

June 2023 Newsletter

Late in the afternoon, after service at the manor, visits to the hospital and a long in home call, we decided to get the grocery shopping done. We had gotten as far from home as across the street, at the stop sign in front of the church. A woman was standing with her phone out, taking a picture of the sign and without thinking, I jumped out of the car to greet her and introduce myself.

At my greeting she turned and replied in Spanish that she'd come that morning from Mexico and was staying up the street with her sister. While it seemed easy enough to understand her, it seemed beyond my brain's function to recall much if any Spanish in reply.

I pointed to the sign, where it says Pastor Deborah Gelerter and said, "I am Pastor Deborah. Welcome!" She beamed at me and said, "God is good and love!" And I managed, "God is good and here and for ALL." Then on some silent command we opened our arms to each other and she kissed my cheek. We said, "Yes," and yes and yes in agreement. I pointed to the sign and said welcome. And then I went to the grocery store and she went to her sister's house.

It didn't occur to me until later how timely this Spirit led encounter was. Only just this morning in our communion service at the assisted living facility, one of the readings for this Sunday's service was Acts 2:1-11 The coming of the Holy Spirit.

For sure, despite most of my language skills leaving my brain, we understood each other as well as the Spirit intended. God is good, and love and here and for all. You are welcome! And, yes! Yes, and yes.

Peace~
Pastor Deborah



Photo of "Pentecost red" beach glass found near hungry point.

Installation and Potluck - Sunday, June 4, 10:00 am



*Pastor Tim, Pastor Deborah, and Bishop Shelley at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Tarpon Springs, FL for Pastor Deborah's Ordination.
Photo by Bishop Pedro Suarez*

Please plan on attending the installation of the Rev. Deborah Gelerter and the Rev. Tim Bernard as your new pastors! The Rev. Shelley Wickstrom, Bishop of the Alaska Synod, will be with us. We thank her for being with us and for the Spirit working through her as she leads all of the congregations of the Alaska Synod. This may be the final time that she is with us. Her second term as bishop comes to a close next year as there will be a new bishop elected at the synod assembly. Please take time to greet her, thank her for her service to our synod and the wider Church. She has been, and continues to be, a blessing to us all.

There will be a potluck dinner following worship. Please bring a dish to share. All are welcome and invite others to join you!

What in the world?

Vacation Bible School for all ages

Please mark your calendars for Monday, June 19th – Thursday, June 22nd for Vacation Bible School. It will be on four evenings, from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. We are planning to have a meal at 5:30, then learning and activities for the whole family from 6:00-7:30 pm.

We are planning on having one group (preschoolers – kindergarten) and one group (grades 1-6). We need our teens to help us as helpers and guides for the younger children. There will be class time for our adults as well. In fact, there is something for all ages!



Here is what we need: We need you! We need adults to help teach and lead activities. We need musicians and artists. We need people to help cook, serve, and clean up after the meal. This is one of those times in the congregation where we need “all hands on deck,” so to speak. Please help us out to make this a memorable event that makes a difference in people’s lives. Thank you!

Food Items Needed for HIP

We are collecting items for Humanity In Progress (HIP). Their food distribution and food drive occurs the 3rd Sunday of every month, from 11 am - 1 pm at 208A Haugen Dr., which is on the corner of Haugen and 3rd Street.

Here is what they need:

Kitchen Bags: (we try to make 40 bags per month)

Noodles, canned meat Tuna/Chicken, Cream of Mushroom Soup, Canned Veggies, Loaf of Bread, PB and jelly, Canned Fruit

Ready-to-eat bags: (our goal is to make 800 bags per month)

Protein/Granola Bars, Pop-top Canned Foods, Individually-packed Snacks, Peanut Butter and Jelly, Fruit Cups, Beef Jerky

Congratulations Scholarship Recipients!

The Petersburg Lutheran Church gave away two scholarships this year to two very talented seniors, who were strong leaders in the school, whether it was academics, the arts, sports, or other extra-curricular activities. The two recipients are Stacey Eilenberger and Jack Engel. Congratulations to Stacey and Jack and all of the Petersburg High School Graduates!



*L-R, Jack Engel, Pastor Deborah, Pastor Tim, Stacey Eilenberger
Photo by Dave Berg.*



Congratulations Amanda!

We give God thanks that our own Amanda Birchell has accepted the position as Office Administrator. Her first official day will be June 12, but she has been doing some training with our current Office Administrator, Joy Warnke, before she leaves. We give God thanks for Joy's gifts and for the gifts that Amanda brings to this position. Congratulations, Amanda!