



THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN

VOL 97, NO 2, March 2021

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PALM DEVOTION

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

"Lenten Optimism"

For it pleased the Father that in [Jesus] all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight — if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister. (Colossians 1:19-23)



In our churches and in our homes, the observation of Holy Lent deepens through this month of March. From the joy of Bread of Life Sunday on the fourteenth to the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the sudden and jarring reading of St. Matthew's Passion account on the same day, we tumble into the depths of human depravity and shame. The last few days of March will leave us in dark Gethsemane and take us to the foot of the cross.

How easy it is for us to look at the secret plot against Jesus, His unjust trial, and His brutal suffering on the cross and get emotional. Anger at the rulers, disappointment in the crowds, or sorrow over such a senseless loss are all reasonable and understandable emotional responses. The Passion of our Lord is a story that has been played out countless times in human history, literature, and art. Injustice and mob mentality are the stuff of human tragedy. No culture or civilization have been immune to these sinful traits.

But, dear Christian, let us move beyond the purely emotional response to these things. Let us see ourselves standing in unjust judgment, in the jeering crowd, and as the witnesses silenced by fear. Let us see our own complicity in the passion of our Lord and let us see that the world's sin is, in fact, our sin. Let us see that it is we who have destroyed the peace that should exist between ourselves and our neighbors – ourselves and our God. May the emotions of Lent drive us to our knees at the foot of the cross to cry out, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!"

PALM NEWS

(cont.) And then, dear Christian, let us lift up our eyes and see Jesus answering that very prayer. See Him on the cross suffering for our sin. See Him suffer our alienation, the punishment for our wicked works. See Him die our death and be buried in our grave. See the mercy and love of God in Jesus as He reconciles us. Let us see Lent as the Springtime of our lives in which Jesus Christ makes us new, holy, blameless, and above reproach.

Looking over the landscape of this sinful world, in the midst of tragedy, injustice, and death, we see the Holy Cross of Jesus. Seeing the Cross, we see hope, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Our Lenten devotion is an optimistic one as it is firmly fixed on the Cross of Jesus. Rather than being a six week funeral for Jesus, Holy Lent is a time of penitence rooted in hope. It is a time of optimism founded upon the promise of God in Christ Jesus who has made peace for us through the blood of His cross.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March

10. Concordia BC3 partnership and scholarship program seminar, Haven I dining room, Cabot, 1:00 to 1:45 pm and 2:00 to 2:45 pm. Deadline to register: Friday, March 5th.

12. Coast to Coast Virtual Concert see Upcoming Special Events for details.

Lenten Services

Tri-Parish

Mar. 3 - A Prisoner Pardoned, John 18:33-40 @ BETHEL, Glenshaw, 7:00 p.m.

Mar. 10 - A Painful Presentation, John 19:1-7 @ ST JOHN'S, Millvale, 7:00 p.m.

Mar. 17 - The Prerogatives of Power, John 19:8-12 @ ZION, Lawrenceville, 7:00 p.m.

Mar. 24 - The Pronouncement of Punishment, John 19:12-16 @ BETHEL, Glenshaw, 7:00 p.m.



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

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<http://www.palmpa.org>



February 2021

Lutheran Student Fellowship & International Student Ministry

Written By: Judy Rodgers, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bristol, CT and Pastor Eric Andrae, Lutheran Student Fellowship of Pittsburgh

“I am so grateful for having Pastor Andrae as a mentor during my time in college.”

Grace Aquilina

Did you know that Pastor Andrae serves on the Advisory Council of the [Beatrice Institute](#)? The Beatrice Institute is an ecumenical learning and research community based in Pittsburgh that serves students, faculty, and the broader public.

Mentors Make a Difference!

As you know, our campus ministry is Lutheran – intentionally, and with integrity and authenticity; at the same time, we serve any and all, and seek to do so winsomely in the name of him who is Lord of all. As we serve and connect with other Christians, mutually edifying relationships have been initiated, formed, and sustained. Some of this has been through Pastor Andrae’s work with the Beatrice Institute.

Two students Pastor Andrae mentored through their time as Christian Studies Fellows at the Beatrice Institute received the high honor of being named recipients of Barry Scholarships. This award is reserved for graduate students at the University of Oxford. Both women will pursue their studies this coming fall while affiliating with the [Canterbury Institute](#) as fellows. Truth, virtue, sincerity and respect while pursuing knowledge were the focus of the scholarship committee in choosing recipients.



