



The Shepherd's Pipe



Volume 51, Issue 7

July 2020

Vicar's Note

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we begin the month of July, we will be well into the Sundays after Pentecost. The first Sunday in July is the 5th and somewhat ironically it also happens to be the 5th Sunday after Pentecost this year. Many of us recognize this time after Pentecost as the, "green season," because that is the liturgical color for this period of time in the church year. This period of time is also known as "ordinary time." This may also seem ironic, given that there seems to be very little that is ordinary right now.

Maybe in this time that seems to be anything but ordinary, we can find some comfort in this time after Pentecost or "ordinary time," in the church calendar. This is the longest period of time in the church calendar, comprising somewhere between 23 and 28 weeks, depending on when Easter falls in a given year. So, the liturgical color for roughly half of our church year is green and that is a color that signifies growth. We can see this pretty readily as we look outside and see the green of growing grass or the beautiful green leaves on the trees. For us as people of faith, the green can represent our on-going growth in faith.

One of the primary ways that we grow in faith is through engagement with God's Word. That my friends is how I think we might actually find some comfort in these rather extraordinary, "ordinary times." Here in God's Word, we find the Good News of God's great love for us. It is this Good News, that gives us peace of conscience. While we live in a world broken by sin and are ourselves sinners, through our baptisms, we daily die to sin and rise to new life in Christ.

May each of you find some comfort in this Good News and in this "ordinary time" in the church calendar, I encourage you to spend some time in God's Word.

Peace,
Vicar Chris

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Romans 6:3-5 (NRSV)

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

Happy Birthday!

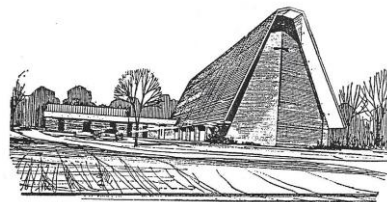
- 1 – Terri Lombardo
- 2 – Jeremiah Weber
- 7 – Mike Linz, Sr.
Kate Tervo
- 9 – Jim Mowrey
Diana Tervo
- 10 – Raymond Braun
Mitchell French
- 11 – Bill Snyder
- 15 – Isabella Andrews
- 16 – Mary Ann Burick
- 19 – Beau French
Joey Mrozek
- 23 – Theresa Andrews
Madison Byler
- 24 – Richard Ratvasky II
- 25 – Linda Hahn
- 27 – Eric Eagan
- 30 – Madison Hicks
Bria Westrick

Happy Anniversary!

- 1 – Richard and Terri Tankersley
- 4 – Bill and Kristen Snyder
- 20 – Mark and Lauren DeRiggi
Jim and Rosina Mowrey
- 28 – Brian and Danielle Johns
- 29 – Kevin and Cristy Nagy

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

**** During this time, we will continue to have virtual services throughout the beginning of July dependent on changing guidelines for social gatherings. We 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.**

Worship Services

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 10:00 am just like normal. 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.

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

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.

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 to let us know and we will provide the link for you so that you are able to participate.

Additions to Newsletter

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

Mission Project

Our mission project for July will continue to be support for Lutherlyn, Good Gifts, and ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund, which is discussed at significant length in this edition of the Shepherd's Pipe.

If you would like to support any either of these projects, you can continue to do that. As you send in your offerings, we just ask that you designate that support, by indicating either, "Lutherlyn," "ELCA Good Gifts," or "ELCA COVID-19." As always, thank you for all of your support!

"Zooming" with Danielle

Anyone who is looking for some fun from home can join our exercise group on Mondays and Wednesdays during July at 9AM. You do not have to join with video if you are not comfortable showing off your dance moves or your early morning right-out-of-bed look. If you just want to watch, that's fine too; although, I promise you at least once you'll be dancing in your chair! It requires you to download Zoom and join on your computer, iPad or phone. Just text or call Danielle Johns to give her your email address so she can send you a link for our get-togethers. Her telephone number is 330-646-7792.

Portals of Prayer

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

Celebrating Vicar Chris

Sunday, July 26 will be Vicar Chris' last day with the Good Shepherd family. We would like to celebrate him and thank him for being a part of our church family for the last year with a Farewell Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall after services.

Congratulations, Kamdin!

In February 2015 at just 4 years old, Kamdin Suorsa was diagnosed with leukemia. After being told that he was high risk, his parents pursued a bone marrow transplant. On May 29, 2020, Kamdin was celebrated with a parade of cars in front of his house for being designated as a cancer-free child! Kamdin is the son of Scott and Sky and grandson of Don and Beth Suorsa. He is pictured (right) below with his brother, Logan.



Welcome, Thatcher!

Congratulations to our organist, Evy Amerson and her husband, Brady, on the birth of their third child, Thatcher LeRoy Amerson. Thatcher was born on June 2, 2020 weighing 7 lbs. 3 oz. and measuring 19 in. long.

Directory Update

We have been working on updating our directory since our last version was published in 2015-2016. We recognize that things have changed since then and are trying to include the best information that we have for the Good Shepherd family. However, we know that there can be oversights. If you have updated information that you would like included in the directory --- maybe an e-mail address or cell phone number that you didn't previously have included ---- and would like that included in the new update, please send that information to the church office at gslcnewcastle@gmail.com or call the office at 724-654-8246 and leave a message to let us know.

