



THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN

VOL 94, NO 9, November 2020

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PALM DEVOTION

by The Reverend Dr. Douglas H. Spittel, President,
Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries

“Thanksgiving”

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” – Philippians 4:6-7



Saint Paul’s admonition to be anxious for nothing, at first glance, appears to be an impossible prescription. We all have worries over circumstances, troubles, and concerns in our lives. In hindsight, some of our worries are unfounded, but in the moment they all seem quite real. Our minds race to the worst possible outcomes and scenarios. Anxiety grips us, sometimes leading to a sort of paralysis that ends up making matters worse. To the one gripped by worry, “be anxious for nothing ... pray” sounds a lot like “don’t worry ... be happy” and brings little solace.

And then Saint Paul seems to pile on by adding that we should pray “with thanksgiving.” Pray with thanksgiving? How can one be thankful for a situation that brings worry and anxiety? Be it poor health, a shaky financial situation, or relationship problems, how (and why) are we supposed to give thanks for the things that cause us to worry?

If St. Paul’s words were a prescription to do this (pray with thanksgiving) so that you get that (the peace of God), I dare say that none of us would ever reach that “Nirvana.” But thanks be to God that the peace of God is not a reward for doing the right things the right way. Reading verse seven gives us a better and proper perspective on verse 6. The “peace of God” surpasses all understanding. God’s peace is something outside of and beyond our abilities to conjure or evoke. God’s peace is a gift given to us by His gracious and merciful hand. It is the Divine peace that is given to us specifically for the purpose of guarding our hearts and minds and bringing healing to the pain of our anxiety.

Palm Devotion (continued)

This peace of God is given to us “through Christ Jesus” our Lord. Just as Jesus comforted the paralytic with the words “be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven,” so also Jesus bestows His peace on us in the forgiveness of our sins. By His powerful word, Jesus disarms our anxiety at its root. Whatever sin-broken problem afflicts us, it cannot overcome us. As real as our suffering may be, even more so is the reality of forgiveness and eternal life. And this is not some abstract, wishful thinking sort of peace or forgiveness. Jesus has promised that the power of forgiveness is given to us in specific and tangible ways – His Word and Sacraments. Jesus speaks us forgiven in Holy Absolution and the proclamation of the Gospel. Jesus washes us forgiven in Holy Baptism. Jesus feeds us forgiven in His Holy Supper, which the Church also calls the Eucharist, which is Greek for Thanksgiving! Jesus surrounds us with His love in the consolation and help that we receive from our Christian brothers and sisters in the household of Faith.

Now read Paul again ... *“Be anxious for nothing [rather, find healing for your anxiety], but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving [the power and comfort of Eucharistic forgiveness], let your requests be made known to God [who is gracious and merciful]; and the peace of God, [the gift] which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds [with healing and consolation] through Christ Jesus [Who has Himself borne all of your iniquities and carried all of your sorrows to the Cross].”*



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November

8. The Concordia Lutheran Ministries Annual Meeting, 3:00 p.m. See Upcoming Special Events for locations

11. Veteran's Day Service conducted by Pastor Westgate, Minersville Cemetery in Pittsburgh's Hill District (Shawnee & Ossipee), 11:00 a.m.

December

13. Concordia Lutheran Ministries annual Live Nativity scene, Haven II, Cabot, Doors will open at 4:30 p.m. with 15-minute performances at 5:00, 5:30 and 6 p.m.

TBA. Camp Erin Purse Gala, fall 2020



CALENDAR NOTE: DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT ANY OF THE SCHEDULED EVENTS MAY BE CANCELLED OR POSTPONED. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CHURCH FOR UPDATES.WE PRAY THAT ALL OF YOU ARE SAFE AND HEALTHY.



The Pittsburgh Lutheran

Published by
Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries
(PALM)

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The Pittsburgh Lutheran is published 10 times per year.

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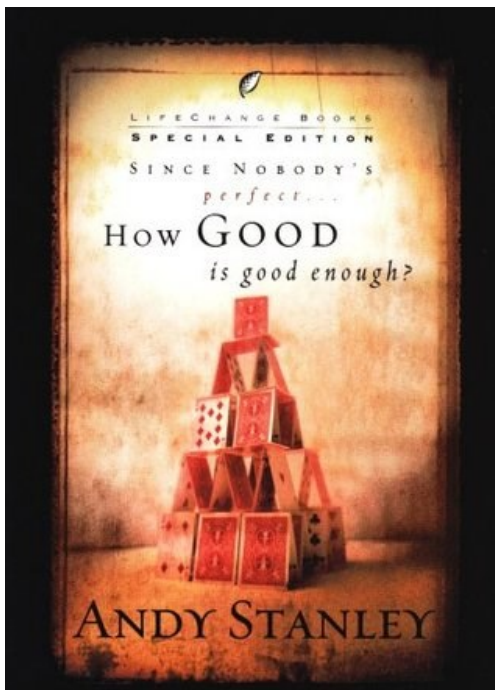
SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

Come In When You Want To

by Augusta R. Mennell, Campus Ministry Director

One day All Saints will have a new campus ministry director and the rewarding time that I have had in helping students will come to an end. When that new person arrives, she will probably ask me what my schedule is. I'll have to tell her that I don't really have a daily schedule. I don't use a schedule because I have always depended on whomever God sends. For more than thirty years this has always produced results for me.