Sheyann McPherson & Grace Aquilina at a Beatrice Institute event (with Pastor Andrae) in 2019

<p><i>“My three years as a fellow of the Beatrice Institute have provided me with incredible friendships and mind-stretching discussions that have grown me both as an academic and as a Christian.”</i></p> <p><i>Sheyann McPherson</i></p>	<p>“I met Pastor Andr� through the Beatrice Institute, an ecumenical community of students and faculty in Pittsburgh during my sophomore year at the University of Pittsburgh. Over the next three years, I came to deeply appreciate his supportive friendship and guidance both academically and spiritually. Although we did not share the same faith tradition (I am an Anabaptist from the Bruderhof church) our relationship was built on our common ground rather than the differences within our faith traditions. I especially appreciated ongoing conversations we had on topics such as how to participate in classroom discussions that contradict my faith, the role of women in the Church, and the meaning and application of certain texts such as the letters of Paul or Christ's words in Revelation, ‘Behold I stand at the door and knock.’ My life has now taken me far from Pittsburgh, but the friendship and support I have received from Pastor Andr� has proven important for my life's trajectory far beyond my undergraduate years, and I hope will continue for many years to come.” – Sheyann McPherson, Pitt, December 2020 graduate</p> <p>“I am so grateful for having Pastor Andr� as a mentor during my time in college. He always took my questions and interests seriously, often following up when he had given them more thought to send me resources, prayers, or hymns that reminded him of me. As a Roman Catholic, I appreciated both his eagerness to help me work through questions within my tradition and his openness about his deep love for Lutheranism. I appreciated his kindness and generosity so much, and I’m so glad to call him a friend.” – Grace Aquilina, Duquesne, August 2019 graduate</p>
<p>Lutheran Student Fellowship (LSF) & International Student Ministry (ISM)</p> <p>535 N Neville St Pittsburgh, PA 15213 www.LSFPgh.com</p> <p>412-683-4121</p>	<p>We Appreciate You!</p> <p>Your campus mission is still serving the needs of students; God's work continues through your campus ministry, and we need your support.</p> <p>Please, especially in these difficult times for us all, support the ministry financially.</p> <p>You can donate online: scroll about halfway down at http://lsfpgh.com/donate/ OR for no-fee, secure giving, go to the NEW giving portal at http://www.firsttrinity.net/donate/</p> <p>and choose “Campus Ministry” from the drop-down menu (for recurring giving options, just follow the directions to sign up or contact me). 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.</p> <p>If you are a Thrivent member, please contribute through Thrivent Choice to "Lutheran Student Fellowship of Pittsburgh, PA".</p> <p>MOST IMPORTANTLY, PLEASE PRAY FOR US, AS I DO IN GRATITUDE FOR YOU. THANK YOU!</p>

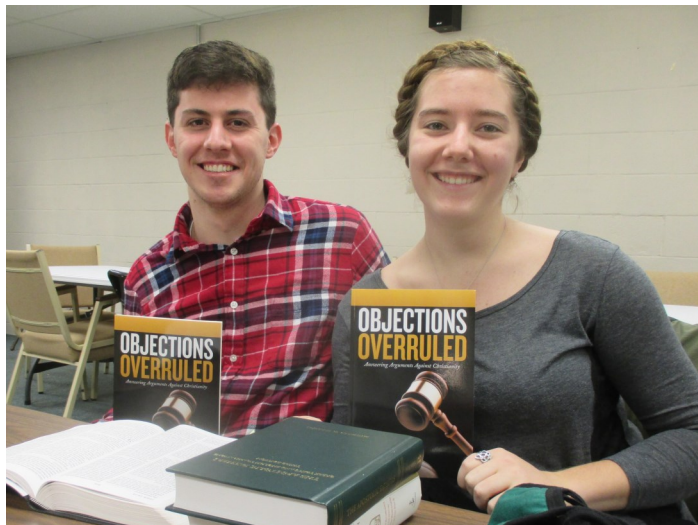
SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

by Augusta R. Mennell, Campus Ministry Director

God Opens Doors

What are some of the ways that God uses to open the hearts of college students to faith? The methods God uses are just amazing.

After a long winter break students from Slippery Rock University, Grove City College, and Westminster College came back to study online or in the classroom. While they were gone All Saints Fellowship kept in touch by telephoning them to tell them they were in our prayers. They appreciated the calls.



Consequently, it was normal to call students like Natty and his wife Holly (not their real names) on the first day that SRU began classes. Natty from Sri Lanka is an SRU graduate. His wife Holly is an undergraduate from Pennsylvania. He is Buddhist, while she is a Christian due to her grandmother's influence. I called thinking they would just enjoy a hello from me and an invitation to come and visit when they had time. Natty used to come in when he was an undergraduate because his father had suffered severe health problems and he needed to talk. He had also called when he needed help finding the right car to buy. But this time, much to my surprise and pleasure, Natty asked if we could visit that very afternoon.

Their visit turned out to be a great opportunity to share friendship and, most importantly, more faith. They excitedly told me about their plans to help others after they finish their studies. They described their decision not to have children; a decision they had made for several reasons: they believe they can do more worthwhile work by helping people who need help and by supporting helpless animals. Also, they realize how much effort it takes to raise a child. They commented on the "stress" it puts on parents to raise a child. They showed their photos of their three rescued cats who are spoiled and a bit naughty. Their cats filled their lives with love.

As the conversation developed I asked Natty, a Buddhist, what he believes about life. He said he believes that "what will be will be." Holly then said that she believes in being kind. She does not attend church at this time. I met Holly after she had married Natty. At that time she had not seemed concerned about his faith, but when I asked Natty what he believes about God, her face grew animated. Clearly she did care and was glad the topic had been broached. God had opened the door by giving us time to talk about what Christians believe. God also gave an opportunity to give Natty an easy-to-understand book called How Good Is Good Enough by Andy Stanley, which goes to the heart of faith: it argues that all other religions say good works will get you into heaven and only Christianity says that Jesus is the only way.

