

# Portal ight

the monthly Newsletter of West Portal Lutheran Church and School

SEPTEMBER 2025

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**West Portal  
Lutheran  
Church Website:**

westportallutheran.org

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From Pastor Binz

“Your labor is not in vain”  
 “Therefore, my beloved brothers (and sisters) be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain”  
 1 Corinthians 15:58.

This was the bible passage I shared with our staff while in the redwoods the week before school began. Oftentimes we get frustrated, discouraged because we don’t see the fruits of our labor. Paul, as he is writing to the church at Corinth, is encouraging them many who probably felt like us, questioning if our work is really making a difference? And the answer is “yes” even if we don’t see the outcomes.

The first Monday of September is always set aside to honor all those who labor regardless of the field or profession. All honest work is honorable and a blessing to our neighbor. As Paul reminds Titus, “The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those



Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord ...

1 Corinthians 15:58

who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people” Titus 3:8.

I’ve heard it said that most of all that we do or have is because of someone else. We are able to send our children to private school because parents made it possible for us to get a good education to pass on to our children. We are able to work and provide for our families because we grew up in an environment that was safe and healthy. What if we grew up in a war torn country or a very impoverished neighborhood without all the advantages that have been given to us?

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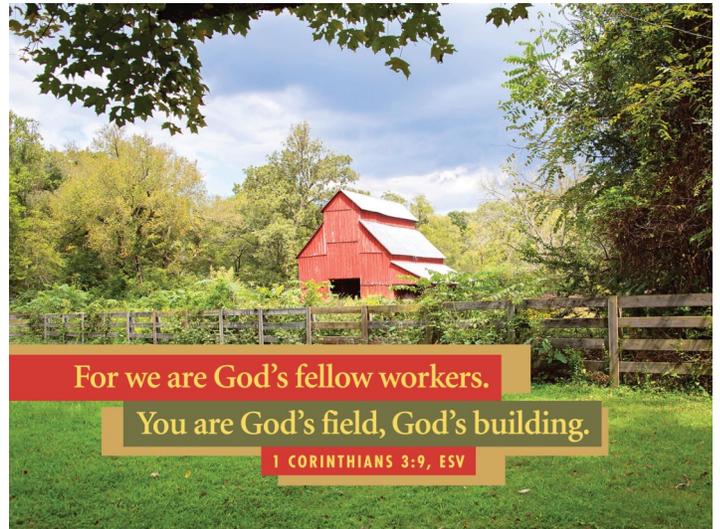
In regards to our salvation 100% is because of the work of God.

God's work of faith. Because of Jesus going to the cross and suffering, dying and rising, we are "gifted" forgiveness and eternal salvation. And because of God's blessings of all things needful for body and soul we rejoice, pray, praise and give thanks. This work is why we work in response to God's work for us.

This truly was a labor of love from God. Sending His Son Jesus to the cross for us out of His tremendous love for us. Whatever work we may do in the Lord will not be in vain. But rather be a blessing to those around us. *"For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building"* 1 Cor. 3:9.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Binz

**Requesting a proof reader of the monthly PortaLight and weekly Church Bulletins to replace Mrs. Margaret Finley, who faithfully proofread!**



Please be  
Praying for...

**LET US PRAY TO THE LORD GOD** for those who are ill, homebound, or recovering from recent hospitalization: Elfriede Bonfert; Charlene Bruggemann-Wong; Angie Cheung, Helen Bok's sister-in-law; Bill Eves, Virginia Ferry's cousin; Jimmy Fong, Evelyn Fong's father; Gilbert Mogyorossy; Sigrid Rogge; Ruth Stresow; Ray Toloski; Cheryl Wong; Marilyn Wong; Franklin Yee.

