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The Rev. Gregory W. Frey, Pastor

JULY, 2022

It is very likely that the United States Supreme Court is on the verge of making sweeping changes to women's health by altering federal law related to abortion. When and if this happens, you might wonder what guidance the church has provided concerning this social, moral and theological issue.

In 1991 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in assembly, approved a social statement on the issue of abortion. Social statements of the ELCA on issues such as abortion are developed to guide church leaders, pastors, bishops, church organizations, ministry and advocacy groups, etc. to engage theologically and ethically with issues affecting life and faith.

Because this statement is over 30 years old and was written during a period of time where a right to abortion services had already been protected nationally for nearly 20 years, this statement will likely need to be revised. However, I encourage you to read the *summary* of the statement printed below. You can read the full statement on the ELCA website at: www.elca.org/faith/faith-and-society/social-statements/abortion.

"Abortion"

Social Statement Summary



The social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) on the topic of abortion faces the challenging task of speaking for a church body as divided as the

American public on the topic. The statement begins with a claim about the unity of the church as a whole. United in Christ and believing that the Bible is the authoritative source and norm for Christian faith and life, Christians are free, and even obligated, to engage in moral deliberation over our disagreements.

In setting parameters for discussion, the statement questions the use of "rights" language so common in the public abortion debate:

Nor is it helpful to use the language of "rights" in absolute ways that imply that no other significant moral claims intrude. A developing life in the womb does not have an absolute right to be born, nor does a pregnant woman have an absolute right to terminate a pregnancy. ("Abortion," p.2).

After setting the stage for moral deliberation over abortion and acknowledging the controversial, potentially divisive character of the issue, the statement explains the convictions of our faith, on which we base judgments on abortion:

- Human beings are endowed with dignity, created in God's image, and they bear the responsibility of stewardship;
- The gift of human life comes from God, has intrinsic value, worth and dignity in all phases of development, and is guided by God's law;
- Sin has corrupted God's creation, leaving us "caught up in a web of sin in which we both sin and are sinned against" (p. 3);
- God calls us to lives of repentance and renewal, seeking to manifest the fruit of the Spirit; and
- As a community of forgiven sinners, "our love for neighbor embraces especially those who are most vulnerable, including both the pregnant woman and the life in her womb" (p. 3)

The social statement describes how this church, as a community supportive of life, responds to the reality of abortion. Its fundamental judgment about abortion is that: "Abortion ought to be an option only of last resort. Therefore, as a church we seek to reduce the need to turn to abortion as the answer to unintended pregnancies" (p. 4). We "live out our support for life in all its dimensions" (p.4) through hospitality, keeping sexual intercourse in its proper setting and using

contraception, action and education. By contrast, attitudes such as irresponsible sexual activity, individualism and materialism are life-degrading.

The statement reminds this church of its call to be a compassionate community that recognizes the moral complexity of individual situations. In most circumstances, the church encourages women with unintended pregnancies to continue the pregnancy while assessing the situation realistically and considering adoption as a positive option.

When considering ending a pregnancy, a woman or couple should consider factors such as unwilling participation in the sexual act leading to conception, threat to the life of the mother, and severe fetal abnormalities. However “This church opposes ending intrauterine life when a fetus is developed enough to live outside a uterus with the aid of reasonable and necessary technology” (p. 7).

The statement also speaks of public policy issues related to abortion. The ELCA participates in public debate about abortion while seeking justice for all. It advocates aid in preventing unwanted pregnancies, through education and contraception. Next, it supports a better life for the child and parents through improved social services and initiatives such as parental leave.

Regulation of abortion, the statement recognizes, is where members of this church disagree widely. The statement declares that the government has a legitimate role in regulating abortion. It states, “Because of our conviction that both the life of the woman and the life in her womb must be respected by law, this church opposes:

- The total lack of regulation of abortion;
- Legislation that would outlaw abortion in all circumstances;
- Laws that prevent access to information about all options available to women faced with unintended pregnancies;
- Laws that deny access to safe and affordable services for morally justifiable abortions;
- Mandatory or coerced abortion or sterilization;
- Laws that prevent couples from practicing contraception;

- Laws that are primarily intended to harass those contemplating or deciding for an abortion” (pp.9-10).

Lastly, the statement addresses issues that require further deliberation, such as gaining spousal and parental consent for abortions and using public funding to pay for the procedure. It calls ELCA members to engage in “public debate on abortion in a spirit of respect for those with whom they differ” (p. 10).