Natty said he does not usually read books in print form, but Holly volunteered that she would and she would share it with him. My prayer is that Holly and I can meet for lunch, even though she has classes and two jobs, so that she can learn more about Jesus. Natty works, too. We pray that he will join us. We thank God for this open door to faith.

Another book which could open students' hearts to faith is Objection Overruled. A copy of this book was sent to All Saints campus ministry free of charge. It was sent by Issuesetc.org. Rev. Marius Zill, LCMS director of campus ministry and LCMS.U wrote "I commend Objection Overruled to everyone, but especially to high school seniors and college freshmen." After reading the book All Saints campus ministry ordered several copies, which we will give to our college students as a Valentine's Day gift from All Saints. We want them to see that "sound reason and science are allies, rather than antagonists to their Christian faith," as Rev. Zill comments. We look forward to sharing copies with international and American college students especially to students like Natty and Holly. Our amazing God will no doubt use this book to open college students' hearts to faith.

LOCAL MISSION

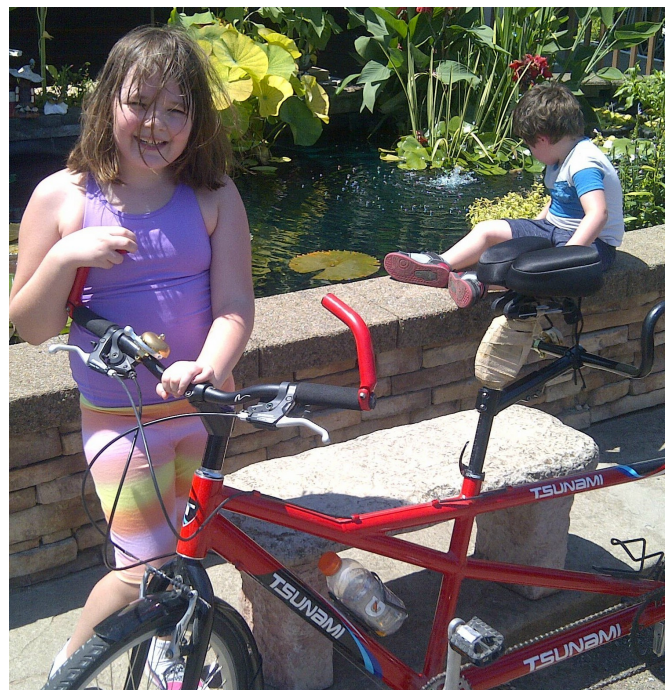
MILEPOSTERS NEWS

The groundhog saw his shadow, placing a damper on Mileposters rides for six weeks. Meanwhile, vest-pocket games events are taking place, with checkers, chess, and air hockey. Our newest members, six-year-old twins, enjoyed a game on January 17 (pictured).

It is time to look back on the year 2020. The Mileposters have been riding since 1997--23 years. Over 124 different children have participated, riding bikes for one, two, three, four, and five persons.

For 2020 there were 20 members. Nine adults assisted in various ways; five of those were tandem captains, taking the lead position on multiple-place bikes on the trail. One of the five was a new captain who joined us during the year. Eleven kids rode as stokers, behind captains, sometimes riding a single bike alone. Fifteen different bikes made it possible to have the right bike for every rider. A stoker-forward tandem was added during the year. City steps events, walking, helped us weather the pandemic. One movie event was held right before the coronavirus took hold; three of those in attendance became new riders--the stokers are pictured at the fishpond on the Riverfront Trail, July 29 (the girl is happy because she had never been able to ride a bike before--on a tandem, it became possible). A fourth new rider from another family joined us as well.

Over 49 rides, starting at over eight different trailheads on more than three different trails, resulted in 3,046 miles ridden to raise support for LCMS ministry in Puerto Rico. As of February 10, 816 miles have been logged for the 2021 campaign. Soli Deo Gloria.



HOUSES OF WORSHIP SERIES

Our Houses of Worship

By Shirley Freyer

Christ Lutheran Church, New Castle

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“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” – 2 Corinthians 6:18

Home is where the story of Christ Lutheran Church begins. It is the starting place of hope where memories were created, and friends become family in Christ. All are part of the household of God.



On Easter Sunday, April 12, 1925 a group of 24 gathered at 29 Beckford Street in New Castle, Pennsylvania to form Christ Lutheran Church led by Rev, George F.W. Hegele until late 1926. The congregation affiliated with The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States (LC-MS) and ordained and installed Candidate Walter R. Sommerfeld who served until 1945 when he accepted the call to Christ in Forest Hills where he served until his retirement.

But the congregation had no church home until February 7, 1937 when the current building was dedicated in three services led by local pastors, Revds. Daniel Goerss, A.G. Merkens and H.R. Lindke. Those founders – the Brenners, the Gunthers, the Hartfelders, the Schmidts, William Huber, F. Reiter, M. Schenker, and M. Reinhart met in their homes and as their families grew, they worshipped in the Y.M.C.A., Woodmen’s Hall in downtown New Castle and other denominational churches.