An example of how I work came when I picked up the phone to call an international student from Nepal to invite him to have lunch with me. He immediately agreed and then told me I had called at just "the right time." He needed help right then to get his car started so that he could tutor a friend's child. He thought the car's battery was dead, so he asked to borrow my battery cables if I had them. We don't have battery cables, but I quickly made several phone calls to find someone who could bring battery cables to him. This took time, but it was well worth it. He was so appreciative of the kindness shown that it opened the door to more sharing of the Gospel.



His call for help was unscheduled, but it fit perfectly into my day. More than that, it gave an opportunity for conversation the next week when we would meet for lunch. He will leave in November when he graduates and moves to Philadelphia to attend Temple University. This would be one of our last times to have a personal conversation. Since he now trusts me, I'll invite him to read a useful evangelism tool. It is a short yet fascinating paperback book called How Good Is Good Enough? by Andy Stanley. It analyzes the reasoning behind "works" religions and demonstrates how faulty such reasoning is. It is an excellent tool when working with Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus. And, in the last chapter, Stanley clearly explains the Gospel's free gift of salvation which "works" religions do not offer. This book will introduce him to the Gospel.

Recently an international lady who is not a student called to ask if she could come in to visit. She is from a country close to India. She is married to a professor who teaches at SRU. He did his graduate work in North Dakota, where she discovered that Christians are "very kind." When she arrived in Slippy Rock a year ago, she and her small daughter approached All Saints' booth at the annual village festival held in "downtown" Slippy Rock. She was very pleased when my husband, who was helping man our booth, introduced himself and told her where our church is located. He told her about our great rummage sale going on which she would probably enjoy.

That was the beginning of our relationship. She has come to visit often because her life is quite lonely. When she called, I invited her to come over. When she came, I suggested we spend the afternoon visiting the Amish stores in New Wilmington so that she could get out of the house. It turned out to be a special time to be together. We have not talked religion because she's not ready. All I know is that she is a Muslim who wants to stay Muslim, but welcomes friendship.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Come In When You Want To (continued)

Unscheduled? Yes. Productive? Probably, because the Holy Spirit will show her that All Saints has more than kindness to share. But it must be in God's time. I don't use a schedule; I depend on the Holy Spirit to help me assist those who need spiritual guidance.

Not all things at All Saints are unplanned and unscheduled for me. A planned highlight is the Bible class I get to have with two American SRU students who come in weekly to study the Bible, currently the book of Romans. They come in rain or shine because they really want to know what the Bible teaches. We got to know them when we met them at SRU's orientation for new students. They are from different Christian denominations, but are both determined to learn what the Bible teaches. From these studies they will determine which denomination will be theirs. Even if they cannot come to study on Friday afternoons, they never skip, but always ask to reschedule for a time earlier in the day. The study time is the highlight of their week, and it is mine, too. What deep satisfaction to share God's Word.

Life has many interruptions and unplanned events. The unscheduled calls which come to campus ministry are often the best. I remember Kenzaburo from Japan asking if we would have time to teach him about the Bible. That led to his baptism.



All Saints thanks God for these unscheduled times when the Holy Spirit will open doors to faith.

PITTSBURGH CAMPUS MISSION

Bad News, Good News

by Pastor Eric R. Andrae

We are now about a month and a half into the school year, and I have some bad news and some good news. As is customary, first the bad news. There's a pandemic. And this has meant severe university restrictions on officially recognized student organizations, such as your Lutheran Student Fellowship (LSF), making it just about impossible to meet in person. It also forced orientation events – such as activities fairs – to move online, and these events were very poorly attended.

But there's also good news. With our weekly Bible Study moving online, I invited recent alumni from all over the country and many have been able to join us. We have over 25 regulars, with a typical weekly attendance of 13-20, discussing the topic “Conversing about Religion and Politics”.



With Deaconess Hanna Kern graciously volunteering to teach the class once again, our weekly online International Student Ministry (ISM) ESL class and Bible Study has resumed, with students joining us from as far away as Japan. Indeed, one of our Japanese students in Pittsburgh invited her friend “Moe” to participate from Tokyo. Though we have actually never met, I was able to connect Moe with LCMS missionaries who are also in the Tokyo area. With them, she will attend church for the first time ever on Reformation Sunday.

I will soon begin teaching our annual Catechesis class, for those possibly interested in communing membership and, for some, baptism. We are anticipating having students from CMU and Pitt, undergrad and graduate students, Christian and non-Christian – including a sophomore at Pitt from China, a Ph.D. student who just came out of Mormonism, a student at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, the Episcopal campus chaplain and his wife (who also previously invited me to join him for a virtual Bible Study with 6 Chatham students), a young mother from Venezuela, an atheist with whom I have had regular conversations on faith over the years, an undergrad at CMU who at First Trinity attended church for the first time ever last month, and others.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Bad News, Good News (continued)

With the conflict and polarization over race in our country and on campus increasing, I reached out to the director of the CMU Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion, a fellow Christian. I have known her for years through my on-campus presence and participation at all kinds of events. Over coffee a couple weeks ago, I listened and offered my assistance in trying to create a climate of true conversation and dialogue among the campus community. I also gave her the August issue of *The Lutheran Witness*, which included an article by Korey Maas, a professor at Hillsdale College, on “Political Community and Polite Communication” (which I have been using in the student Bible Study). When I mentioned that Dr. Maas is a good friend of mine, she thought it would be a great idea for him to do an online workshop for her staff and students some time next semester.