The statement ends with a final paragraph calling ELCA members to participate in shaping society. The church:

...seeks to shape attitudes and values that affirm people in whatever circumstances they find themselves. Its pastoral care, compassionate outreach, and life-sustaining assistance are crucial in supporting those who bear children, as well as those who choose not to do so. Through these and other means the people of God seek to be truly supportive of life (p.1).

FROM THE PARISH RECORDS.....

New Members:

Karen DeFusco

Cindy Dietz

Warren & Barbara Greth

Mark & Cathy Hammond

Eric & Angela Houck, Riley, Jordyn and Nolan

Helen Rissmiller

Michael Romano

David & Mary Rowe

Tristan & Lisa Smyth

Daryl Szajek

Clair (Rocky) & Catherine (Kay) Weikel

Les & Judith Wetty

Eleanor Yost



Contribution to the **Memorial Fund** in memory of **John Bonslaver** given by June Baer.

--YTD Giving thru May, 2022--

	Jan.-- <u>May 2021</u>	Jan.- <u>May 2022</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>% chg.</u>
Offerings	\$ 146,528	\$ 159,774	13,246	9.04
Vision 2020 Contr.	23,212	23,177	-35	-1.15
Total Giving	\$ 169,740	\$ 182,951	13,211	7.22

THOUGHTS ON TREASURES AND RAINFORESTS

Joy Gerhart

I guess I had so much fun at VBS that I'm not ready to let go completely, yet. Whether the kids got it or not, the over-riding theme was that Jesus is our treasure. We shared a Bible verse each day that related to this theme (and a story as well). These are the Bible verses that we shared but did not require the kids to memorize, though they did put each verse to music to help with memorization.

How precious is your steadfast love, O God!	Psalm 36:7
You shall be my treasured possession.	Exodus 19:5
You will have treasure in heaven; come, follow me.	Matthew 19:21
But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.	2 Corinthians 4:7
But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.	Matthew 6:20

These are favorite Bible verses for me. (I can never choose just one!) Steadfast love is the promise that God's love will never fail us and will never leave us, no matter what! That is surely a gift and a treasure! In seminary I learned the Hebrew word *segullah* means "treasured possession" (NRSV) or "my own possession" (RSV) or "my chosen people" (TEV) or "peculiar treasure." God spoke this word to the people Moses led to Mount Sinai to let them know they were special. (It is found in other places too, including Deuteronomy 7:6 and 14:2.) How does that feel to know God thinks we are special? (Of course, we must remember that we are blessed TO BE A BLESSING to others.) We must also remember that we are like clay jars and that we are fragile, yet God dwells within us. Though it is hard to observe, I have always liked the

last verse. Here is the full quote: (Matthew 6:19-21) ¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Martin Luther even suggests that that which we value and put our trust in, that is truly our god. Do we put our trust in God or in other things?)

We just exposed the kids to these verses, but as adults we need to ponder them. What does treasuring God and being treasured by God mean to us? How do we acknowledge this in our lives? This is truly important!

One other thing that made an impact on me during VBS was the information I found and shared about the rainforest. Some of the information is exciting and some is heart-breaking.

- Over 100 inches of rain falls in the rainforest each year, but can reach up to 400-450 inches in one year. The canopy of the rainforest is so dense that it takes 10 minutes for the rain to get through the canopy layer and onto the ground!
- Animals that live in the rainforest include: snakes, frogs, many, many kinds of birds including parrots and macaws, insects, cougars, chameleons, Bengal tigers, mountain gorillas, orangutans, sloths, turtles, butterflies, toucans, and jaguars. (The last four animals were the names of our VBS groups.) The average temperature is between 70 and 85 degrees.
- Every second there is part of the rainforest that is cut down. In fact, we lose a football pitch every six seconds which means over 80,000 football fields worth of rainforest are cut down every day.
- Most animals living in the tropical rainforest live in the trees. They can find all the things they need in the trees and rarely have to come down to the floor of the forest.
- There are some tropical rainforests that have been around since the days the dinosaurs ROAMED the earth.
- Many foods we eat come from tropical rainforests or originated there: bananas, avocados, mangos, cacao, coffee, and papaya.

One quarter of all natural medicines have been discovered in rainforests. Compounds in rainforest plants are already used to treat malaria, heart disease, arthritis, bronchitis, diabetes, glaucoma, hypertension, muscle tension, rheumatism, and tuberculosis among other health problems. Many antibiotics, anesthetics, antiseptics, cough medicines and other medicines come from rainforest plants and herbs. Over 2000 kinds of plants that you can find in the rainforest can be used for cancer treatments!