In 1945 a parsonage was purchased for the new pastor, Rev. Martin Lobeck. Through the dedicated efforts of the Ladies’ Aid Society, a new Moeller pipe organ was installed on Aug. 28, 1948 – refurbished exactly 66 years later, so noteworthy that it captured a cover story in the local daily newspaper. An excerpt from that article in the Aug. 29, 2014 edition of the New Castle News reads, “Built by what was once the world’s largest pipe organ maker ... in addition to its 328 pipes, the instrument has a percussion component: Deagan Cathedral Chimes, 25 bells that previously were hidden inside the pipe room, but which now have been hung in a Trinity configuration on a wall of the sanctuary.”

Pastor Lobeck accepted a call to Mt, Calvary in West View replaced by Rev. Herbert Poellot from McKees Rocks, a few months later.

An Education wing was constructed on the left side of the sanctuary in 1964, five years after Rev. Harold Held was installed. The new addition housed the expansion of the Sunday School. It included nine classrooms, and a multi-purpose room. Currently, that expansion has been converted to four classrooms, a library, a nursery, a pastor’s office and a secretary’s office as well as the multi-purpose room. Pastor Held served for nearly 40 years until his retirement in 1998.

A Renovation Committee was formed in 2003 to rescue what the group called “the tired look.” Through the help of a bequest, an elevator and the modernization of the facility for handicapped accessibility was completed during the tenure of Rev. James Zang who arrived in 2004 and served until 2008.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP SERIES

On July 12, 2009, Rev. Sean Walters was called from Concordia, St. Louis Seminary, ordained and installed. He and his wife, Angela were what he calls “military brats” and lived in Germany and Belgium longer than the United States. He served in the military for eight years and after he finished college, he became a police officer. Prior to God’s call he was a corporate sales rep for an aluminum company. The couple has two sons and three grandchildren who live in the New Castle area. “We have made our home here,” he said. “We love the people here. It is a good core group with a focus on God,” he continued.

Pastor Walters, for one is glad that the generations who preceded him at Christ Lutheran, as well as the one to whom he ministers, have been faithful stewards of their pipe organ. “The beautiful music we have has a rich history in itself and is beautifully played on the organ,” he said. “It could be played on a keyboard, but it doesn’t sound near the same.

Of course, behind every good pastor is a devoted wife. Angela is a Sunday School teacher, altar guild president and director of the Caring & Sharing Committee. This ministry has played an essential role this past pandemic year as it exists to reach out to homebound parishioners as well as anyone who is in need through phone calls, greeting cards, even frozen meals – basically to let people know we are thinking of them and care for them, explained retired nurse, Carol Flamino.

Christ’s founders left a legacy of names that are still recognizable today. In fact, it is estimated that perhaps nearly one third of its current membership are not only a “family in Christ” as their website posts, but generations of Brenners, Gunthers, and Reiters. The Christian spirit of its charter members lives on in the lives of their children.



Acting Congregational President Jamie Reiter Maslyk is a lifelong member. Baptized in 1971, she came home to church again in 2000 when her niece was baptized. No matter where you go, your heart brings you back where you began, “I found a new vein of family,” Jamie said. “Our members treat you like family and welcome you to come as you are.” That atmosphere reaches out into the community where, according to Jamie, their church has specific goals. “We are there for people who don’t know God loves them.”

The congregation is most interested in getting people to know Christ. Some years ago, she was inspired by Gary Janetcke’s Awakening Series hosted by church leadership. Not only did those in attendance analyze Christ’s strengths and weaknesses, but they also attended classes to teach women how to sew, balance checkbooks, read recipes, and life skills in general. As a result, she initiated a Facebook group to post the church schedule soon evolving into a conduit for Lawrence County events.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP SERIES

Her evangelism spread to her own family when her mother-in-law witnessed her joy in her church work and how her faith strengthened her. Janet Maslyk became a Lutheran and teaches Sunday School and serves on the Altar Guild.

Members have continued to invest time and dollars in seminars that teach outreach. “Just before the pandemic we were enrolled in a program called ‘Refocusing to Advance the Church’s Calling,’ part of a Missional Pathways curriculum,” said Carol who serves as church organist, historian and financial secretary. Saturday sessions offered core group training for methods to spread the Word. She too is a lifelong member with founders’ roots. Her grandmother was a charter member and her mother, Emma Schlumberger served as the organist 40 years ago before Carol inherited the post.

Pastor’s website welcome reiterates their mission – “to follow our Lord’s final command and to make disciples of all people ... have the boldness to tell unbelievers and the unchurched the Good News about Jesus Christ,” and their focus on community involvement.

Coupling the mission and the focus has led them to establish a Prayer Shawl Ministry, work with the city rescue mission to provide local food distribution, contribute to the Bair Foundation for foster children and create Operation Lifeline, remembering our troops with extra supplies. Block parties and the delivery of Easter Eggs introduced the neighborhood to the efforts of the church.

“We are always wondering what we can do,” both Carol and Jaime agreed. “It’s just what you do.” And sometimes it does reap additional attendance. A group home, La Casa, located down the street from the church houses 12 men. Pastor teaches a Bible Study there and someone occasionally provides haircuts, another teaches crafts, and the men attend worship at Christ. On holidays, they are remembered with gifts and dinner from the congregation.

