



The Shepherd's Pipe



Volume 52, Issue 4

April 2021

Council Meetings

As we continue to hold our monthly council meetings virtually, we would like to remind you that meetings are open to anyone who is interested in joining us. If you would like to be included, please call the church office and leave a message to let us know and we will provide the link for you so that you are able to participate. **This month's council meeting will be on Tuesday, April 13th at 7:00 pm.**

Help Recording Services

If you are interested in helping to record live streaming of our church services, please contact Hailey Tammaro at 724-674-6296.

New Treasurer

We are still in need of a new treasurer. If you are interested, please contact the church office or Terri Lombardo. There is a copy of the job description available as well.

Cancelled Stamp Collection

The goal is to support the Lutheran World Relief "Stamporee" project, which provided for shipping of gifts, kits and clothing to those in need around the world. Anyone can contribute by saving used envelopes having cancelled stamps on them. When trimming stamps from the envelopes, remember to allow at least ¼" or more around each edge of the stamp. If not, they are discarded. All stamps are accepted; however, Commemorative stamps are worth more. Ask friends, relatives or co-workers to participate in this worth while project. The stamp collection box is on the counter in church library.

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

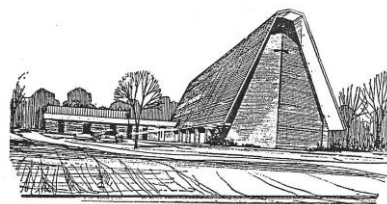
Happy Birthday!

- 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 Tammaro
Jonathan Tammaro
- 30 – Jensen Vanassa

Happy Anniversary!

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

Our Mission



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
of New Castle

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.

Please Reach Out

We are asking you to please pray for, send an Easter or a Thinking of You card, or contact our current homebound members:

Kessler, Alba
724-535-7303
PO Box 12
West Pittsburg, PA 16160

Metzger, Bertha
Haven Convalescent Home
725 Paul Street
New Castle, PA 16101

Nelson, John W. & Frances
724-658-2579
1810 Morris St.
New Castle, PA 16102

Suorsa, Donald & Beth
724-654-9063
724-944-4982 cell
796 Eastbrook-Harlansburg Rd.
New Castle, PA 16101

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 26th.

Portals of Prayer

Editions of the Portals of Prayer are available for January-March. If you would like a copy, please contact the church office and we will make sure that you receive one.

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. Any donations can be left by the main doors. They will be collected and processed appropriately while we remain out of the building.

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/>

Yes, it is finally happening! We will begin in-person worship on Easter/Resurrection Sunday, April 4, 2021!

Here is what you need to know: The following is taken from a letter sent out by Council in June 2020. A few details have been changed concerning how we will Commune as we re-open for worship on Sunday, April 4, 2021:

As part of the determination to return to in-person worship, Church Council has considered a number of precautions to be implemented to help keep our church family as safe as possible. It is recognized that people have different views related to COVID-19 and what precautions need to be taken. It is also recognized that as people living in the world, we take risks. We evaluate the risks posed to each of us and determine if going forward with whatever activity is a reasonable risk to take or not.

Each of you are invited to review the precautions that Good Shepherd is implementing and determine if returning to in-person worship is reasonable for you and your situation. We also ask for understanding among our Good Shepherd family for those whose decisions about returning may be different from our own.

As you consider what will be your best option for worship, please keep in mind that Good Shepherd is working on options to continue to live-stream or somehow make available the Sunday Morning worship service virtually.

The precautions to be implemented for resuming in-person worship are as follows:

- All are asked to wear masks while inside the building. We will wear masks to protect each other.
- Social distancing is expected to be maintained. Pews will be taped off to help maintain social distance. Additionally, we ask that worshippers sit in the same pew as they return to worship in subsequent weeks. Pews will be marked with names to aid in this. Space will also be identified for visitors.
- Singing and corporate speaking will be allowed because of the expectations for masks to be worn and distance to be maintained.
- Hymnals, paper, pencils, etc. will be removed from the pews. However, Bulletins containing Liturgy and hymns will be distributed.
- Doors will be opened so that each person will not need to open the doors. This will reduce touching of a common surface. Entry and exit will be through the main entrance and through the side parking lot entrance.
- A hand sanitizing station will be centrally located in the narthex. Worshippers are encouraged to use this station as they enter the worship space. Other items normally in the narthex will be removed to discourage congregating in this space before or after worship.
- The worship leader will take care of the readings as well as the lighting and extinguishing of the candles. There will be no lector or acolyte taking care of these items.
- Passing the peace will remain corporate, no individual sharing of the peace.
- An offering plate will be placed in a central location. The offering plates will not be passed. Electronic giving through Zelle is encouraged.
- Rather than providing a paper prayer list in the narthex, time will be included in the Prayers of Intercession for people to offer their petitions silently or aloud.

- Holy Communion: upon entering the Sanctuary, you will find small bags containing wafers and lidded cups containing wine on a table at the rear of the church. Please take these with you to your seats. You will not be asked to come up to the altar for communion.

- A record of who attended each weekly worship service will be maintained. In the event that someone determines that they have COVID-19, this will allow the people who could have been exposed to be notified.

In addition to these precautions, we ask that anyone who is not feeling well or is experiencing fever or other symptoms of illness, please remain home so as to protect your neighbor. This last year has been difficult and unexpected. We look forward to returning to the church building for worship. The precautions that are being implemented for this return are being done to reduce the risk for those coming back into the building. ***We recognize that things, both in and out of our control, could change. Should any changes be made, this will be communicated as quickly as possible.***

- Pastor Wilfred K. Goetze & Terri Lombardo, Council President

April Mission Project

“Love the child, save the horse, give strength and hope through faith.” You can find this motto on the website of a local Christian ministry, Ready Yourselves Youth Ranch.

