



# Leacock Communicator

Leacock Presbyterian Church

717-687-6619

[www.leacockpres.org](http://www.leacockpres.org)

Volume 61, Number 7

October 2020

## Notes from the Manse

### ***Pandemic***

What if you thought of it  
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—  
the most sacred of times?  
Cease from travel.  
Cease from buying and selling.  
Give up, just for now,  
on trying to make the world  
different than it is.  
Sing. Pray. Touch only those  
to whom you commit your life.  
Center down.  
And when your body has become still,  
reach out with your heart.  
Know that we are connected  
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.  
(You could hardly deny it now.)  
Know that our lives are in one another's hands.  
(Surely, that has come clear.)  
Do not reach out your hands.  
Reach out your heart.  
Reach out your words.  
Reach out all the tendrils  
of compassion that move, invisibly,  
where we cannot touch.  
Promise this world your love—  
for better or for worse,  
in sickness and in health,  
so long as we all shall live.

Lynn Ungar 3/11/20

I received this poem it now seems so long ago, almost like in another lifetime. My Spiritual Director sent it to me to offer some solace in a fearful time. Look at that date on which the poem was written. It's now been some six months since we realized a world pandemic had come home, here in the community in which we live. So much has happened since. A good bit of it has only compounded the anxiety, the fear, the

grief that COVID-19 brought. We have witnessed racial unrest and voices crying for justice too long absent; we are a nation ever more divided in ways that have become increasingly toxic, cruel, certainly far from the way we are called to live by our Lord. It all wears one down. There are some who insist that they have come to terms with the new normal of the pandemic. And some of the words of the poem may now seem no longer to pertain—for instance, people are traveling more, and buying and selling have resumed for some businesses. We can hope, and we should. But we do not know the future. Just today I read one expert speak optimistically about the course of the virus, while another grimly spoke of a coming second wave.

In such a time, it is hard to plan or predict what we will be able to do next year, much less in a month. What I can tell you is that Leacock, the fellowship of which you are a part, is very much alive. There are so many behind the scenes who have worked hard all these months so that we can worship and remain connected. Through my work on the leadership council of the Presbytery, I have heard about what other churches are doing. And I can tell you, without any exaggeration, that what we have done shines. I know, for other churches have asked for details on how we have handled various situations. All of this didn't just happen. The Regathering Committee researched and deliberated to find a way to regather safely. Some of the precautions are not universally welcomed. It isn't pleasant to have to wear a mask during a worship service, to have to be socially distanced, to have no Bibles in the pews. And this doesn't even mention the absence of singing, which we all miss. But we have kept safe, thanks be to God, and so these precautions will continue, until we are sure they are no longer needed.

There's more. We are seeking to do more in the months, always safely. We are looking into a virtual bazaar—people would make or identify things they wanted to donate, take a picture, and we would put them on a well-publicized site where people could visit and buy items. The idea of Bible studies using Zoom is being explored. We are doing the annual Crop Walk. The Deacons are caring for the At-Home members above and beyond the weekly calls and notes from the Caring Connection. The Trustees are keeping up our buildings and grounds and are considering a fall workday. Your church, our church, is very much alive.

But the pandemic is still here. Times are still tough, in so many ways. But consider the words of *1 Peter 1:6*, where it is said we may rejoice even though for a little while we may suffer various trials. It is in times like these that like a precious metal in fire our faith is made stronger. And in the meantime, the words of the poem still offer wisdom. Let us be humble, learn acceptance and not try to make the world something that it isn't. Let us be connected in new ways, even if at times terrifying and beautiful. Let us make a covenant with each other, as strong as one for a marriage. Let us center down. Let this trying season be a Sabbath for us, a time to pause on a threshold between what has been and what is to come.

Rev. Robert W. Birch

# October Lectionary

<b>Sunday, October 4</b> <b>17th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9 12-20 Psalm 19 Philippians 3:4b-14 Matthew 21:33-46	<b>Sunday, October 11</b> <b>18th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Exodus 32:1-14 Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23 Philippians 4:1-9 Matthew 22:1-14	<b>Sunday, October 18</b> <b>19th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Exodus 33:12-23 Psalm 99 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Matthew 22:15-22
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<b>Sunday, October 25</b> <b>20th Sunday after Pentecost</b> Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 Matthew 22:34-46
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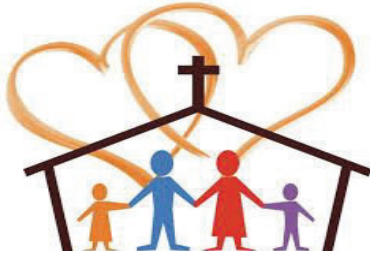
## Worship Notes

As summer passes into autumn, we continue to gather for in-person worship as well as recording our services for those of you who have chosen to remain at home. Our summer Old Leacock services saw an average of eleven participants. Gathering at the old church on a Sunday morning was a blessing as we enjoyed the fresh air (and, yes, a bit of warmth on occasion) and the sense of being surrounded by a great “cloud of witnesses.”