Church secretary since 2013, Patty Sankey and Carol are living proof of the church’s motto “where friends become family in Christ.” They were born exactly a month apart, baptized, catechized, confirmed and now work for Christ Lutheran as third generation founders. “My Godmother is currently the oldest member,” Patty proudly professed. Doris Arbuster is homebound but keeps up with what is happening at church. “This church is a special place to us. Our roots are here, and we wouldn’t want to be anywhere else,” Patty declared. “There’s a bond that can’t be broken.”

Carol chimes in, “This is where the family started, where you come; it’s part of our lives. It’s home.” Another former member shares her memories of Christ Lutheran. Sharon Gunther Weldon reminisced. “My grandmother, Helen Gunther was one of the charter members. Her children grew up in that church. My parents met there in Walther League (Dorothy Detke and Henry Gunther) and were married there by Rev. Walter Sommerfeld in 1944. They greatly admired Rev. Sommerfeld and stayed in touch with him after he left. I can remember visiting with him and his family at their parsonage at Christ, Forest Hills. In fact, John (Sharon’s husband, Pastor John Weldon) served with him as a summer intern for two summers during our seminary days. Rev. Sommerfeld participated in our marriage ceremony.

“My sister, Linda (Yaro) and I also grew up in the church. We were baptized by Rev. Sommerfeld and confirmed by Rev. Herbert Poellot. I remember Christmas programs, sauerkraut suppers, good times in Walther League, my parents going to Fellowship Club, a group for adult members.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP SERIES

“Many of our extended family were also members there. My uncle was the longtime treasurer, my aunt a longtime organist, and some of my cousins are still members. Christ Lutheran was my church in my growing-up years until I turned 18 and our family moved away. I still hold many fond memories of our time there.”

Her sister, Linda sent this message, “My grandparents, August & Helen Gunther were founding members of Christ Lutheran Church. My father (their son) & my mother were married there. I was baptized there, confirmed there, & married there. It holds a special place in my heart. I am very grateful for my cousins who have joined Christ Lutheran over the last years & have improved the building itself & have kept the congregation engaged & growing over the years. It is one of the healthy churches left in New Castle. May the Lord bless it always.”

For 96 years the people of Christ Lutheran Church by faith have worked to establish the kingdom of God in their midst. Their steadfast faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, their continuing labors to keep the true teaching of the Word of God, the administration of the Sacraments according to Christ’s institution in their community, their witness of this faith, and practice according to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church have written the history of Christ Lutheran Church (from the 50th Anniversary book) ... a place they call home, reaching back to find the future.



SCHOOL NEWS

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Oakmont / Penn Hills

<http://rlspittsburgh.org/>

The final week of January was Lutheran Schools Week, a celebration of all Lutheran Schools across the country. This was also National School Choice Week, a chance to celebrate the ability of parents and families to choose the best educational options for their children.

--Did you know?--

“Schools in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod serve children in early childhood programs through grade 12 in over 1,900 schools nationwide and 3 schools internationally. Additionally, 9 colleges and universities operate to serve post-secondary and graduate students across the nation.” (LuthEd)

We have many Lutheran schools in the Pittsburgh area! Redeemer in Verona offers a preschool – 12th grade education, St. Luke’s in Butler offers a preschool – 8th grade education, and many area churches have Lutheran preschools. Your support of these schools is needed to help them continue to show the love of Christ to their students and their families while equipping them for a life of Christian citizenship and discipleship.

“One empty chair means one less child hearing the gospel” – (Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Schools)

To celebrate the week, Redeemer hosted a variety of fun dress-up days and events. Students had pajama day, crazy hair and sock day, and school spirit day, just to name a few. Each class also participated in a door decorating contest to display Biblical characters that exemplified our theme, “Sent to Serve.” We had service events that included writing special notes with Bible verses to be given to the homeless and collecting snacks for the hardworking staff in our local assisted living facilities. Students also joined thousands across the nation on a virtual mission field trip to Thailand each day. It was a busy, joyful week. Be sure to check out our Facebook page for all the pictures and updates.

Circumstances haven’t kept Redeemer from participating in winter activities! Thanks to the efforts of Redeemer coaches as well as coaches at area schools, the basketball season for middle and high school is in full swing. National Honor Society has been very busy, organizing an e-recycling collection in January and the annual Valentine’s Day grams in February. The robotics program has also continued, with the middle school team gearing up for competition. Performing arts is likewise in full swing, gearing up for the musical presentation of Annie in April. We are thankful to the Lord and to everyone involved for making all of these activities possible for our students!

Enrollment for 2021/2022 is now open! Visit our website to apply, or contact our admissions counselor, Mrs. Jackson, for a tour! rlspittsburgh.org, 412-793-LUTH

We continue to be blessed to be in school 5 days a week!

Please contact us for more information and follow us on Facebook: Redeemer Lutheran School
Please keep Redeemer Lutheran School in your daily prayers.