With the above-mentioned restrictions on in-person group meetings, I have continued to emphasize and expand the 1-on-1 nature of this ministry. Just one example: my Jewish student (whom I’ve mentioned in other updates) and I continue to meet about every three weeks, and he has now asked me to help him with his Independent Study. The project is under a professor that I know well through our work with the Beatrice Institute, a devout Christian. Our student will be developing a huge infographic on the history of the doctrine of God; among other things, he and I will together study its development during the Reformation. And much, much more...!



This summer three of our college students were confirmed, having completed catechesis: Sydney Preston (soph., Pitt; 3 June), Nathan Dietz (Sr., Pitt-Greensburg.; 14 June), and Marija Linde (soph., Indiana University of Penn.; 21 June). [Preston was confirmed at Calvary, Mechanicsburg near her home due to Pitt’s COVID-19 restrictions]. See photos above. Each has their own wonderful narrative, but that would need to be another article for each – there simply isn’t space and time to tell you all the GOOD NEWS from your campus mission in Pittsburgh!

Your campus mission is still serving the needs of students; God’s work continues through your campus ministry, and we need your support. Please, especially in these difficult times for us all, support the ministry financially. You can donate online: for no-fee, secure giving, go to the NEW giving portal at <http://www.firsttrinity.net/donate/> and choose “Campus Ministry” from the drop-down menu; for recurring giving options, just follow the directions to sign up. You can also make checks out to First Trinity with “Campus Ministry” in the memo line, and mail to: Campus Mission, 535 N. Neville St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213. If you are a Thrivent member, please contribute through Thrivent Choice to “Lutheran Student Fellowship of Pittsburgh, PA”. MOST IMPORTANTLY, PLEASE PRAY FOR US, AS I DO IN GRATITUDE FOR YOU. THANK YOU!

LOCAL MISSION

MILEPOSTERS NEWS

September 20 saw five kids with the group leader, joined by two other adults, pictured at Milepost 25, making a 12-mile round trip between Boston, PA and Dravo Landing on the Youghiogheny River Trail. One of the kids, intent on becoming a junior captain, rode the 20-inch convertible tandem by himself; it can be a tandem trailercycle as well as an independent bike.



Riding the triplet and a tandem, two adults and three kids made a round trip of 14 miles on the Yough, between Buena Vista and West Newton, on September 27.

Four kids joined three adults, including the group leader, on October 3, beginning at the east trailhead of the Eliza Furnace Trail, before crossing the Hot Metal Bridge and doubling back on the South Side Trail to where the picture was taken, near the Glenwood Bridge, for 6 miles total. It was the first captain training ride for the lady on the right, who aspires to be the ninth Mileposters trail mom. Riding solo, she handled the tandem well, and the kids appreciated her concern for them. Her daughter was tail gunner on the triplet. It was their fifth Mileposters ride; they started July 29 of this year, after attending other Mileposters activities.

These and other rides pushed the total for Puerto Rico for 2020 to 2,241 miles.



Our Houses of Worship

By Shirley Freyer

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church

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The kneelers are what attracted Dr. Ross Betts to Bethel. “It implies a certain kind of disposition to worship,” the 30-year member said. “Your physical body becomes a part of what’s happening spiritually,” he continued.

He was drawn to the architectural features of the sanctuary. “The elevated pulpit, the communion rail, the baptismal font with the engraving of a deer symbolizing the passages from Psalm 42 (“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.”) all aesthetically convey what we believe in, Ross said.

He and his family came there looking for Sunday School during the summer and found Pastor Pelsue singing the liturgy as he went about his preparation. Ross also found what he called “old school Lutherans” – lay people who were gracious and most importantly, theologically sound.”

Still today, Martin Luther’s characterization of the Christian church where there is nothing but forgiveness of sin, both in that God forgives us and in that we forgive, bear with and help each other is the description of the congregation at Bethel. Liturgical, confessional and sacramental are the words used on the website despite the times we live in.

Dr. Betts as Director of Missions is gearing up for the Project Angel Tree, one of the many outreaches Bethel supports, which supplies gifts to the families of prisoners at Christmas.

To discover the history of Bethel, who to talk to but the oldest life-long member, Fred Heintz who serves as Director of Doctrine and Worship. Only 15 years before Fred was born, six pastors from Pittsburgh canvassed Glenshaw finding a prospect list of 28 souls on behalf of the Pittsburgh Church Extension Society.

Six months later, the pastor from Mt. Calvary in West View conducted the first worship service for 77 persons in the former DeHaven Elementary School on Mt. Royal Boulevard. Those in attendance formed the congregation in 1938 and arranged the present land purchase and construction of the current building. In the early 1960s, a major renovation was completed adding classrooms and office space as well as updating the fellowship hall and kitchen.

The congregation began a three-year celebration of its 75th anniversary in 2010 inviting all living former clergy to conduct services at Bethel – Rev’d’s. Floyd Duff, Mark Schreiber, Keith Enko and David Pelsue. The longest tenured pastor, Art Litke retired this past June, having served 24 years.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP SERIES

One of the most important actions in recent history developed through Pastor Litke's service as vacancy pastor for Zion, Lawrenceville three years ago. Members of Bethel along with St. John's, Millvale and Zion, Lawrenceville began to explore how the three congregations could work together since Pastor Hahn was preaching at Zion each week.

