



Fall 2026 Lion's Roar E-Newsletter

****Please note: if you cannot see all of this newsletter (to the end, where Amanda's contact information is) find a link at the bottom of your e-mail that will allow you to "view the entire message".****

Pastor's Corner - *Pastor Joel Neubauer*

And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.”

—Revelation 21:5a



“I am making.” In the ancient common Greek vocabulary of the book of Revelation, this small sentence, this divine statement, is one word — “ποιῶ” — “I am making.” Neither *I made in the past* nor *I’ll get around to making in the future* but “I am making” here and now. Our spirituality as Christian people centers around one word: the one Word of God — the one Word proclaimed in sacred scripture — the one word made flesh in Jesus Christ — the one word, which still the Holy Spirit inspires in our midst here and now. God’s Word is a creative word, not because it

has the potential to be creative, but because it has the character of being creative in all times and places.

The God who speaks to us, ultimately leaving this word “I am making” to echo in our spiritual ears, is a God who is characteristically creative. We know that God Is Love. We trust God to be gracious and merciful. We find God to be consistently creative. And our consistently and characteristically creative Creator is therefore a God we cannot pin down to keep in one place!

As we’ve welcomed this fall, we found a new holiday in our liturgical calendar: a feast of Creation in Christ. Jewish tradition recalls the anniversary of creation in the autumn of our northern hemisphere, celebrating the new year — *Rosh*

Hashanah — in memory of the creation of our first parents. This autumn anniversary of creation is quickly followed by the Jewish day of atonement — *Yom Kippur* — and we might marvel at the connection between a creation God calls “very good” immediately followed by a new creation of a new goodness through atonement, mercy, peace, love, faith and grace. Our feast of Creation in Christ is similarly rooted in fidelity to this creative Creator: from Orthodox Christian tradition, we recall God’s creation of the cosmos in this season (officially assigned to September 1) and we immediately yoke all of creation to the re-creating work of God in Christ. “See, I am making *all* things new,” says Christ. “See, I am making all things *new*,” says God’s creative Word. What is complete is also making all things new.

I have been pondering our congregational acronym — SMLC: *Supports Making Life Creative* — SMLC: *Spirituality Makes Life Creative*. Both are valid. As a congregation, we engage a vital ministry for our community in support of creativity. We host music educators, dancers, recitals, concerts. As body of Christ, in the Spirit of Christ, we stitch and sew and draw and sing and ring and plant and quilt and write. These are not tangential to our identity, but rather reflective of Christ — as much as it is reflective of Christ for us to support God’s children through ministries of preschool, Family Focus, scouting, the *Refugio* in Ecuador, children’s smiles in China, et cetera. Because we worship and follow and conform our lives to the one Word who says “I am making” we are a spiritual community that is bound to creative work. Creative in art. Creative in science and engineering. Creative in soil and water. Creative in learning and growing. Creative in play.

Christian creativity calls us to be compassionately constructive for the confronting and calming of contemporary concerns. What *was* and what *will be* belong to God’s past and future; we stand with God in Christ for all the Great I Am is newly making among us *now*. I witness Christ’s work in you and among our neighbors; it entralls me to behold a continually new Creation in Christ through your faith and loving service, as our vision claims, “to embrace all in response to God.”

Yours in the refreshing peace of Jesus’ making, Pastor Joel

News and Announcements



Sine Nomine Presents Two special programs for the Fall season. On September 27, 2026 Thom Robertson and Marty Barstow will present a program of beloved hymn tunes in organ and piano arrangements by Marianne Kim, Douglas Wagner, Smith & Husted, and Carolyn Hamlin. Marty is Director of Music Ministries at Green Acres Presbyterian Church in Portsmouth. Thom, since his full-time retirement in 2012, has served several churches in Tidewater, most recently St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Suffolk.



Sine Nomine Presents....On December 5, 2026 the **Virginia Handell Consort** returns to usher in the season of Advent with a special holiday program featuring melodies of yesterday and today in a program of traditional arrangements of holiday favorites as well as original arrangements by maestro Al Reese. Begin your Advent season with this festive program and usher in the holiday season.





The ceiling is telling the glory of God and we give a heartfelt thanks to Stephen Auth, Tom Auth, Monte Correll, Duane Melson & Fred Sommer for their skilled handwork to address recent water drainage damage from a clogged drainage pipe and to repair our preschool hallway.

This has been a big project in our Preschool Wing in the weeks leading up to the new school year.

Thanks to all who help rebuild and to all who share in our partnership of prayer!



BACK TO SCHOOL AT THE REFUGIO DE LOS SUEÑOS

The children at the Refugio de Los Suenos in Quito, Ecuador, are busy getting ready for a New School Year!