SCHOOL NEWS

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

Middle school boys basketball team competes against Cheswick Christian



6th grade class enjoys PJ Day during Lutheran Schools Week

Bible encouragement notecards to share with 1st Trinity homeless ministry



Door decorating contest winner, 9th/10th grade classes

SCHOOL NEWS

ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Bridgeville

The man came down, down, down, and Jesus raised him up, up, up!

This was the rhyme Pastor taught the children during our Chapel lesson last week. Each week we gather in the sanctuary to hear another Bible story taught by Pastor. In non-COVID years, the children would sit together on the steps in front of the altar and listen intently as the story was being told. This year the children are sitting in the pews in their “classroom bubbles”. At first, I was not happy about changing the way we had to do Chapel ... the children could not sit together, or interact with each-other ... just another thing COVID was interfering with!

As the weeks went on I realized that I was focused on the wrong thing. As I sat in the pew behind the children I realized that not only were they still loving every minute of Chapel, but now they were able to see our beautiful cross with Jesus ... their little eyes were now focused on Christ, as mine should have been all along, and not focused on the logistics that were not appealing to me.

We were still able to gather and hear the Word of God just like the many people who came to hear Jesus teach and heal the paralytic man. So many people came to hear Jesus teach, to hear his Father’s word. They did not care if they were inside or outside of the house, sitting on the steps of the altar, or in the pews ...hearing the word of God is all that matters.

I pray that we can all keep our eyes focused on Christ, and not the challenges we each face daily. Look up to Christ to get us through those challenges.



Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Schools

by Terry Terhune

This past year has been truly unprecedented, hasn’t it? Despite the many challenges experienced due to COVID-19 health concerns, many of our local Lutheran schools continue to teach students, not only excellent academics, but most importantly the love of Jesus Christ.

Children, preschool through high school, are able to meet in safe environments and grow in faith, body, and mind.

Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Schools (PALS) is honored to support 11 schools in Western Pennsylvania and their students and families. For the current school year, scholarships awards through PALS have made Lutheran education affordable for 149 students. Scholarship funds are made possible through the generosity of Concordia Lutheran Ministries, corporate contributions through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, and individual donors.

PALS has a part-time position available for a Director of Development who would help expand the assistance that PALS provides to Lutheran schools and the impact they have in our local communities. If you are interested in this paid position, or would like to support PALS through a contribution or the EITC program, please contact us at palspgh@gmail.com.

CHRIST LUTHERAN

Forest Hills

Christ Lutheran is ministering to its members in new ways. New to us. We send the printed worship services, announcements, puzzles and the weekly sermon to people who have requested them. They could be shut ins or people who are sheltering at home because of the Covid 19 virus and don't have access to the internet or are uncomfortable with it.

We also now are streaming live on Facebook. On Mondays the service is uploaded to YouTube. People who have access to the world wide web can actually view the services. They can also download a copy of the worship service and follow along while watching online. The hymns are printed in the service folder, so if one is familiar with the music, he or she can sing also.

Look for us on the web at www.christlutheranfh.org, [Facebook](#), and YouTube: [Christ Lutheran Church Forest Hills PA](#)

MT. CALVARY

Westview

Once the Christmas holidays were over and the new year began, Mt. Calvary's Tuesday Outreach Group did not waste any time getting started on its next project. Those who attend each week made 55 Easter gifts for the folks on Meals on Wheels from the North Boroughs/Sewickley Area. One of ladies found directions for a clever item - how to make a "bunny" out of a bar of soap and a washcloth. The finished product is both adorable and practical, but the ladies are betting nobody will want to take them apart to use them. Gift bags including candy and a bookmark made from recycled cards completed the gift.

Additionally, the team was helping to plan a project for a group of Girl Scout Daisies that has been meeting in the church for a few months. More information will be forthcoming next month.

Sunday services are continuing in person and - thanks to Jim and Dawna Heinrichs - are also available online through Zoom. The latter are especially appreciated on snowy Sunday mornings.



NEWS FROM AREA CONGREGATIONS

ZION LUTHERAN

Lawrenceville

Since 2009, Zion Ladies Aid has raised more than \$2100 for local missions through its “Hearts for Jesus” annual fundraiser. This year all proceeds will be donated to Redeemer Lutheran School. Members and friends simply honor or memorialize loved ones with a paper heart for \$5 each. Donors are published in the weekly bulletin.



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 Service every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee...



Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world!



Holy Cross Evangelical-Lutheran Chapel, your mission church in the Hazelwood neighborhood of the City of Pittsburgh, has celebrated several milestones. Begun as a missionary endeavor in 2017, Holy Cross has now been served by two volunteer pastors and two full-time vicars. Having grown to a little over a dozen people in 2019, we



were blessed to acquire a suitable church building in which our missionary outreach has flourished for over a year. With thirty members and a worshipping community regularly attending services on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday each week, the little congregation is well on its way to becoming an established voice of the Gospel in our city.

We invite you to participate in the blessings of the establishment of this new congregation. Holy Cross has been blessed through a broad partnership with PALM, First Trinity, the English District, Concordia Lutheran Ministries, the Office of National Mission of the LCMS, the Heinz Endowments, and faithful Christians like you.