"In 2018, the three congregations enjoyed a joint church picnic, ice cream social and Fall Sauerkraut Supper. Worship services during holidays and rotation of Lent and Advent services were held and the first Sunday in March of this year, a meeting was held including members of all three congregations, where the 3-2-1 concept (three locations, two clergy and one congregation) was presented," Fred explained. "All three congregations agreed to pursue the concept," he continued, and now we are in the process of preparing a constitution and by-laws for the organization of one congregation with the three campuses."

Rev. Dr. Daniel Hahn, called pastor at St. John's and Vicar Donn Woolweber in a shared call by Zion and Bethel enable all three congregations to continue in-person services at their traditional times.

Fred said, "I have lived in Belle Vernon, Uniontown and Butler, but I always remained a member at Bethel. A lot of that had to do with my parents attending Bethel, but mostly it was because much of the rest of the congregation were like a family. Even now I have a 'brother' I was never aware of when growing up - fellow Elder, Paul Hoffman, "but that's a long story," he noted.

Fred and his wife Donna, also a lifelong member and presently the Director of Property, are involved in most every program and service Bethel provides. They just delivered 24 quilts for the homeless, a mission project at First Trinity and made possible by members of all three churches and meals for the blind at First Trinity.



Bethel serves as the regular meeting place for the local Al Anon and Nar Anon groups. A new handbell choir is being formed and Wednesday morning Bible class just finished a study on "Angels and Demons," led by Pastor Hahn. One of the favorite Tri-parish projects of Director of Finance Paul Hoffman is the Stations of the Resurrection after Easter and the Celebration of Lessons and Carols at Christmas, presentations to nearby Concordia Lutheran Ministries communities.

Paul and his wife Kristen joined Bethel in 1999. "We were looking for a more traditional service and happy to find a group of people who adhered to the strict interpretation of Scripture and worshiped in a manner that we were comfortable with. For Kristen, it was somewhat of a homecoming, as she had been a member at Bethel when she was younger," said Paul. She knew many of the Bethel members and she and Paul and their son Kevin have grown spiritually and enjoyed the opportunity to serve the Lord in the church and in the community. "We now look forward to what the future brings with the work of the tri-parish group," Paul revealed.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP SERIES

As Director of Christian Service, Dr. Gary Swanson is responsible for service activities that include fundraisers (such as the Drive-thru Oktoberfest on behalf of Redeemer Lutheran School), social events like the annual Seder Dinner and service projects. He and his wife, Dr. Heidi Swanson joined Bethel in 1992.

Like fellow member Dr. Betts, they felt at home there. When he and his wife and three children arrived in Pittsburgh, they attended several LCMS congregations, but were most comfortable with the traditional liturgy. At the time, they wanted to find a church home where the children would be able to attend preschool. "As we continued to add children, we continued to feel that the congregation was effective in upholding their Christian education and spirit development." All 9 children were catechized by Pastor Litke.

Heidi and Gary met at Michigan State University and went to medical school together and got married. She trained at Children's Hospital of Michigan and he completed a residency in general psychiatry. A fellowship in children psychiatry brought the couple to Pittsburgh. It is no wonder that Dr. Gary was the perfect Director of Youth and provider of prolific children's sermons.

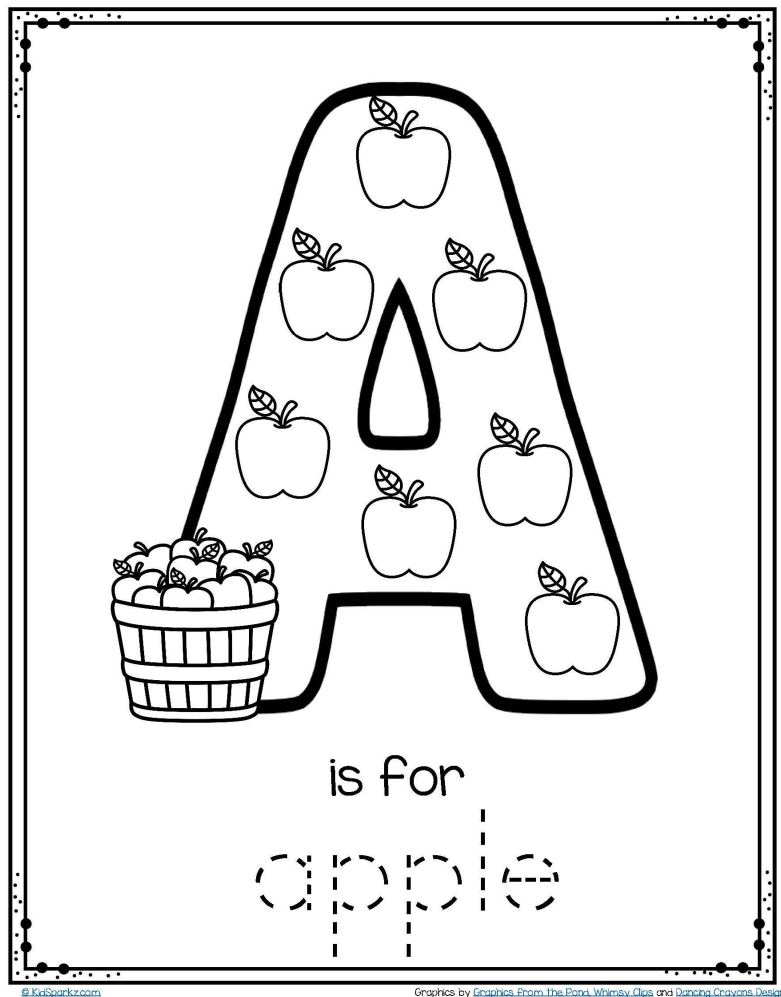
The 2020 pandemic birthed a venue that was like a dream come true according to Executive Director Al Todd III. He had been eager to begin to live stream and videotape worship services but there was concern about its effect on attendance. The closing of the churches in March provided the opportunity he had been pursuing. Bethel's website now provides weekly worship on Bethel's Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/183323405082870/videos/1413344388850908/>, thanks to his diligence and expertise. A Financial Advisor for Thrivent Financial for 26 years, Al has served as Executive Director since 2010 and invites all to check out Bethel's website or come in person to visit: Bible class at 9 and worship services at 10:15 a.m. every Sunday.