Thanks to the generosity of the Padrinos (Sponsors) at St. Mark Lutheran Church, the children have received new school uniforms, shoes and school supplies. These gifts may seem like simple necessities, but to the children, they represent something much greater—a reminder that they are loved, remembered and supported by people thousands of miles away.

On a sad note, please keep Deaniela Ona, a dear Refugio child, in your prayers. She is

suffering from severe burns after a gas explosion in her home. May God bring her healing, strength and comfort.

May God bless our Padrinos at St. Mark for their kind and generous hearts.

Sharing

God's love is making a lasting difference in the lives of the children.

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" -Matthew 25:40

Creation in Christ





Handbell Rehearsals Return!



Make a joyful noise unto the Lord...with Handbells!

Come and find out how much fun ringing, striking, shaking, thumping, plucking and counting can be! Reading music is not a prerequisite; but counting to 4 is (and sometimes we do fractions??).

We are always on the lookout for new ringers. We have an immediate opening for a long-term sub to ring with us until mid-November.

We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 6:00 – 7:00 and ring to the glory of God about once a month during a church service. First rehearsal is 9/10/26.

Questions? Call Gail Teigeler at 757-810-5691

Pack 595 Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser!



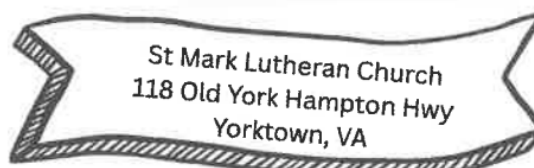
Join us for a delicious meal & help support our Cub Scouts!



September 23rd
6:00PM-8:00PM



Suggested Donation
\$5 per plate



Save the Date: Oktoberfest!

OKTOBERFEST



Save the date!

October 4th

12:15pm



**Music,
German food,
beverages,
and fun!**



PJ's Faith Fable

[Click here or on the article itself to view in another window or tab.](#)

**PJ's Faith Fable:
The Star-nosed Mole**

The star-nosed mole, whose eyes are slight
and given not to useful sight,
whose nostrils front a conic face
(mocked more for comic looks than grace
since, from each nostril, outward reach
appendages— eleven each)
has dug through earth with paddle paws
quite large to match its monstrous claws.

Arising from its earthen hole,
it seems the tiny star-nosed mole
has stumbled on a riverbank
where stands a great blue heron, lank
and tall— a most impressive bird,
who finds the star-nosed mole absurd—
an oddly-formed, misshapen runt.
The bird is there to judge a hunt

between an otter and a mink,
the each of which appears to think
its hunting skills within the creek
are better than the heron's sleek,
swift, fearless jabs within that stream
whose earthy, muddy waters gleam
with rippled sunlight to reveal
some movements of a hidden meal.



The heron tells the mole: "Don't move.
This otter thinks that it can prove
how well its eyesight, mind and speed
and muscle move through grass and reed
to plunge from land and land upon
some unsuspecting river prawn,
except it needs the water clear
to see the menu offered here."

The mink indeed seems troubled by
the mud in which the waters lie:
its body, tense upon the brink
of jumping in, begins to slink
away in mad admittance of
this limitation which, above
all else, makes other powers moot.
The heron's smile stays resolute,

who says: "The otter's got a chance
to catch a fish. Now watch it dance
through murky water, trailing grace
like whiskers on its pretty face;
those whiskers feel what eyes can't see.
The otter's better matched to me,
and yet it needs its prey to flail
or else its hunt is doomed to fail."

Indeed the otter seems at least
as graceful as the plumaged beast.
With lungs that hold a captured breeze,
it darts with strength and turns with ease,
but all the river's fishes freeze:
the otter, thus, finds none of these
and so it crawls ashore unfed:
the darkened water won instead.

"You'd see if you had better eyes
that all the mink and otter prize
as stronger, swifter skills than mine
are dull beside my own, which shine!"
the heron says, who hurls to pluck
a swimming frog from water's muck,
which— just in time— decides to duck
and shame the heron with bad luck.

But in the muddy waterhole,
without a word, the star-nosed mole
jumps in and swims with paddle hands;
its cone-shaped body now commands
attention as, upon its nose,
it holds small bubbles which it blows
first out, then in, to smell the dark:
this mole whose jaws outshark a shark.

Then, faster than an eye could see,
the star-nosed mole successfully
both catches and consumes its prey
and then, untroubled, swims away
while otter, mink and heron gaze
at something none had thought to praise:
a life that breathes where others don't;
a spirit told to stop, who won't

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the LORD of hosts. —Zechariah 4:6b

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