We need to treasure God’s creation too!

VBS THANK YOUS.....

Thank you to all who helped make this VBS program—Rainforest Explorers-- possible. We enjoyed exploring in the rainforest and found that our most priceless treasure is Jesus himself, and not only is he a treasure, but he loves and treasures us, too! Our 35 children thoroughly enjoyed the games, science lessons, stories, crafts, music and snacks. Perhaps they were most captivated by Sidney the Sloth (who s p o k e v e r y s l o w l y) who appeared in his tree every night! We were blessed with 10 youth who helped us with the whole program—Riley, Maddie, Jared, Evan, Henry, Mark, Callista, Emma, Mya, and AJ! We had 20 adult musicians; shepherds; snack, game, science, and craft leaders; and decorators. Thanks to everyone who made this VBS a “wild” success.



EXCITING NEWS FROM THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER.....

Have you seen the new CDC playgrounds? Both the toddler playground and the older children’s playground have new equipment thanks to a special grant received by the CDC. The children and the parents are delighted with the new play equipment. It is a great selling point when giving potential families a tour of our facilities.

The Social Ministry Committee is partnering with the Daniel Boone Middle School to provide students with basic supplies for a successful school year. A box will be in the narthex for your donations.

Bring your items on or before Sunday, August 7

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| Fidget gadgets (Dollar store) | index cards |
| 1 inch 3 ring binders | post-it notes |
| 2 inch 3 ring flexible binders | highlighters |
| 5 or 8 tab index dividers | composition books |
| notebook paper | spiral notebooks |
| closable pencil pouch with 3 holes to put in binders | |
| red pencils | #2 pencils |
| mechanical pencils | tissues |
| stylus pen compatible with an iPad | |
| Stylus Pen https://www.walmart.com/ip/onn-Stylus-Set-10-Pack-Assorted-Colors/213187335 | |
| earbuds lightning jack connection or stereo jack connection
(earbuds can be found at Five Below or the Dollar Store) | |
| Earbuds at Five | |
| Below: https://www.fivebelow.com/products/runner-earbuds-w-built-in-mic | |
| Ti-34 multiview calculator | |



For distribution by the nurse:
Girls and ladies bikini underwear (small, med and large)



Mark your calendar! The next Blood Drive is on Wednesday, July 20, from noon—7:00 P.M. here at St. Paul’s. Online registration is available at www.GIVEaPINT.org. Use sponsor code 2050 or contact Rhonda Maloney at 610-858-9236.



JOIN US ON JULY 24 FOR CHRISTMAS IN JULY.....

We will enjoy Christmas hymns during services—then please join us between services for some festive fellowship!

Feel free to bring your favorite holiday treats to share!
Wear your red and green!
Hope to see you there!



Also save the date- Outdoor service and Church Picnic on August 28th- watch for more details and sign-ups!

PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING THIS MONTH.....

If you see your name here it is not because we think you have a specific need for prayer, but to let you know you are in our prayers whatever your need may be. Please include in your prayers this month: Richard Weiler, Judy Weiler, Andrew Weiler, Rachel Weiler, Charles Weiser, Anne Weiser, Joan Wendel, Landon West, Benjamin West, Les Wetty, Judith Wetty, John Wolfe, Pam Wolfe, James Wolfe, Arlene Wolfgang. If you have anyone to add to the prayer list, call the church office. Please pray for those with special concerns: Bruce Basch, Carole Berry, Sue Blevins, Linda Breitenstein, Diane Davis, Eve, Heath Fegely, Anna Gyuris, Dave Hackett, Sara Hartline, Jackie Hurchalla, Kasper, Daniel, Kim Koury, Priscilla Leh, Lisa Lerch, Craig Nichols, Carol Pearson, Nathan Resch, Sue Trout, Kitty Varady, Sarah Weider, Rick Weiler, Shelly Wilson, and all others listed below or those we name in our hearts: Makayla Becker, Avery Boorse, Michael Burd, Jake Campbell, Darrell, Barbara DePrefontaine, Ethan, Ron Glaser, Jevin Heller, Connie Hunter, Terry Johnson, Joanne Marnell, Ron Mutter, Richard Randolph, Lauren Ridge, Gene Schaeffer, Audrey Serrian, John Shaner, Ellen Sheeler, Vernet Spence-Brown, Jason Stalneck, Joan Wendel, Craig Williams, Jane Williams; Sandi Zelinski, homebound -- Charles Brown, Fern Brown, Peggy Burns, Jennie Clouser, Carol DeLong, Betty High, Arlene Hildebeitel, Dale Szajek.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES AND BEST WISHES IN THEIR FUTURE ENDEAVORS.....