SCHOOL NEWS

ST. JOHN'S PRESCHOOL

Millvale

St. John's Preschool in Millvale has delayed in person classes until January 2021 due to Covid. In the meantime, the Preschool is offering free "virtual learning" videos on their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/StJohnsPreschoolMillvalePA) and website (www.stjpreschoolmillvale.org). Each week focuses on a new letter of the Alphabet. Our head teacher, Mrs. Beran, begins each week with the students' favorite chant, the pledge of allegiance and a prayer. She then instructs the children on the new letter, how it sounds and how to write the letter. She also teaches the children words that start with that letter and reads a book that corresponds to the letter. Her videos are shared on the Preschool's Facebook page at 9:00a.m. on Mondays. Pastor Hahn has Jesus Time with the children and tells them a story from the Bible that relates to the letter of the week. His videos are available on Tuesdays at 9:00a.m. each week. Our teacher's aide, Miss Becky, demonstrates a craft project connected to the letter of the week that the children can make at home using common household items. Her videos are available starting on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. We also will offer bonus videos from time to time on Thursdays of our members reading books to the children or singing a song with them. The Preschool started with the Letter A on Monday, October 5. They continue to post videos each week and encourage all parents and grandparents to sit down with their young ones and watch together. We hope it will help them to prepare for kindergarten while they are safe at home until regular preschool sessions resume.



REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Oakmont/Penn Hills

RLS is enjoying the mild, beautiful weather that God is providing this autumn! We are seizing every opportunity to enjoy the temperatures, with teachers taking students outside for breaks, lunch, and even instructional time. The weather also afforded opportunities to participate in service projects recently; a high school team assisted Cutting Edge Relief with community improvements in Wilkinsburg, while middle and high school students worked on beautification at the Redeemer campuses by weeding and spreading new mulch for landscaping and playgrounds.



Our middle school students will now have the opportunity to participate in the Lutheran Junior Honor Association. This association will recognize students who exercise leadership, servanthood, and discipleship, while excelling at academics and will also foster these qualities through service projects and other activities. The Lutheran Junior Honor Association is sponsored by the Lutheran Education Association.

Redeemer’s high school cross country team is attracting attention! Our runners continue to excel, earning new personal records and competing well against much larger schools. Three runners placed in the top 30 at a recent meet on October 3. As of this writing, the team is preparing for regionals at the end of this month. Catch a recent article in the Tribune-Review online featuring our XC runners! The link is also shared on our Facebook page.

The high school Robotic Rams robotics team is gearing up for the Wolverine BEST robotics competition at Grove City College at the end of October. We look forward to sharing updates in the next issue.

Right: Two RLHS cross country team members place in top 25 at recent invitational meet.

Below: HS biology class enjoys the outdoor classroom.



ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Bridgeville

Greetings from the Preschool! It's been a while since I've had a chance to connect with all of you due to the pandemic, but we are back, and ready to roll!

We have made many changes to our normal routine, all necessary to ensure our families that their child's health and safety is our top priority. To date we have 142 students enrolled and things are going smoothly. The children are happy to be back and we are looking forward to a great year.

Due to the pandemic, one of our focuses this year will be teaching the importance of proper hand washing and staying germ free. Each teacher spends a portion of their circle time reinforcing how and when to wash our hands using a variety of media including songs, stories, and sequencing cards. Mrs. Barb Oechslein, our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) teacher, outlined a fantastic STEM activity that really stuck (literally) with the classes. It visually stressed the importance of hand washing to remain germ free. Try this with your kids at home. We used the four steps of the Scientific Method to start the STEM class. We asked the question, "How can we get germs off our hands?" Our hypothesis was unanimous, "Wash our hands with soap."



Next, we experimented. With a spray bottle we found out what happens when we forget to cover our mouth if we cough or sneeze. A sneeze can travel up to 100 mph. Each child's hand was sprayed with water and then sprinkled with glitter (pretend germs). First the children tried to shake the germs off, then they rubbed their hands to try to remove them. A paper towel was offered to help with the process. We had some success, but some germs still remained on their hands.



