bien de salud y en sus labores
diarias.

- el motivo de esto es para
contarle un poquito sobre
mi a mi me gusta mucho
jugar pelota pero me gusta
estudiar me gusta dibujar.
estoy en el grado de segundo
primaria.

agradesco por su apoyo
con los viveres y que Diosito
los sigabendiciendo grande
mente a toda su familia y trabajo.

Dear sponsor, I greet you through this letter, hoping you are in good health and that your daily work is blessed. The purpose of this note is to tell you a little about myself. Although I love playing ball, I also enjoy studying, drawing, and painting. I'm currently in 2nd grade. I want to thank you wholeheartedly for the support with the groceries. May God bless you greatly, you and your entire family, and especially your work.

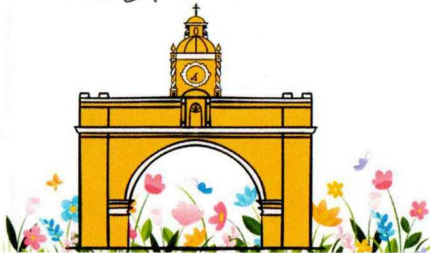
THANK YOU!



Sponsor: Apostles Lutheran Church

Child Name:

- Hugolino choc tajar
5057



GUATEMALA



querido Padrino
le saludo con muchas
abrazos espero que se
encuentre bien de
salud y le deseo muchas
existas en sus labores
y siempre agradeciendo
por todo sus apoyos
que me estan brindando
cada mes gracias por
ser parte de mi vida
economicamente. gracias
por todo les deseo
muchas bendiciones

Dear Sponsor, I send you warm greetings and many hugs. I hope you are in good health, and I wish you much success in your work. I am always very grateful for all the support, the financial help, and everything you provide me each month. Thank you for being part of my life. I wish you all the best and many blessings.

THANK YOU!