We ask that you:

- Pray for Holy Cross as the mission continues to be established.
- Visit Holy Cross in person to pray with us. Our schedule of services may be found at www.HolyCrossPGH.info.
- Support Holy Cross with your time and talents. Volunteer with our neighborhood food and clothing outreach or speak with Vicar Hasselbrook about other ways that you can help.
- Support Holy Cross with your generous gifts. We have been blessed to be able to meet our budget every year through good stewardship of the gifts that we have been given. Please consider a generous gift to enable us to finish 2021 in a strong financial position. You may give online at www.HolyCrossPGH.info (scroll to the form at the bottom of the page) or by sending a check to:



**Holy Cross Lutheran Chapel
c/o Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries
535 N Neville Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213**



Thank you for all your prayers and support and thank God for blessing Pittsburgh with this wonderful mission church!

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Concordia Lutheran Ministries

BC3 is coming to Concordia for an informational presentation about our partnership and scholarship program! The focus of this presentation will be on the first steps and pre-requisites needed, application deadlines and transcript requirements to begin your journey through Nursing School!

When: Wednesday, March 10th

Session 1- 1:00 to 1:45 pm

Session 2- 2:00 to 2:45pm

Where: Haven I dining room at the Cabot campus

Deadline to register Friday, March 5th

See the flyer on page 24 for more details. Spread the word! Know someone that might be interested? This is also open to community members!



Tri-Parish

Members of Bethel, Glenshaw, St. John's Millvale and Zion Lawrenceville will worship together at Lenten services each Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Dan Hahn and Vicar Donn Woolweber have chosen the theme, "Crucified Under Pontius Pilate."

Mar. 3 - A Prisoner Pardoned, John 18:33-40 @ BETHEL

Mar. 10 - A Painful Presentation, John 19:1-7 @ ST JOHN'S

Mar. 17 - The Prerogatives of Power, John 19:8-12 @ ZION

Mar. 24 - The Pronouncement of Punishment, John 19:12-16 @ BETHEL



Christ Lutheran, Forest Hills

Concordia University Chicago's Wind Symphony has partnered with the Symphonic Band of Sheboygan Lutheran High School in Wisconsin to present "From Coast to Coast: Praising Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The concert will be live streamed to congregations throughout the United States, and Christ Lutheran Church, Forest Hills is invited to attend this virtual event. The concert will take place March 12 at 8:30 p.m. Visit www.lutheranhigh.com/coast-to-coast-concert to access the live stream or join the congregation at Christ. They have parking available as well as enough room to social distance. Call the church secretary at 412.271.7173 to make reservations at or e-mail emails@christlutheranf.org.

Concordia at Rebecca Residence Campus Names Phil Ricci Executive Director

Concordia Lutheran Ministries President & CEO Keith Frndak recently named Phil Ricci Executive Director of the Concordia at Rebecca Residence campus, Concordia's continuing care retirement community in Allison Park that includes the Concordia retirement living community Highpointe at Rebecca.

Ricci, a Pittsburgh native, has more than 20 years of healthcare experience, serving in several roles at nursing and rehabilitation facilities in the region. He holds a BS in Health Sciences and a master's degree in occupational therapy from Duquesne University. In his new role, Ricci will oversee personal care and skilled nursing care at Concordia at Rebecca Residence as well as retirement living at the neighboring Highpointe at Rebecca.

"Concordia's reputation for excellent, high-quality care is what drew me to work for this organization," Ricci said.

Ricci lives in Treesdale with his wife Nicole and their two young children. He is excited to get to know his new Concordia family as well.

"I find that working with my wonderful team and spending time with our residents and patients are the most rewarding aspects of my new role," Ricci said. "I'm looking forward to expanding these relationships in the future."

To learn more about the many career opportunities at Concordia at Rebecca Residence, visit our website at ConcordiaRebeccaResidence.org.

Crocheting for a Cause

At Concordia Lutheran Ministries, many of our residents utilize their hobbies to help others. Concordia at Cabot Oertel Care Center resident Kathryn Barch has personally donated over 500 crocheted items to different schools, churches and charity organizations across the country. She started crocheting after her daughter introduced her to the hobby four years ago, and it became a favorite pastime. Now she crochets two items a day and makes hats to give to people in need. "I love to do it, it keeps me busy and I hope it helps people who need it," she said. Thank you for all you do Kathryn! Interested in learning more about this caring community? Visit: www.ConcordiaCabot.org.



HOW TO RECOGNIZE SEASONAL DEPRESSION IN SENIORS

The winter months bring the joy of celebrating the holiday season with friends and family members, but the shorter days and lack of sunlight can also cause mood changes for certain individuals. In some cases, these changes are significant and indicative of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). According to the [National Institute on Aging](#) (NIA), "SAD is not considered a separate disorder but is a type of depression characterized by its recurrent seasonal pattern, with symptoms lasting about 4 to 5 months per year." SAD can be difficult to recognize, especially in seniors, as many symptoms are overlooked or attributed to other medical conditions. Below are several ways to detect seasonal depression in your senior loved one, especially if they are isolated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As always, discuss your concerns with a medical provider or primary care physician to receive an accurate medical assessment.