We learned a new song about washing hands that takes 20 seconds — the amount of time it takes to properly wash our hands. The song is sung to the tune of "Frère Jacques" ... Tops and bottoms, tops and bottoms, in-between, in-between, all around your hands, all around your hands, now they're clean, now they're clean. As we washed and sung our song, we observed the 'germs' go down the drain, and we found our hypothesis to be correct.

I will continue to keep everyone updated as our year continues. We are hoping to resume many of our normal activities as time goes on. Next challenge....cold and flu season! Please keep us in your prayers.

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

McCandless

Ascension Lutheran Church (8225 Peebles Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15237) will again be collecting OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES. If you are interested in packing a shoebox, we have both plastic shoeboxes and cardboard shoeboxes available. We pack these shoeboxes to share the Good News of Jesus Christ! Sure, it is nice for these kids to receive all the gifts that you pack, but the real gift is God's love and that they come to know Him as their Lord and Savior. That is the eternal gift that they cannot live without. For a short video of what your shoebox gift can do, go to: <https://video.samaritanspurse.org/josephines-story-made-in-his-image/>

Not sure what to pack in your box? For ideas broken down by gender and age range, go to: www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox-suggestions/

There is also a list of items that CANNOT go in your shoebox. Do you want to build a shoebox online this year? That is great! For \$25 (which includes shipping) you can build a shoebox online that would be the same as if you packed it yourself. You get to choose what goes in your box from the items list in several categories.

Samaritan's Purse has started something new this year. Each church can now have a Goal Page that members can build their box through and get counted toward the goal. We have set a goal of 20 online shoeboxes this year. With COVID-19 making it more difficult for some people to get to the store, this is a perfect solution! Just go to the Ascension Goal Page to start building your box online:

<https://build-a-shoebox.samaritanspurse.org/view/a7d21c0d-18bb-43df-a53a-2ab5bf18687d>

Shoeboxes are due back no later than 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 22, 2020. This year, more than ever, these kids need Operation Christmas Child's "Good News and Great Joy." If you would like to participate or have any questions concerning Operation Christmas Child, please contact Bob Marcellus at finance@ascensionpgh.com.

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN

Brentwood

Concordia continues to work with the Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh and Squirrel Hill Health, hosting the latter's Mobile Clinic on our grounds for the tenth time on Monday, October 12, as they continue to provide free Corona Virus testing here in the South Hills. Concordia is proud to be a part of this effort to keep our neighbors safe and healthy in these uncertain times.

On Saturday, October 17, youth and friends from Concordia - Brentwood, Zion - Bridgeville, and First Trinity - Oakland/Shadyside, had a great hayride together down on the Simmon's Farm in McMurray. This was the 14th consecutive year for Concordia, and we had a great time with our fellow Lutherans exploring the corn mazes, enjoying the games, roasting smores and hotdogs, and enjoying the fellowship.

Many thanks to the Simmons (members of Peace - McMurray) for hosting us again, and allowing the kids, especially a chance for our youth, to stretch their legs after being largely cooped up since March because of Corona Virus.

We're looking forward to doing this again - as always - next October, and hopefully we can share the experience with MORE of our Pittsburgh Lutheran youth as well!

REDEEMER LUTHERAN

Oakmont

Redeemer Oakmont had planned to celebrate its 120th Anniversary as a congregation and the 40th Anniversary of the Dedication of the church building on Sunday, November 1, but the celebration has been postponed to next year due to the pandemic.

BETHEL LUTHERAN

Glenshaw

Al's Bike Drive for Toys for Tots for Christmas 2020

When Al Todd and his family, active members of Bethel Lutheran Church in Glenshaw for 20 years, found out that the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program was in need of bicycles for needy children for the upcoming Christmas, Al took action to raise enough money to purchase 33 bikes for them. Al was told at that time that donors generally didn't donate bicycles and that the Marines, if given cash to purchase toys, are limited in the amount they can spend on each toy, making a new bicycle an impossibility. That was 13 years ago. Since then, thousands of new bikes have been donated through the non-profit organization he founded after that initial purchase. Last Christmas, Al's Bike Drive was able to purchase over 1,000 new bicycles for Toys for Tots. The organization, run by volunteers, has become the largest and virtually sole provider of new bikes for Toys for Tots in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Al has been a representative of Thrivent Financial for the past 25 years and is actively involved in charitable events in the Pittsburgh area. His biggest passion, however, is providing bikes to needy children and teens in our area.

There has always been a need to help parents provide their children with gifts at Christmas, but this year the need is even greater. This year, a shortage of bikes has created a challenge, so *Al's Bike Drive* will be buying as many bikes as will be made available and also helping to stock the Toys for Tots warehouses with other toys. Bikes and toys will be presented to the Marines on Thursday, December 3, at Walmart. Unlike previous years, where over a hundred volunteers would show up to load bikes onto vehicles to go to the Toys for Tots warehouses, this year, due to Covid-19, the Marines and a small group of volunteers will load bikes.

For Christmas 2020, our Marines have requested almost 700 bikes as well as helmets. It takes a large amount of monetary donations and volunteers to make this wish a reality for them. If you would like to provide a bike or other toy to a needy child this Christmas, your tax exempt donation can be made electronically at alsbikedrive.com. Alternatively, checks can be mailed to Al's Bike Drive, 1736 Ferguson Road, Ste. 200, Allison Park, PA 15101.

Al's Bike Drive wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas!