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

Rev. Curtis Binz, Senior Pastor

Rev. Jacob Swenson, Associate Pastor

May Luu, Administrative Assistant

Angie Holt, Church Secretary, PortaLight Editor

Ms. Sherise Lee, Principal

Amy Kao, Music Director

**Worship Schedule**

**5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service-Lord's Supper**

**9:00 AM Sunday Adult Bible Study**

**10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service-Lord's Supper**

West Portal Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

## Thoughts From Pastor Swenson

“For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.” (Psalm 91:11 English Standard Version)

There are a few church holidays that fall during the month of September. Some we might have heard of before; one, less so. In the Lutheran Church, we celebrate Holy Cross Day on the 14th. This day commemorates the finding of our Lord’s cross by Helena, mother of Constantine, and the salvation won for us through our Lord’s death and resurrection. A week later, on the 21st, we give thanks to God for the grace shown to St. Matthew and his faithful example. Matthew heard our Lord’s call in faith, left his tax booth, and became one of our Lord’s chosen Apostles.

The holiday that slips by, but which looms large in Lutheran history, falls on September 29th. September 29th is the feast of St. Michael and All Angels. Michael is one of the two named angels in Scripture (the other being Gabriel). He appears in both the Old and New Testaments as a figure in support of the Lord’s people and Church against Satan and the world. On St. Michael’s Day, we give thanks to God for creating angels and the care He provides for us through their service.

What are angels and what do they do? Angels are, like us, beings created by God. They differ from us in that they are spirits, that is, without bodies; and, they serve a different purpose. Theologians are divided upon which day they were created. Some suggest day four, when God created the stars, sun, and moon. There is some indication elsewhere in Scripture that it could have been earlier. In either case, they were created before man. The word “angel” means messenger. Angels were created

by God to serve Him and to bring His Word to us. They do this often in Scripture: think of the angels outside of Bethlehem, singing to the shepherds.

Since the Fall, they do other things, as well. The Lord defended His people of old from evil through the service of angels, and He does so today, as well. Through the ministry of angels, we are preserved from the assaults of Satan and the unbelieving world. There are also times where we have been kept from further physical harm through the care of angels. Often times, neither of these are things we see or even know about. Angels are humble servants of God, and we are thankful to receive God’s gracious care for us through them.

There are some common misconceptions about angels that we can leave for another time. Angels are not God. They are neither all-powerful nor all-knowing, even if they know more and can do other things than we can. We do not (and should not) pray to them. We certainly do not worship them. Lastly, we do not turn into angels when we die. The Church observes St. Michael’s day to praise God for His incomprehensible love for us and His gracious care for us through the service of angels. This year, September 29th is a Monday.

