



The Shepherd's Pipe



Volume 51, Issue 4

April 2020

Vicar's Note

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 8:31, 38-39 (NRSV)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Over the past couple of weeks, I have heard these words from Paul on more than one occasion. I have also used them a few times for devotions with various "virtual" gatherings. I have found comfort in these words from Paul for a long time and find them to be especially comforting today. I hope and pray that you also will find comfort in these words that Paul wrote to church in Rome almost 2,000 years ago.

Paul asks the question, "If God is for us, who is against us?" In her book, *The Story of Romans*, A. Katherine Grieb, says that the answer to Paul's question is implied to be, "No one that matters." As we find ourselves in the midst of a pandemic called COVID-19, it may seem that it might not be so "who" is against us, but rather "what."

This "what," a virus that was not a part of thoughts mere months ago, has turned our worlds upside down. We find ourselves to be separated from our families, our church family, our friends, and coworkers. Even though we are experiencing these separations, Paul's words remind us, that nothing -- not even this "what" that seems to be against us -- that nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

My friends, God is for us, always. Even in the midst of the challenges of life in this world, God is for us and Jesus is with us. Christ has won the victory over death for the sake of the world. Take comfort in God's unending love.

In this time where we find our normal has and continues to change, I invite you to seek out new ways to connect with each other. Maybe even renew some old ways of connecting, like mailing letters or cards. We are in this together and we always remain connected in and through Christ. Know that you are in my prayers and I am available to you as always.

Peace,
Vicar Chris

Best Wishes on Your Special Day to our Members and Friends of GSLC:

Happy Birthday!

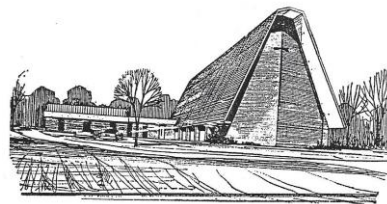
- 1 – Darlene DeDominicis
- 2 – Brittany Andrews
- 3 – Matthew Mrozek
David Ratvasky
- 9 – Beth Suorsa
- 10 – Stacey Phillips
- 14 – Kristen Snyder
- 18 – Scott Suorsa
- 21 – Rachael McConnell
- 26 – Kate Johns
Callie Bruno
- 29 – Shirley Boyer
Nicolas Tamarro
Jonathan Tamarro
- 30 – Jensen Vanassa

Happy Anniversary!

- 5 – David and Patti Michael
- 7 – Gordon and Betty North
- 19 – Harry and Ruth Ratvasky
David and Heather Ratvasky
- 28 – Alfred and Theresa Andrews

Our Mission

We, the congregation of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, New Castle, Pennsylvania, are called by God, baptized into Christ Jesus, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Because of God's great love shown us in the gift of his Son, we are bound together in love. Therefore, we make disciples of Jesus Christ through teaching, worshipping, witnessing, and serving.



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
of New Castle

**** At this point, all activities are TENTATIVE, dependent on changing guidelines for gathering. We will have virtual services for as long as necessary and will communicate changes as they occur. Feel free to reach out to Vicar Chris or church council members with any questions that you may have.**

Holy Week and Easter

Maundy Thursday, April 9 – Worship at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10 – Worship at 7:00 p.m.

Easter, April 12 – Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Invite your family and friends!

Council Meeting

Our monthly Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 14 at 7:00 pm.

Vision Committee

Members of the Vision Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 21 at 6:00 pm.

Election Day Bake Sale

Our bake sale will take place on Tuesday, April 28. The time is TBD.

Additions to Newsletter

Do you have something to publish in The Shepherd's Pipe? Please have any submissions into the church office by Monday, April 27.

Mission Project

Until the end of April, we will be collecting offerings for ELCA Good Gifts including Lenten offerings.

Join Us for Zumba!

Zumba is here at Good Shepherd! Please join us on Wednesday mornings at 9:00 am. The cost is \$4 and our instructor is Danielle Johns.

Pop Can Collection

A reminder that we are continuing to collect pop cans which are taken for recycling with the proceeds being returned to the church.

Snack Sign-Ups

A new snack sign-up sheet has been placed on the narthex table for you to volunteer to take a turn bringing in snacks for fellowship after church. Please consider being a part of this ministry by bringing in food or sponsoring a week of treats.

Bible Study

Our Bible Study with Vicar Chris will take place on Tuesday, April 14 and Tuesday, April 28 at 2:00 pm.