Ready Yourselves Youth Ranch is a non-profit, Christian ministry that connects horses in need of rescue with children dealing with challenges and difficulties who need to learn about the hope and healing found in Jesus Christ. In 2010, the founders and directors, Micheline and Mathew Barkley, desired to combine her broken childhood and his equestrian experience to rescue horses and mentor children facing conflicts and challenges of their own. When God blessed them with fifty acres of land in New Brighton, PA, they gathered a dedicated group of volunteers and mentors to bring their faith, time and talents to make RYYR a place where God’s love and grace enables horses and children to trust and love again.

The mission of RYYR is to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ by bringing together rescue horses, Children in need (6-18) and volunteer mentors ready to shine the light of Christ into the darkest night, creating a safe and loving environment ready for God to heal.

If you would like to learn more about this ministry and what kind of support they need, go to www.ryyr.org.

Council Highlights – Meeting held March 9, 2021

- This meeting was held virtually via Zoom

CHURCH MATTERS:

Videoing Church Service

- We will begin videoing church service starting March 14th, 2021. Members of the congregation can view the service on Good Shepherd’s YouTube channel.
- We will receive the liturgy from Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- If we cannot find a pastor to fill in on a Sunday, we will redirect members of the congregation to stream Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church’s church service online.
- Pastor Goetze will preach on the first (Easter Sunday) and third Sunday of April.
- Discussion of giving out palms via the picnic shelter for Palm Sunday.

Re-opening the Church

- Discussion on opening the church on Easter Sunday for in-person worship while abiding by the COVID pandemic plan that Good Shepherd has in place.
- Michonda Weber offered to package the communion elements, so we can safely have communion.
- Michonda Weber made the motion to re-open the church for in-person worship while abiding to the CDC guidelines, state recommendations, and the synod recommendations. Cancellations will be relayed via email and phone. Grover Welsh seconded.
- Discussion on coming back to in-person council meetings. We discussed that being in the fellowship hall or being outside would be better than being in the living room.

Constitution

- Discussed...
 - Age of council members (members should be over 18)
 - How many council members make a quorum? The original version says the church council should include the pastor and 12 elected members.
 - When council terms begin and end (January 1st to December 31st)
 - Council terms will be 2 years rather than 3 years.
 - There will be no term limits for members.
 - Council members will not be able to hold more than one office at a time.
 - No elected officers are able to hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.
 - We may amend our old constitution or keep the proposed new constitution.

Cleaning and Maintenance in the Church

- Grover will get a price on cleaning the floor in the shepherd's center.
- Fred has and will continue to replace the ceiling tiles in the lady's room.
- He will continue to clean the walls, toilets, and floor in the lady's room.
- We need more volunteers to clean the church before we reopen on Easter Sunday.

OLD BUSINESS:

- There are many shingles down from the roof.
- Linda Marttala made a motion to extend Pastor Goetze's contract for three more months. Ruth Johns seconded. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discussion that Good Shepherd should have smoke alarms outside the kitchen, hallway, near the classrooms, and in the sacristy. (Approximately 3-5 smoke detectors)
- Ruth and Curt will purchase the smoke detectors and install them.
- Jodi Tammara made a motion that we purchase smoke detectors for the church. Terri Tankersly seconded. The motion carried.

Some Notes from Your Treasurer

You may have noticed in last month's council notes that it mentioned that the PPP loan was deposited into our checking account. A little explanation about that statement is we applied for another PPP loan from the government in January. The first PPP loan we received last year in the amount of \$6,700 was forgiven by the government in early January. Therefore, a couple of weeks later in January, we were eligible to apply for a Second Draw PPP Loan. The basis of the eligibility determination was that we were forgiven on round one and that we could demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross receipts between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020. As a result of our offerings decreasing, we were able to receive a Second Draw PPP Loan in the amount of \$10,376. The money is being applied to employee and utility expenses over a twenty-four week period which began the first week of February. At the end of the loan period, we will apply for forgiveness again to see if we will qualify to keep the total amount received.

The spring cleaning project that is helping us keep the thousands of dollars we received in insurance money for fire remediation is going well. Many areas of the church have been cleaned by volunteers. We do still have a need for someone to volunteer to come in and wash down some walls. Lists of jobs that still need to be done remain posted on the bulletin board that is in the main hallway.

So, because of the fire and the pandemic, we have been blessed with approximately \$30,000 to put toward one of our major building projects.

All of the repairs to our heating system have been completed. There is a new heating/air conditioning unit in the main office. The boiler has been fixed and a new heating unit has been installed to replace the one that caught on fire.

Additionally, with plans being made to return to in-person worship, I just want to let you know that offerings can still be made by mail as you have been doing this past year. Thank you for your cooperation and your continued support of your church. – Ruth

Circles of Prayer for Mission

Please pray for the members of Good Shepherd:

Daily Prayer

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ We pray for our interim, Pastor Wil Goetze, as he shepherds us with his many talents.

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 Joe Biden, 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, Ruth Johns, Terri Lombardo, Linda Marttala, Shirley Mazzocca, Hailey Tammaro, Terri Tankersley, Jodi Tammaro, 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 Tammaro, 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 and their caregivers: Alba Kessler, Fran Nelson, Don Suorsa, and Bertha Metzger.

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.