Yours in Christ,  
*Pastor Swenson*



## *Faculty Installation - August 10, 2025*



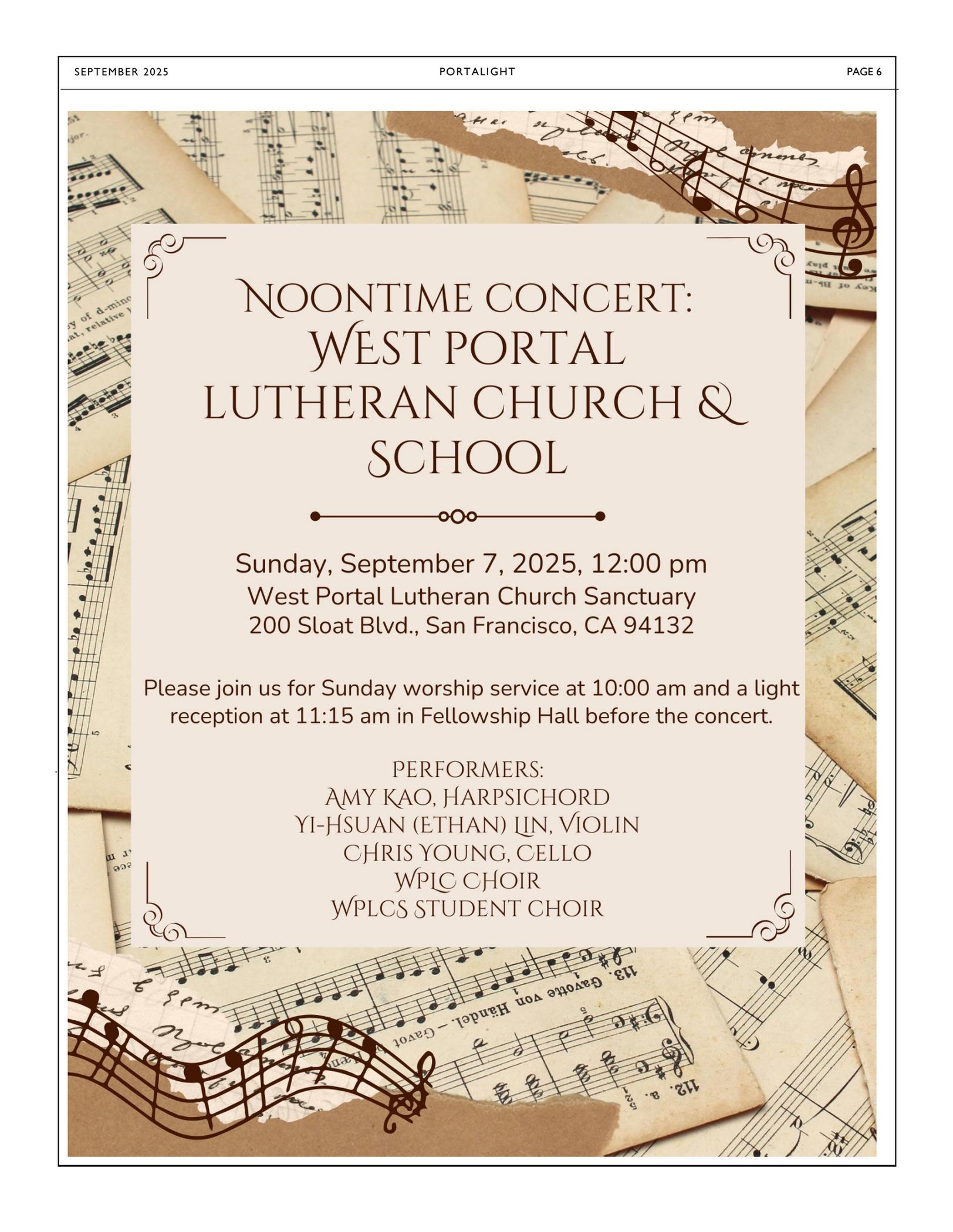
Teachers and staff 2025-2026



Amy Kao, Choir & Piano Accompanists: Kaelyn Aung & Hailey Ng performed during the Installation Service.

**We welcome Bobbi Lucille Binz through the waters of baptism on 8-24-25!  
Pastor Binz officiated his granddaughter's baptism.**





NOONTIME CONCERT:  
WEST PORTAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH &  
SCHOOL

Sunday, September 7, 2025, 12:00 pm  
West Portal Lutheran Church Sanctuary  
200 Sloat Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94132

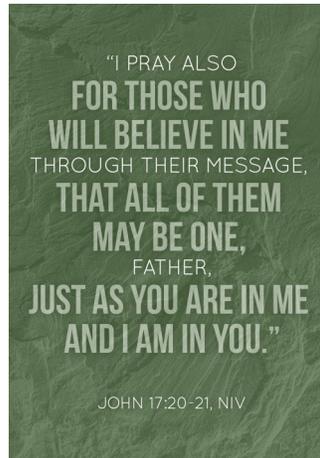
Please join us for Sunday worship service at 10:00 am and a light reception at 11:15 am in Fellowship Hall before the concert.

PERFORMERS:  
AMY KAO, HARPSICHORD  
YI-HSUAN (ETHAN) LIN, VIOLIN  
CHRIS YOUNG, CELLO  
WPLIC CHOIR  
WPLCS STUDENT CHOIR

# *West Portal Lutheran School: News from the Principal's Desk*

Dear West Portal Lutheran Family of Faith,

*...that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (John 17:21)*



When we use the word commUNITY, we like to emphasize the “unity” that comes from a shared purpose we all share. At West Portal Lutheran, our vision is to foster children who are positive, healthy, and whole. This vision is realized when our children are transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and sent out into the world to live purposeful lives of learning, service, and leadership.

The importance of our catchphrase for the month of “We are One” is best realized when we confess a common faith in Jesus Christ and the salvation imparted through his death on the cross and resurrection. Because Jesus has died for us all, this cancels my need to be my own “savior” and it allows me to embrace that we are all equally made in God’s image and equally given salvation through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a school principal, I am often reminded that I am not the most important thing or person (and need a daily prompting of this). Like John the Baptist, I am striving (yet often failing) to

echo his words of “he must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

As we teach our children that “We are One,” they need the community around them to model the beauty of loving each other well and learning to truly see others as Christ would. The human heart’s desire is to say “Me first!” and a transformed heart is “Christ first.” Let us pray that we can build a generation that seeks to love as Christ has loved us first!