NEWS FROM AREA CONGREGATIONS

MT. CALVARY

Westview

Mt. Calvary in West View opened the church doors for services early in the summer, and then in October, the bell choir was back in action. Music director Sharon Pritchard asked members of the bell and voice choirs what they thought of practicing and performing using the suggested proper distancing. The consensus was that it would work for the bells but would prove more difficult for voice choir. Bell practices therefore started on Mondays in October, with the choir performing for Reformation Sunday and All Saints' Sunday.

In other news, the church learned about a costume jewelry sale being held at the South Park Community Center the first weekend in November, with the proceeds going to benefit Operation Troop Appreciation. Founded in 2004, OTA is dedicated to supporting both active and veteran members of the Armed Forces who serve and make sacrifices for our country. Its mission is "to build and sustain the morale and wellbeing of the military community, past and present, with the assurance that the American public supports and appreciates their selfless service and daily sacrifices." Members and friends of Mt. Calvary donated hundreds of pieces of jewelry; and with the items being priced from \$1 to \$5, as much \$1000 could be raised to benefit the troops, just from our church.

Mt. Calvary also continued with its tradition of providing cookies to the local Meals on Wheels during October. Dozens of cookies, along with donations, were brought to the church each Sunday to be delivered to the MOW office during the week.

Mt. Calvary donated jewelry to the Operation Troop Appreciation annual fundraiser (pictured below).



NEWS FROM AREA CONGREGATIONS

PEACE LUTHERAN

McMurray

Our congregation bid farewell to Bishop Jamison Hardy and family with a service of Farewell and God-speed followed by a luncheon with family, congregants and friends on Sunday, October 11th.

The Hardy's will be relocating back to their native Michigan following their 20 years of ministry here in the Pittsburgh region. Bishop Hardy will continue on in his role as Bishop of the English District of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. We thank and praise God for Bishop Hardy's pastoral leadership and care over the years and we will miss him, Wendy, Noah, Nathaniel, and Naomi greatly. May God continue to richly bless them in their transition to their new home and lives in Michigan.



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Clarksburg

5-1-1 Joy

This past week was a memorable and joyous highlight for the month of October at St. John's. 5 Baptisms! Our 1st Anniversary! And our 1st Hymn-fest!

On Sunday, October 4th, we celebrated both our first Anniversary, blessing the parish and new furnishings. Within the same service, we celebrated the Baptisms of three young children. Our First Anniversary was truly a reflection of our mission work here in Clarksburg.



On October 7th, we celebrated the Baptism of an adult convert.

On October 10th, we celebrated our first Hymn-fest, celebrating Reformation hymnody. Five musicians offered their talents on the Organ, Piano, and Harpsicord.



5-1-1 Joy (continued)

On October 11th, we celebrated the baptism of another adult convert. We also said farewell to Pastor Gandy as he heads off to serve as a Chaplain in the Air Force.



+Soli Deo Gloria+



Vicar Donn and Debbie Woolweber invite you to join us
EVERY TUESDAY AFTERNOON AT 3 P.M.
for inspired and powerful prayer simultaneously with others
throughout the world!



ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
237-37TH STREET, LAWRENCEVILLE
412/621-2720

Worship Services every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Dr. Daniel Hahn Jr., Pastor

Concordia Lutheran Ministries

Delegates have been notified that Concordia Lutheran Ministries Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 8, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. Due to pandemic restrictions, the meeting will be held live at Concordia at Cabot as well as the Concordia at Rebecca Residence Chapel and the Harmony Room at Concordia of the South Hills via videoconferencing. Registration begins at 2:30 p.m. Dinner will be served following the meeting at approximately 4:45 p.m. The main order of business for the day is the election of seven members to the Board of Directors. Nominees are: incumbent Len Bloom – St. Luke; Charlie Buttgerit - Redeemer; Rev. Ronald Bright – Christ, Forest Hills; Bishop of the English District Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy - Peace; Frederick W. Heintz Jr – Bethel; Gail Holzer - Redeemer; Sandy Marcovecchio – Good Shepherd of the South Hills; Donald Olmstead – St Luke; ; Sherri Purucker – St. John’s; and Nell Wilson – Zion, Bridgeville. Of those nominated, Pastor Hardy, Fred Heintz, Gail Holzer, Sandy Marcovecchio and Donald Olmstead have served on the Concordia parent board in the past. Delegates will elect seven persons to three-year terms. By-laws dictate that all voting must be made in person. Please contact Director of Church Relations Shirley Freyer at 412-585-0603 with any questions.



Concordia Lutheran Ministries will again present its annual Live Nativity scene on Sunday, Dec. 13. This will be the eighth year Concordia has sponsored this free, public production located on the Cabot campus in front of Haven II at 148 Marwood Rd. Doors will open at 4:30 p.m. with 15-minute performances at 5:00, 5:30 and 6 p.m.

Parking will be available at entrance 6 on Marwood Rd. As an organization rooted in Christianity, Concordia’s vision statement is to serve the Triune God by providing for the needs of His people. Spreading the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ is one way to help care for the spiritual needs of the community. For more information, call Connor Hagey at 724-352-1571, ext. 8343. To keep up to date with what is happening at Concordia, visit the Events page at www.concordialm.org.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Adopt A Concordia Resident At Christmas

A fun way for a church group to remember residents is the “Adopt-A-Resident” approach. Each resident is asked to provide us with a “wish list.”