Devotional Resources

Good Shepherd has pocket size copies of *Portals of Prayer* available on the information rack by the steps leading to the balcony. *Portals of Prayer* is also available electronically on Kindle and iBooks. Apps are also available for Apple and Android. Note that all these options require a subscription.

Some other resources that you might be interested in:

- *Our Daily Bread* - Apps are available or you can sign up on-line for a daily e-mail at <https://odb.org/> — This is a free resource.
- A daily Bible verse can be sent to you from DailyVerses.net — You can sign-up for this to be e-mailed to you or you can find them on Facebook and Twitter. This is a free resource.
- <https://www.biblegateway.com/> — Bible Gateway is another free resource where you can look-up bible verses from a variety of translations. If you create an account, you can also sign-up for delivery of a verse of the Day or for a number of devotionals, including a 40 day Journey with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a daily passage from the writings of C.S. Lewis, as well as a number of other devotionals geared toward men, women, or families and many others. You can see a listing at <https://www.biblegateway.com/devotionals/>

These are just a few of the resources that are available. If there is something that you have used and found particularly helpful, please let us know in the office so that we can share it with others.

Partnership with Trinity

During this time, we are working to stream Sunday worship service on Facebook Live as a joint effort with Trinity – Ellwood City. Please check out Good Shepherd and Trinity's Facebook pages for updates as we navigate through the next few weeks. Worship is still scheduled for Sunday morning at 10:30 am as well as Lenten services on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm.

Good Shepherd: <https://www.facebook.com/GSLCNewCastle/>

Trinity: <https://www.facebook.com/TrinityEllwood/>

Please note that both of the church's pages are public, so you do not need to be a Facebook member in order to view and/or watch the live streams.

Circles of Prayer for Mission

Please pray for the members of Good Shepherd:

Daily Prayer

- ❖ For Vicar Chris, in his ministry to our congregation.
- ❖ For the entire Good Shepherd family, that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and truth and grow in our relationship with him and one another.

Sunday Prayer

- ❖ For Evy Amerson, pianist/organist; in her ministry of music for our worship.
- ❖ Gracious God, all people are united in your mercy. Help us to see and understand our kinship in you and to celebrate together in worship.

Monday Prayer

- ❖ For our local, state and federal government officials, especially for President Donald Trump, his staff and members of Congress, that they may lead our nation in justice and peace.
- ❖ For courage and strength for Synodical leaders, especially Bishop Kurt Kusserow and our presiding bishop of the ELCA, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.
- ❖ For an increase in ministry workers, both rostered leaders and lay, allowing God's church to grow, sharing the faith, and encouragement to those who are new to faith.

Tuesday Prayer

- ❖ For our Church Council members in their decision making for our congregation: Fred DeDominicis, Curt Johns, Ruth Johns, Terri Lombardo, Linda Marttala, Shirley Mazzocca, Hailey Tamaro, Terri Tankersley, Diana Tervo, Barbara Turk, Michonda Weber, and Grover Welsh.
- ❖ Give thanks to God for ELCA members who share joyfully God-given blessings through stewardship of their resources of time, skills and money.

Wednesday Prayer

- ❖ For Kevin Green, Director, his staff and ministries of the City Rescue Mission.
- ❖ God of many blessings, we give thanks for giving us life. We praise you for the call to mission with which you continue to draw us out of ourselves and into relationship with others.

Thursday Prayer

- ❖ For the Pastor/Pilots of LAMP ministry of Canada.
- ❖ For the elderly and homebound and the Meals On Wheels staff and volunteers.
- ❖ Almighty God, we give thanks for the earth you have created and all its living things. Help us appreciate the love you give and remember continued thankfulness for your goodness.

Friday Prayer

- ❖ For Grover Welsh, Sexton, Ruth Johns, Treasurer, Terri Tankersley, Financial Secretary, Hailey Tamaro, Youth Group Leader, and K'rin Fortuna, Secretary.
- ❖ For individuals who have physical, emotional, or spiritual needs and their families and friends who care for them. For our homebound members: Alba Kessler, Delores LeComte, Fran Nelson, Don Suorsa, Kim Cook, Bertha Metzger, and Alfred Andrews.

Saturday Prayer

- ❖ For the people of the Passavant Retirement and Health Center in Zelenople.
- ❖ Give thanks for the time, talents, prayers, and funds that are donated to the ELCA Disaster Response which enable the ELCA to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and bring the Good News to those who are suffering.