Blessings in Christ,  
*Sherise Lee*  
School Principal



Back to School Game Night families



3<sup>rd</sup> Graders received their bibles at the first school chapel.

# West Portal Lutheran School

WPL Sunset Campus School Kickoff on August 11<sup>th</sup>! It was great to see so many parents and students excited for the new school year.



# West Portal Lutheran School

WPL Sloat Campus School Kickoff on August 12<sup>th</sup>! It was great to see so many parents and students excited for the new school year.





# SEPTEMBER

Monday, 9/1	Labor Day	Church & School Closed
Wednesday, 9/3	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 9/6	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/7	9:00 AM	Sunday School-Meet in Church Sanctuary
Sunday, 9/7	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Parish Hall
Sunday, 9/7	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/7	11:15 AM	Reception before the Concert-Parish Hall
Sunday, 9/7	12:00 PM	Concert for the WPL Music Ministries
Wednesday, 9/10	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 9/13	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/14	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Parish Hall
Sunday, 9/14	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/14	11:15 AM	Council Meeting
Saturday, 9/20	5:00 PM	Worship Service - Partners In Faith
Sunday, 9/21	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Parish Hall
Sunday, 9/21	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/21	11:15 AM	Elders' Meeting
Wednesday, 9/24	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 9/27	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/28	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Parish Hall
Sunday, 9/28	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 9/28	11:15 AM	Altar Guild Meeting-Parish Hall

**Housing Assistance Needed!**

Our accountant, [Xhensila](#) (pronounced Jensilla) is looking for an in-law unit, a small apartment or a room to rent with kitchen privileges near the church or along a bus line to the church . For further information, you may call her 425-301-9014. Thanks!



# September Birthdays and Anniversaries



1 Gideon Swenson	19 Stephen Lew	2 Sherman & Linda Chao
3 Kieran Mohanna	20 James Presley-Nelson	2 Vincent & Jessica Gatchalian
4 Raman Edwards	20 Brittney Rosas	4 Clayton & Susan Tang
5 Ashley Nulph	21 Judy Law	9 Roland & Janine Jung
5 Rhonda Short	21 Annalise Traub	9 Jason & Kimberly Wendt
6 Abby Situ	21 Monica Soper	14 Chris Kang & Kathleen Chon
6 Billy Biermann	23 Alisa Adams	15 Steven & Kathleen Toloski
7 Helen Hsu	23 Ray Holstead	17 George & Patty Almuete
10 Jericho Gatchalian	24 Lillian Wu	19 Joseph & Angela Szu
10 Effie Randall	25 Portia Chu	20 Robert & Stefanie Nixdorf
10 Vicki Proehl	26 Lila Stofferahn	21 Eddy Tsang & Eileen Lai
11 Lei Wu	27 Athalie Tom	21 Gary & Beverly Presley Nelson
11 Waily Tom	27 Kyle Stranahan	22 Rick & Aileen Brasche
11 Tod Kaiser	27 Alisha Fei	27 Alex & Lucy Lew
11 Christian Almuete	27 Beatrice Priest	
12 Joshua Huang	27 Kassandra Yeung	
12 Michelle Woo	29 Trenton Louie	
13 Carol Slettvedt	29 Marcus Yu	
14 Nora Dorr	30 Sugi Chiu	
16 Bruce Mercado	30 Melinda Miyagishima	
16 Hendrick Wong	30 Ping-Yee Law	
17 Sigrid Rogge		
17 Bennette Nulph		

***"Pray for one another" (James 5:16)***

Let us follow this command of God's Word. Use the birthdays and anniversaries list each month to hold up one another to the Lord in prayer. You may wish to keep this list on your refrigerator, in your Bible, in your Portals of Prayer, or in some convenient place. What strength we receive from Almighty God when we sincerely pray for one another! And in these "interesting times," a call to a member wishing him/her birthday or anniversary greetings would certainly be appreciated. It's particularly important that we keep in contact with each other these days.