Seasonal Depression Symptoms

Depression in seniors is often overlooked, as many symptoms are common in other medical conditions or misattributed to aging. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has made it more challenging to identify depression symptoms in many seniors, as feelings of lethargy or sadness can stem from not being able to take part in daily activities, having a disrupted routine or experiencing social isolation from friends and family. If your loved one is currently isolated in a home environment or resides at a skilled nursing or senior care facility, pay particular attention to behavioral changes that seem out of the ordinary and regularly check in on your loved one. Symptoms of seasonal depression include: Fatigue, Lethargy, Social withdrawal, Insomnia, Changes in daily habits/personal hygiene, Change in temperament (increased irritability, sadness, feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness), Changes in appetite or weight, Restlessness and agitation, Anxiety, Additional physical and psychological changes.

Seasonal Depression Treatments

Treatment for seasonal depression varies depending on an individual's specific needs. However, several treatments for seasonal depression include:

- Light therapy
- Antidepressant medications
- Vitamin D supplements
- Talk therapy
- Social support

An effective long-term treatment plan might include one or more of the listed forms of care. In addition to the treatments listed above, a healthy diet, practicing mindful forms of exercise and spending time engaging in enjoyable activities can help overcome seasonal affective disorder. If your loved one is isolated at home due to COVID-19, or a resident at a skilled nursing or personal care facility, engaging in these forms of self-care can be more difficult. However, communicating regularly with your loved one through FaceTime, Skype or calling over the phone can give you an indication about how your loved one is feeling. Additionally, you can help your loved one by sending care packages filled with their favorite foods, different activities and family photos. If your senior loved one is experiencing symptoms of depression, there are [resources available to help](#). Consult with your doctor, a family member or friend and know that you can call the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Line at 1-800-273-TALK at any time.

FAQs About the COVID-19 Vaccine

Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available. Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Concordia encourages everyone to receive the vaccine.



Here are some FAQs about the COVID-19 Vaccine from the Centers for Disease Control:

Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

No. None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?

No. Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently, in clinical trials in the United States can cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, a vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection.

Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

No. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. Messenger RNA vaccines—also called mRNA vaccines—are the first COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States. mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response.

The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the mRNA cannot affect or interact with our DNA in any way.

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.

Source: Concordia Lutheran Ministries: Words of the Mouse 2/4/21

Seven Facts About COVID-19 Vaccine

For more than 10 months, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone in countless ways - and now we have a vaccine to defeat our common enemy. Along with the hope these vaccines bring, for some, there is also apprehension. To help everyone understand that the vaccines are safe, HealthPRO Heritage's Physician Consultant, Dr. James Avery (MD, CMD, FAAHPM, FCCP, FACP), shares the following points to help encourage everyone to receive the vaccine:



Twenty Years of Studies: Although it seems like the COVID-19 vaccines were produced in record time, the fact is these vaccines are based on mRNA (messenger RNA) vaccine technology, which has been studied for more than two decades and applied in the COVID-19 vaccines.

mRNA Technology: The use of this technology means that the actual virus itself is NOT used in the vaccine, but rather the mRNA elicits an immune response to specific virus characteristics.

Completion of Phase 3 Trials: Each of the vaccines has met or exceeded phase 3 trials, which requires at least 30,000 people for testing.

Mild Side Effects: Data from all trials found that less than 10% of people experienced side effects. The most common was fatigue that went away in 24-48 hours. Not a single Concordia resident or staff member has reported any significant side effects.

Efficacy: People who receive a COVID-19 vaccine are 20X less likely to become infected with COVID-19 and thus less likely to experience potential hospitalizations related to the virus. The vaccines are proven to be roughly 95% effective.

Mild Symptoms: Like the flu vaccine and contracting the flu, those people who received the vaccine and still tested positive for COVID-19 only had mild symptoms, seemingly lessening the impact of the virus.

Family Planning: The Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines do not have a live virus, therefore, the vaccine is unable to enter the nucleus to alter any DNA in recipients, nor fetuses. In addition, according to the CDC, there is no evidence to suggest there could be an increased risk of infertility.



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



Dr. Patricia Annear, EdD
MSN RN CNE

Your Dream for Free:

Taking the First Steps Towards Earning a Debt-Free Nursing Education

Dr. Annear's 3rd visit to Concordia Lutheran Ministries

Dr. Patricia Annear, Dean of Butler County Community College's Nursing and Allied Health Division, and an admissions representative will be onsite to discuss the first steps – pre-requisites needed, application deadlines and transcript requirements. They will also provide an overview of the curriculum for BC3's RN program and offer an early look at their upcoming LPN program.



Registration is recommended for each session. Please call 724-352-1571, Ext 8482 or Ext 8372, to register through the HR department.

We're excited for YOUR future!

Concordia's BC3 Tuition Assistance Program offers the unique opportunity to become a nurse for free, but how do you get started? We understand that taking the first step can be overwhelming when you're not quite sure where to begin, so we have called back the experts!

Wednesday, March 10th

Session 1: 1:00 p.m.
Session 2: 2:45 p.m.

Haven I Dining Room
Concordia Cabot Campus

Deadline to Register:
Friday, March 5th



If you are unable to attend in person, please let HR know at the time of registration and they can provide you with a Zoom link.

Please join us for this exclusive opportunity!