Worship at Paradise continues on course with everyone wearing masks and sitting in the appropriately distanced spaces. We are averaging between twenty- five and thirty attendees. Being able to say the Lord’s Prayer and our Affirmation of Faith together has added a sense of participation for all of us. We also are grateful to our church secretary for including the Scripture passage and the words to the hymns in the bulletin. It is a strange time, but we remain thankful for the worship opportunities we have.

As time passes, we are beginning to investigate increasing our audio visual capabilities with a new camera and the possibility of live streaming. Stay tuned for more details.

**World Communion Sunday** is October 4 when Christians all over the globe celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper together. We will be having Communion, and those of you worshipping at home are reminded to have a piece of bread and sip of juice ready for this part of the service.



### **October Prayer Families**

October 4  
Bonnie Rice

October 11  
Mary Ellen Rice

October 18  
H. Michael Alba,  
Harrison & Valerie Ruhl

October 25  
Fran Sattazahn



### *Flowers for the Church*

*If you are interested in purchasing Sanctuary Flowers in honor of or in memory of someone or a special occasion, the below dates are available in the months of November and December. Please call the church office 717-687-6619.*

**November 1**  
**November 22**  
**November 29**  
**December 27**

### **Thank You!**

Thank you for the notes and cards. Your thoughts and prayers mean so much.  
*Joyce Hamme*

Thanks everyone who visited me, called me or sent me notes in the past year. Being remembered is greatly appreciated. Blessings to all. *Betty Denlinger*



### **Trustee Notes**

Hooray!, We are having a Work Day this fall on October 17, start time is about 8:30 AM. We will be social distanced. As always if you can't make that day I can have something for you to do on your schedule. We are still collecting monies for Old Leacock inside painting. So far \$4800 has been collected. We will get an estimate in the spring. The Trustees are keeping your Church Properties in good shape thanks to your support and giving. Examples: replacing batteries in Emergency Lights, getting the furnaces cleaned at the Manse and Church for up coming heating season. It's always something. Thank you all again and see you at Work Day!

Dave Berkhimer  
Trustee President



### **Session Snippets**

In the time between our newsletters, your Session has remained active, working via Zoom for our meetings and even some committee meetings. We have become more technologically savvy than any of us imagined we ever would. From approving baptisms and the pastor's vacation and continuing education dates to considering future fellowship events and audio visual enhancement capabilities, we have continued keeping our mission as servants of Jesus Christ as our focus.

We also hold all of you and our pastor in prayer during these difficult times. We know much has changed for all of us, and we remain thankful for your faithfulness and love.

## From the Deacons

I want to thank all of you who are participating in the Caring Connection project. This is an important way we can share the love of God with our brothers and sisters at Leacock. When we receive a call or card, it reminds us that we are not alone in these dark and difficult days. We are members of a loving church family. For the coming holidays, the Deacons want to expand on this idea with a "card shower" for our designated at-home members, who are even more isolated than usual. We urge everyone who can to send a Thanksgiving and a Christmas card. If you do not have access to specially themed cards, just use a blank card to send your greetings. A list of the names and addresses will appear in the next newsletter. Please help to make the holiday season a little brighter for these absent but loved members of our church family.

Esta Fisher

## Mission Committee

The Mission Committee sends warm wishes and hope that everyone is staying well. We are looking forward to a new year of better health news and opening the doors to welcome the community back to our monthly meals. We can't wait for this to happen and for all church family and community friends to meet again. Peace and health to all.

Hunger is one of the greatest injustices facing our world. Ending hunger is possible with your help.

Sunday, October 18th, 2020 is our annual community CROP Hunger Walk. Join us at 1 pm at the Paradise Area Park, Pavilion #2, to register and walk. We'll start walking at 2 pm. This year you will be able to register on line and get sponsors on line. You can go to [www.crophungerwalk.org/paradisepa](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/paradisepa). Everyone can help stop hunger and you can help by walking and getting sponsors or by being a sponsor and supporting our walkers. This is a community event. Invite your friends, family and neighbors to help fight hunger and walk with us. Walkers can walk with friends or by themselves. This event is rain or shine. We walk because there is hunger and we want to end hunger. Sponsor sheets will be available at the back of the church shortly. Call Alba Ruhl at 717-475-1560 if you would like a sponsor sheet sent to you. All checks should be written to Church World Services.