Council Highlights – Meeting held June 9, 2020

- This meeting was held virtually via Zoom
- Council further discussed option available after the completion of Vicar Chris' internship on July 31, 2020.
 - The following options available to GSLC were presented to Council on May 12, 2020 by The Rev. Peter Asplin, Assistant to the Bishop, SWPA Synod.
 - Hire a pastor to work as an interim pastor and use the SWPA Synod to schedule clergy and lay supply as available.
 - Hire a retired pastor or a pastor on leave from call to work part-time.
 - Begin the call process to seek a full-time or part-time pastor. This process would begin with creating a ministry site profile. During the call process, Good Shepherd would need a local interim pastor and clergy and lay supply as available from the SWPA Synod. Some congregations that can't afford to call a full-time pastor earn the

necessary funds by renting out their property. Pastor Asplin said that before the current pandemic began, the call process typically took 24 to 30 months.

- Seek a ministry partner congregation (Lutheran, United Methodist, Presbyterian (U.S.A.), or Episcopal).
- Form a cooperative with a number of congregations. This could be as small as three congregations, one pastor, and lay leaders. All of the congregations in a cooperative must agree to admit an additional congregation.
- Sell our property and rent a commercial space.
- Close the church, sell the property, and give the proceeds to other congregations or non-profits in the area.
- Reach out to professional fundraising entities. Pastor Asplin said that this is not often successful.
- Note: Pastor Asplin indicated that the synod may have difficulty finding clergy and lay worship leaders to come to GSLC due to the distance from Pittsburgh.
- Council discussed available options. Council determined to contract with Pastor Peggy Suhr-Barkley as local interim pastor and to schedule with the synod available clergy or lay worship leaders to conduct Sunday services.
 - Pastor Peggy said that she is willing to continue as local interim pastor. Contracts for this arrangement last for 3 months. Pastor Peggy would attend Council meetings and other duties would be negotiated.
- Significant discussion centered around returning to in-person worship. Council determined that GSLC will resume in-person worship on July 19, 2020. There are a number of precautions that will be put in place, in response to COVID-19 related concerns. The details will be documented and distributed prior to the resumption of in-person worship.
- The next Church Council Meeting is planned to be held virtually on July 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

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/>



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Dear partner in ministry,

Weeks may have passed since you last walked in the doors of your congregation and worshiped, face-to-face, with your community of faith. To be sure, being the body of Christ looks and feels differently than it ever has before.

Despite all of this, we are called to be church — together. The ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) looks different now, but it has not stopped. Nor have the needs of our communities and the world. Our church and its leaders continue to minister to its members, to those who are hurting and searching for peace, and to those in need.

The congregations and ministries of this church rely on your weekly offerings and gifts. Without in-person worship services for many weeks or even months, the financial impact could be devastating.

Please continue to give to your congregation and give regularly. Your congregation and its leaders continue to minister to your community of faith. This ministry relies on your weekly offerings. Find out how you can continue your pledge or regular offering through online giving, automatic monthly giving or mail.

I know that, for many of us, this is a time of uncertainty and financial hardship. However, for those of you who are in a position to do more, the needs are great.

In the United States, unemployment has soared. We are already seeing rising demands on our food pantries, homeless shelters and social services. Around the world, millions of people living in poverty are facing this pandemic without reliable access to sanitation and health care.

With congregations and ministries across the country, and a network of companion churches and partners in over 70 countries around the world, we anticipate this crisis will affect us all. Your gifts to the ELCA's [COVID-19 Response Fund](#) will provide funds to the ministries of the ELCA most in need and best positioned to help. This includes our congregations as well as local and churchwide ministries capable of reaching and assisting those in need. **If you are able, please help with a gift today.**

I have been reflecting on the words of Peter: "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received" (1 Peter 4:10). Now is a time when we need one another. Now is a time to live and act as faithful people of God.

Be of good courage, dear church, and remember that Christ is with us now and always.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Continued ...

In response to this plea from the Bishop, council voted to participate in the ELCA'S COVID-19 Relief Outreach. We have received a PPP loan (which should not have to be repaid) from the bank for \$6,700 to help with our costs for staff and utilities for the next two months. Knowing that there are needs that are extreme outside of our church, council pledged from our church \$670 for the ELCA Relief Fund.

We also want to inform those of you who want to help others during this time how you can donate to COVID-19 Relief as an individual. You may include with your regular offering a donation, by stating on the message line of your check to the church "COVID-19" with the amount you want to go toward the fund or write it on your envelope. If you are donating through ZELLE, include a note on the message line of your offering with the amount to go toward the fund. Separate checks are not necessary. Simply write a note how you would like your check that is written to "Good Shepherd Lutheran Church" to be divided. Checks should not be written to anyone other than "Good Shepherd Lutheran Church." One check to the ELCA COVID-19 Relief Fund will be sent from the church.

FYI: One check from you may be designated to many causes. There is no need to write multiple checks. If you need to for your bookkeeping, it is totally fine, but not necessary on our end for bookkeeping. Also, some of you have been sending in weekly checks. If it would be easier for you to write one check for a longer period of time, that is fine too. If you think of another way we could help you, please don't hesitate to call. Your offering checks may be mailed to the church **2323 Old Butler Rd., New Castle, PA. 16101** or Ruth Johns **2824 Glenda Dr., New Castle, PA. 16101**.

JUST A REMINDER -- Zelle is a way to transfer money between bank accounts. When prompted, the church's "First Name" is **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** and the "Last Name" is **New Castle**. The phone number connected to the church account belongs to our treasurer, Ruth Johns – **724-657-4733**. This is a safe and secure way to skip sending checks. If you use this service with your bank, we are now able to receive your transfers. You will be given credit to your offering record the Sunday following your transfer. *NEED HELP? CALL RUTH JOHNS---724-657-4733.*

THANK YOU FOR ALL OF THE MONEY THAT HAS BEEN SENT TO DATE!

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.

