

Giving Thanks, for Everything

By Pastor Justin Vetrano

Psalm 9:1

I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

The leaves are changing colors, the air is getting cooler, and there is an advertisement for something pumpkin flavored everywhere you look. These are the glorious signs that Fall is here as we transition from the heat of the summer to the cozy warmth of a sweater and a nice fire.

There have been a few moments this fall when I have walked out the front door of the parsonage and have pleasantly stopped dead in my tracks because the sky has been so colorful, the leaves are vibrant and the scent of a new season is in the air. With the change of the seasons it just seems like I notice, with a heightened awareness, the complexity of God's creation. I think it's

fair to say that I am drawn to a deeper sense of appreciation because the beauty of the season commands it.

It's so perfect that Thanksgiving comes in the Fall—a time when we are heightened in our senses to appreciate God's beauty that we have set apart a day for us to focus our thankfulness.

As I reflect on our ministry here at THE LIFE, I cannot even begin to comprehend all that God has done for us in this place. It has been two months already since we celebrated the consecration of our church with an amazing worship service and a party that far exceeded anyone's expectation.

People have asked me in one form or another, "What does it feel like now that we have been consecrated as our own church?" As I have pondered that question, I equate it to a change of seasons. I find myself seeing and appreciating things more. Of

course, there is a greater sense of responsibility and even some fear; however, with every person who comes through the doors of the church I find myself even more grateful than before. I just want to say, "Thank you for being here, thank you for what you do for the church," even to the Fed-Ex guy!

Oh my, there is so much for which to be thankful. First and foremost, to

God who has called us into being and enlightened us with the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ. I am thankful that God has brought us together in this place where we meet friends, new and old, people with whom perhaps we would never have a relationship. I am thankful for opportunities to share hope with people through smiles, words and service. I am thankful to watch people serve God and their neighbor in so many ways. To look around this church I see worship assistant schedules filled with names of volunteers, musicians, teachers, staff members and worshippers. I see food bins full and a coat drive box full of coats for children. I read emails of those working behind the scenes on publicity, Bible studies, construction projects, worship planning, event planning, food preparation and so much more. All this I am speaking of is just TODAY!

THANK YOU! Thanks be to God, and thank you to this church community for responding to the Gospel of hope in such honest and joy-filled ways. I look forward to worshipping with you in the days ahead as we draw closer to the Advent Season and especially on Wednesday, Thanksgiving Eve, as we come together to give thanks! May you find time in these busy days ahead to ponder that for which you are thankful, perhaps as you cuddle up with the warmth of the Good News of God in Christ Jesus and a Double-Tall-No-Foam-Extra-Hot-Pumpkin-Spice-Latte.

See you around Church,
Pastor Vetrano 

Join us for your time of THE LIFE!

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|------------------|--|
| Sundays | Worship with Communion, 10am
Children's Sunday School, 9:45am
Reformation Bible Study, 11:45am |
| Tuesdays | Bible Study w/ Pastor Shriever, 11am |
| Thursdays | Worship with Communion, 7pm |
| Nov 13 | Women's Ministry, 7:30pm |
| Nov 22 | Thanksgiving Eve Service, 7pm
(no Thursday worship service) |
| Dec 2 | Tree Lighting & Family Festival, 3-6pm |
| Dec 3 | Advent Box Making, 11:30am |

Getting to Know ... Deacon Nancy Rickman

By Tanya Chesterfield

Deacon Nancy Rickman, or as the students (and teachers) affectionately call her, “Ms. Nancy,” has been a mentor and friend to me since THE LIFE started the children’s Sunday school program five years ago. Deacon Rickman’s calming spirit and her dedication to the many projects she oversees, including Superintendent of Sunday school, plus her selfless desire to always help those in need, is the model of Christianity that I aspire to emulate every day in my own life. Nancy is truly one of God’s angels, and I am blessed to know her. Get to know Deacon Nancy Rickman.

TC: Can’t believe it’s been five years, Ms. Nancy! What initially brought you to THE LIFE?

DNR: Yes! Wow. I was at Resurrection and when they reopened as THE LIFE, I decided to see what it was about. I came on Thursday nights, because that was the only time they had service; I happened to like the casual atmosphere of it, and I liked the way that Pastor Vetrano preached.

TC: When we met, you were studying to be a deacon, what did that involve?

DNR: That was two years of part-time study, one night a week, and approximately 200 hours of volunteer work. You had to be recommended for deaconship. I did the volunteer work here at THE LIFE: I directed Vacation Bible School; taught in the ESL program, and helped with big events like the Tree Lighting, RibFest, and “Trunk or Treat” for Halloween.

TC: Tell us how you got started.

DNR: Anyone can take the deacon courses, but if you want to take them with the objective of being a deacon you have to also be recommended and the minister has to be made aware of it. So it was actually Deacon Paulina Janssen-Mesloh who suggested it to Pastor Vetrano. I was having a conversation with him one day in his office, and he brought it up. I said, “I’ll think about it,” and walked out the door. Then I turned around and came right back in and said, “I’ll do it!” [Laughs] I was commissioned as a deacon in May of 2015.

TC: What are your duties as a deacon?

DNR: Each deacon has their own niche, like Paulina has ESL and mine is the kids. We assist with service, and sometimes we go on home visits. Sometimes I help in the office, wherever I am needed.

TC: You were also still working as a teacher in public school when we met? How did it feel retiring?