If you prefer to send a general gift, we can suggest the following newly purchased items that our residents can typically use: large or extra large sweat suits; adjustable ball caps, socks, large or extra large undershirts, Hair clips/combs/barrettes, Stationery/stamps, Puzzle books, Word Search, Sugar free candy, Books on tape, large or extra large size Dusters/loungers, Snack shop gift certificates, Door decorations, Puffs or Kleenex brand tissue, Watches with large numbers, Lotions and cologne, Tape players/radios for rooms, Music CDs and cassette tapes, a gift box of chocolates, Digital clocks with large numbers, Seasonal sun catchers with suction cups, Large print books (no magazines), Large or extra large cardigan sweaters or sweatshirts, Washable slippers with backs or slipper socks, Jewelry (not pierced), Gift certificates for beauty/barber shop, Decorative small pillows, Devotional books, Decorative throws/blankets, Magnifying glasses, Picture albums/small frames, Lipstick, rouge, liquid makeup, loose powder, toiletries, Sports memorabilia, and Snow globes. Donated general items should not be wrapped and may be dropped off to the Lund Care Center, Building #4. If it is after hours or on the weekend and the administration area is closed, please leave items at a nurse’s station.

Finally, monetary contributions are always appreciated and need to be sent to:
CLM Foundation, 134 Marwood Road, Cabot, PA 16023.

If your congregation or individual members are interested in “adopting a resident,” please call:

CABOT

Jaime White (personal care): 724-352-1571 ext. 8302

Brandy Muth (skilled nursing): 724-352-1571 ext. 8241

ORCHARD

Jodi Macko (personal care): 724-285-4490

HARMONY PHYSICAL REHABILITATION (Concordia of Monroeville)

Diana McDade: 412-119-3960



Concordia of Monroeville

Concordia Lutheran Ministries is providing special pricing for our church members at our Monroeville community for a retirement apartment. Concordia of Monroeville also provides short-term rehabilitation, personal care and long-term nursing care.

All these services under one roof just outside the heart of Monroeville's business district, 10 minutes from the Monroeville Mall and one mile from the PA Turnpike (Rt. 76) and Parkway East (Rt. 376). Pair this convenience with a staff that is dedicated to delivering outstanding care and more than likely, you have found the place you have been looking for.

We think you will only need one visit to see that Concordia of Monroeville offers the best value around. For more information about our different care levels and services or to schedule a free consultation you can call our Concordia of Monroeville Director of Admissions at 412-373-3900.





Concordia Lutheran Ministries Ways to give during COVID-19

As we continue to combat this pandemic together, we at Concordia have been so grateful for the tremendous support we've received from the community. Many people have asked how they can make a difference during these challenging times.

Here are a few ways that you can help Concordia while still maintaining social distancing:

Participate in our card/video campaign for our residents and patients.

To send cards for our residents to enjoy, please contact the Activities Department at the location you are interested in sending them. To send a video message, email us at SendASmile@concordialm.org.

Make or donate any type of masks or other personal protective equipment (PPE). There is no shortage of PPE for daily use at Concordia, but if you would like to help us prepare for our long-term supply needs, please contact our purchasing director at: 724-352-1571, ext. 8374.

Give the gift of a companion.

Some people have chosen to give toward our acquisition of lifelike robotic pets that help our residents cope with loneliness – especially during this time of social distancing. Please call our Foundation office at 724-352-1571, ext. 8363 for more details.

Making a tribute gift in honor of your loved ones.

Tribute giving is a heartfelt way to recognize, honor and celebrate your loved ones or the staff that are helping to care for them. With a tribute gift, you continue to support our mission of providing faith-based, quality care to those who need it most. You can give online at Give.ConcordiaLM.org and click the "GIVE NOW" button or mail to the CLM Foundation at 134 Marwood Rd, Cabot, PA 16023.

If you are interested in helping with any of these initiatives, please contact the Foundation Office at 724-352-1571, ext. 8363 or giving@concordialm.org.

For the most up-to-date information on Concordia's COVID-19 response, visit www.ConcordiaLM.org

Your Dream for Free:

Let Concordia pay for your nursing degree!



recently forged a partnership that will provide amazing opportunities for our community members interested in earning a degree in nursing!

How it works:

- ◆ Apply and earn acceptance into BC3's Nursing Program
- ◆ Apply for Concordia's BC3 Tuition Assistance Program by visiting www.concordialm.org or scanning this QR code to the right
- ◆ Graduate in two years
- ◆ Begin your new career as Registered Nurse with Concordia, debt free!

Quick Q & A:

Q: Will Concordia pay for all of my tuition or a portion of it?

A: In the program, your tuition is FULLY PAID by Concordia!

Q: Do I have to work for Concordia while in school?

A: No, however, if you do commit to 5-6 days a month, Concordia will also reimburse the cost of your books!

Q: What kind of nursing position will I have with Concordia?

A: Concordia has 16 locations across western Pennsylvania that offer inpatient care or residence, and our home health, hospice, and private duty service lines serve 13 counties – so we have a wide variety of nursing positions available!



Interested in a closer look at Concordia?

Call 724.352.1571 x8372 to schedule a personal appointment with a safe distance tour of the Concordia at Cabot campus! Concordia is blessed to be able to give back to our local community members with this amazing opportunity! Email BC3NursingProgram@concordialm.org to learn how you can turn your dream into a reality!