Boyertown Area High School graduates:

- Zachary Freitag who may be attending BCTC in the fall
- Ryan Parduski who plans to attend Delaware Valley University
- Luke Yambor who plans to attend Savanna College of Art and Design (SCAD) majoring in film/television.

Daniel Boone Area High School graduates:

- Kaitlyn Esenwein who plans to attend Florida Gulf Coast University, majoring in political science and international business
- Keith Forster who will attend Kutztown University
- Emma Rose Hackett who will attend Alvernia University to study nursing
- Jordyn Houck who will be attending West Virginia University with Forensic Examiner as her major
- Cory Miller who plans to attend Drexel University with a major in business and finance
- Jared Miller who plans to attend Elizabethtown College to study occupational therapy
- Katie Sarro who will attend Millersville University studying Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing.

Exeter High School graduates:

- Kathryn Berger who plans to attend Alvernia University majoring in forensic science and competing on the women's wrestling team
- Emma Serrian who will attend Canisius College (in Buffalo, NY) and major in animal behavior, ecology, and conservation/zoo biology.

Owen J. Roberts High School graduate:

- Jansen Loscig who will attend the Villanova University School of Business.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO.....

7/1	Denise Millard	7/14	Connie Hunter
7/2	Nolan Gehris		Carson Kupp
	Lacey Krause	7/15	Mason Rotelli
	Keely Woodruff	7/16	Aubrey Stumhofer
7/3	Bruce Musselman	7/17	Zachary Coyle
7/4	Aubrey Braun		Janice Miller
	Tyler Cloutier	7/18	Jordan Koury
	Hunter Konarski		Emily Ridge
7/5	Ed Chroscinski	7/19	Ed Berger
7/6	Jeanette Root		Everly Matthews
7/7	Jace Michener		Lorrie Monroe
	Mary Jean Talbott	7/20	Lisa Mullen
7/8	Ashley Bonetz		Kris Poole
	Susan Kubovsak	7/22	Pat Oxenford
7/9	Brayla Berzins		Marley Yambor
	Todd DePrefontaine	7/23	Stella Boyd
	Autumn Hampton	7/24	Christine Godon
	Matthew Sim		Courtney Gougler
7/10	Kim Koury	7/27	Charles Burns, Jr.
	Cindy Matosky	7/28	Kaitlyn Esenwein
7/12	Allen Hetzell		Zachary Gougler
	Parker LeGrand		Sue Prizer
	Christopher Musetti	7/29	Carlene Yerger
7/13	Bonnie Topur	7/30	Victoria Bennis
7/14	David Bennis	7/31	Ruth Grim
	Franklin Brown, Jr.		Georgia Wegman
	Robert Endy		

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CONGRATULATIONS.....

David & Victoria Bennis	7/3	18 yrs.
Tatum & Kris Poole	7/3	18 yrs.
Russ & Diane Hartline	7/5	25 yrs.
Dave & Danielle Walt	7/5	25 yrs.
Matthew & Justine Sim	7/8	5 yrs.
William & Rose Stalnecker	7/11	52 yrs.
Stuart & Rosalynda Crichton	7/14	15 yrs.
Gene & Nancy Stewart	7/18	22 yrs.
James & Colleen Breen	7/21	15 yrs.
Pr. Gregory & Wendy Frey	7/24	29 yrs.



Joel & Bonnie Steever 7/24 51 yrs.
 Darwin & Mary Levengood 7/25 63 yrs.

Omitted from last month's wedding anniversaries: Gene & Shirley Schaeffer married for 65 years on June 22. Congratulations!