DNR: Yes, I taught reading and kindergarten physical ed. I did that for 15 years. I love [retirement], though. I love it! I’m



Deacon Nancy Rickman

busier now than I was when I was teaching. This is my job now, and I love it! I still direct VBS every summer, and we now have about 35 kids enrolled in Sunday school.

TC: You’ve definitely hit big milestones! What are some of your activities outside of church? You just bought a new home

on the water. Do you like doing “water stuff?” [Laughs]

DNR: Yes, I’m in Point Lookout. It’s been a year already. I do like going out on a boat, but I don’t own a boat [Laughs], so if I know someone with a boat, I’ll go out on it. It’s so nice to feel the breeze from the beach; you feel like you’re on vacation 365 days a year. I also [like to] travel, and went with some members of the church to Germany for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

TC: Your family – I know you have a daughter, who’s getting married next year, and you have a son.

DNR: Yes, my daughter, Jayme (29) lives in Connecticut and she’s getting married in January; and my son, Wright is 30 and he lives in Brooklyn. He and I have been taking ballroom dancing lessons in preparation for the wedding. I take classes on my own, as well, with a group, and we have showcases where the judges give us “critiques” on our moves.

TC: Do you have a favorite Scripture?

DNR: I do! Luke 14:13-14. When you have a banquet, you invite the poor, the lame, and the blind; they cannot repay you, but on the last day you will be blessed. 🕊

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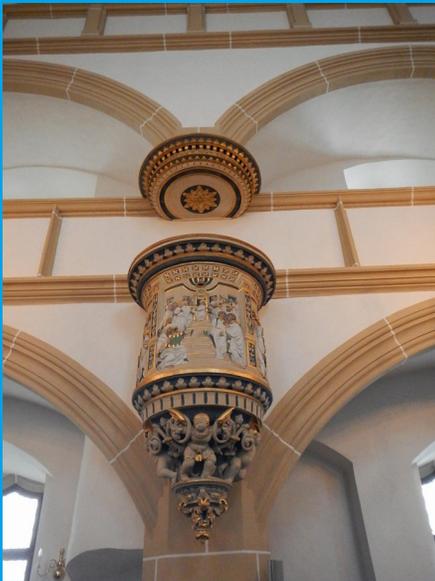
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Here's what some of the travelers had to say about their trip to Germany and the Luther 500 Festival.



Although I was struck by the antiquity and majesty of the churches that Martin Luther preached in, the image that remains with me is the Chapel in the Castle of Elector Frederick the Wise in Torgau. The simple altar table which symbolized Luther's teachings regarding communion and the ornate raised pulpit [photo] to proclaim the gospel helped me better understand my faith. Schlosskapelle (Castle Chapel) is the first-ever Protestant church and was consecrated by Martin Luther on Oct. 5, 1544, and we were in this holy place on Oct 5, 2017!

— Roxanne Oelrich



It was a most amazing experience to walk the paths where history took place. Worshiping in churches that were worshiped in 500 years ago, seeing and touching the Berlin Wall that was a major part of history, walking the paths of an actual concentration camp was just an awesome experience. All the textbook teachings could not make you learn and appreciate these life experiences the way actually being there did. It was an experience everyone should encounter. [photo of group at Rhine River.]

— Fred Gullo



The Luther House in Wittenberg [photo] was fantastic. I enjoyed all the different events, the Town Church and Wartburg Castle. The group was great.

— Sharon Obi

Please turn to page 4

Day School Welcomes New Teachers

By Lisa Dennelly, Day School Director

THE LIFE Lutheran Day School is happy to announce the addition of three new staff members. Mrs. Murphy is the new three-year-old teacher, who is replacing Mrs. Winter. Mrs. Winter worked at the Day School for 17 years and was a dedicated, nurturing teacher. She moved on to a full time job.

Mrs. Murphy comes with years of experience working in preschool. She is very excited to be working with the little ones again after she sent her twins off to college in September.

The school also has two new assistant



New teachers join staff at THE LIFE Day School, (from left) Sam Amatulli, Nicole Schmidt, and Donna Murphy.

teachers. Mrs. Amatulli, or Mrs. Sam, as the children refer to her, and Nicole

Schmidt, or Miss Nicole. Mrs. Sam is working in the four-year-old class, happy to be working part-time so she can still spend time with her two daughters, her husband and many cats. (She rescues them)

Miss Nicole is a recent graduate from SUNY Oneonta and is working toward her master's degree in School Psychology. Miss Nicole works with the three-year-old class assisting Mrs. Rick.

THE LIFE Family is growing by leaps and bounds, with new students, parents, siblings and staff! 

Luther 500 Festival and Germany Trip

Continued from page 3



I found this quote by Martin Luther and thought it was an appropriate reminder of our journey together.

"This group is called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with many different gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms." (LC, Creed, Article III 51)

Travel is the most rewarding way to bring the history of the past alive in the present. To see the places Martin Luther lived, worked, studied and preached this year celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and to participate with fellow church members as well as the 250 Lutherans who travelled from seven

countries to take part in the Luther 500 event was inspirational. Services in the churches in Wittenberg [photo] were spiritually fulfilling. Imagining Luther preaching in St. Mary's Church from a humble wooden pulpit (seen at Lutherhaus) to spread the word of God to the commoners of Wittenberg and seeing the Castle Church where he nailed his 95 Theses upon the door in 1517 provoked thoughts of his bravery and convictions at that time. I am inspired to explore more about his life, his sermons and his music and thankful that I was able to experience this pilgrimage with all the fellow Lutherans who attended the event.

— Pam Demarest