## Stewardship

The Stewardship team met in September, still using Zoom remote online meeting, mostly because all the members couldn't get together physically anyway because of location. One of these months we can hopefully sit together around a table again. Regardless, we met to work as usual. We reviewed our financial statements for July and August. I must say that because of YOUR continued support through this madness, our financial situation is solid. Granted, our expenditures are somewhat lower and we did get help from the government small business grant BUT the ongoing support from the congregation is fantastic and key to our good position.

At this time of year we are already involved in planning the next year's budget, and this year is no different. The process will be somewhat simpler, as we will basically be rolling 2020 budget into 2021. There will be some modifications of course but essentially the same. Everyone will be happy to learn the Per Capita will be the same for 2021 as it was for 2020, so no change there. We are looking intently at purchasing videography equipment to easily capture services and events in the Sanctuary. We want to possibly add live streaming to our abilities. Stewardship and Session agree, the recording and online distribution of our services will be something permanent going forward, even after any virus restrictions are lifted.

Another topic discussed was the possibility of having some sort of year end ONLINE fundraising event. This way whatever we do would be open to local communities to view and participate in. Even more important than generating an income for the Church, would be the sheer act of having an event that would involve the congregation and the community. A way to show that we are not down and out because of this virus, but still active and ready to do good work to help others. I know, time is short and there is a lot of details to work out, but we are trying. Stay tuned for more information!

## Leacock Book and Movie Group

I would like to get the Leacock Book and Movie Group going again, thinking November might be a good month to do so. We can either meet via Zoom or meet in person, each bringing our own brown bag suppers rather than having a potluck meal. For the foreseeable future, I'm not sure it's going to work too well to try to watch movies together in the little room. One thought I've had is to try to pick books/movies that are readily available on DVD in the Lancaster Library System, and we could watch them at home, then gather to discuss them (we're in luck with both *Just Mercy* and *Little Women*, as the system has many copies of both). We could also try to resurrect the old projector we have and set it up in the social hall, but I'm not sure, given today's technology, and lack of DVD drives in most computers, it will work as well. I'd like your opinions on all these matters. Please drop me an email or tex, or give me a call: [emilymb95@gmail.com](mailto:emilymb95@gmail.com), 717-725-6572 to let me know.

Emily Birch, Book and Movie Group Coordinator

## Christian Ed

Covid-19 has certainly done its best to keep us on our toes this year, trying to figure out new/different ways to provide fellowship and learning here at Leacock. The youth Christian education classes are still on hold for the time being, because we need to keep our children and adult teacher volunteers safe. We have, however, begun to think about ways we could provide adult classes again. One of our ideas has been to have meetings to discuss the Scriptural passage for the day and the sermon based on it. We've also been looking at books we can read that address moving forward after the pandemic. We're trying to figure out the best way to meet. Would in-person work? Would it be better to Zoom? Also, when might people want to meet? We would like your input on this, so please contact either Elaine Gouba or Emily Birch to let us know what you think.

Elaine Gouba, Derek Coulton, and Emily Birch, Christian Ed. Committee

## Gratitude Corner

### (Those Who Go Above and Beyond to Care for their Minister and His Wife)



As most of you know by now, Bob and I just celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. It wasn't exactly what we'd begun to plan w-a-a-y back in 2019 when we thought we'd like to renew our vows, throw a big party, and take a second honeymoon to celebrate. We were disappointed COVID-19 interfered with these plans, but consoled ourselves with the fact we've been safe and healthy and have each other. But then something magical happened. Our Leacock family stepped up to the plate and helped us celebrate by remembering our special day with so many cards and e-cards and text messages, we were so touched. It was *almost* as good as the big party we'd planned. What a wonderful card shower it's been.

Thank you, thank you to all of you who remembered our special day! We feel so lucky to be a member of this warm, loving congregation.

Rev. Robert and Emily Birch

## Ushers

October - Harold Yuninger and Mike Ruhl

November - Ellen Barnes and Robin Katz

December - Darwin Eshleman and Craig Keenan

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# OCTOBER

Articles for the November Newsletter  
Are due by Tuesday, October 20, 2020

THE LEACOCK COMMUNICATOR  
Sandy Schoettle, Editor