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JULY 2022

SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

Stronger Together

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me." (John 10:14)
"I say to you, stand up, take your mat, and go to your home." (Mark 2:11)

Jesus speaks: we hear his voice, and we follow. Even when we are made able to hear, by mechanical means. Even when we are blessed to move, using new and inspiring inventions. These are no less miracles than the healing of the one born blind (John 9), or the person on the mat who's unable to walk (Mark 2). Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network is a partner in ministry with us, bringing technology, compassion and faith together – by the work of the Holy Spirit – in ways that put life in motion and love in action, for God's children of all ages – especially youth. They truly make us: **STRONGER TOGETHER.**

+ Bishop Christopher deForest



Watching your child take his or her first steps is one of the most exciting moments in a parent's life. But what if your child has a disability and those steps don't come so easily, or at all? Through the years, parents faced with this dilemma have come to Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network looking for help and finding it. One of the rehabilitation technology stars in Good Shepherd Pediatrics' toolbox is the Trexo Plus. This innovative, wearable robotic gait trainer helps children with spasticity and mobility challenges walk, perhaps for the first time. Thanks to our generous supporters, including the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Good Shepherd has acquired a total of six Trexo devices in small, medium, and large sizes for children as young as 1 through their teen years. This makes Good Shepherd the only pediatric rehabilitation provider in the U.S. to offer all three sizes for both inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation settings. Children who benefit from using the life-changing technology are diagnosed with cerebral palsy, pediatric stroke, spinal cord injury, gait disorders, or other mobility problems.

The device's brightly colored legs allow children to walk hands-free safely, correctly, and consistently, all under the watchful eye of trained Good Shepherd staff. Trexo is one piece in an array of technology used by Good Shepherd Pediatrics and supported by the Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology Fund.

NEPA Synod can be proud of the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network. Because of you, children will be given the opportunity to exercise their brains and muscles in a new way, gaining confidence along with mobility. Good Shepherd provides therapies and residential options unique in the US. Thank you for your faithful, generous, and consistent giving to Mission Support! It makes a difference as we endeavor to live out that mission.

For more information, visit GoodShepherdPediatrics.org.

Story Contributor: Kimberly Stolarik, Interim Administrative Director, Development
Helping Children Through Technology



SYNOD ASSEMBLY REWIND



WHAT HAPPENED AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY?!?

The Reverend Kimberly Vaughn, Senior Director, Christian Community and Leadership Mission for the **ELCA** was the churchwide representative to our synod assembly. Rev. Vaughn enlivened the assembly with her words and brought greetings from the wider church. This representation reminds us that we are a church in three expressions: congregations, synods, and churchwide. These expressions work together to gather God's people and mobilize them to love and serve the world through mission and outreach.

This year's assembly was once again held virtually. We're getting "good" at holding virtual assemblies, but we simply cannot wait to gather in person. Next year, we'll be gathering at **Kalahari** in the Poconos, and we'll be wondering about how our synod and congregations are **going beyond death to life**. This is the "third lane" in our synod focus. Remember we've been talking about lane one, "**Growing young**" and lane two, this year's theme, "**Gaining Strength/Stronger Together**" These vital signs help us understand who we are as God's people and how we might best show up in our contexts.

This year some great **resolutions** were brought before the assembly. Some of these resolutions will be considered and acted upon by the **synod council**. The synod council is an important body within the synod. If you'd like to read the resolutions visit godslove.org/assembly in addition to resolutions you can view all the great videos from the assembly where churches and other groups showed their faith in action through ministries that highlighted our theme of being stronger together, growing young videos that look at fun scenarios to help individuals and congregations understand what it means to grow young, greetings from our ministry partners, and EVERY plenary is available for your viewing pleasure.

We had such an engaging time wondering what God was up to in our midst, especially in places where we're working together for the sake of God's Kingdom, here and now!

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

July 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10 AM—Bible Study	2 6 PM—Holy Comm
3 8 & 10:30—Holy Comm.	4 <i>Independence Day</i> 	5 Quilting 2 PM--TOPS 2 PM—Knit & crochet	6 10 AM—Bible Study	7	8 10 AM—Bible Study	9 6 PM—Holy Comm
10 8 & 10:30—Holy Comm.	11 10 AM—Bible Study	12 Quilting 9 AM—Knit & crochet 2 PM--TOPS	13	14	15	16 6 PM—Holy Comm
17 8 & 10:30—Holy Comm.	18 10 AM—Bible Study	19 Quilting 2 PM--TOPS 2 PM—Knit & crochet	20 12-7 PM—Blood Dr.	21	22	23 6 PM—Holy Comm
			-----Mission Trip Birdsboro & Beyond-----			
24 8 & 10:30—Holy Comm. Christmas in July	25 10 AM—Bible Study	26 Quilting 9 AM—Knit & crochet 2 PM--TOPS	27 10 AM—Bible Study	28	29 10 AM—Bible Study	30 6 PM—Holy Comm
31 8 & 10:30—Holy Comm.						