



**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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The Rev. Gregory W. Frey, Pastor

**SEPTEMBER, 2020**

### **HONESTLY, DOES JESUS REALLY MATTER?**

I have been studying Jesus pretty intensely for at least 30 years and he never ceases to surprise me. There is literally no end to the discovery of who Jesus is and what he means for us but there is a beginning. The beginning is the commitment to become familiar with the essential outline of Jesus' life and the core of his teachings.

Because Americans receive most of their information via television, the opinions of those with the most airtime have the biggest platform. In the arena of Christianity on TV those who largely occupy that platform are evangelical megachurch pastors and entertainers. The image of Jesus presented by this group is mostly a figure I barely recognize, not the Jesus I have been studying in the scriptures all these years.

TV/media Jesus most often comes across as follows:

Jesus represents a God who is interminably angry with humanity and violently disposed toward us because of sin and is only restrained by having His (and the image is always a Him) anger assuaged by taking it out on His Son. Blood sacrifice is required to satisfy this God and providing that sacrifice is Jesus' essential purpose. Once believers accept that sacrifice individually they are: encouraged to live quiet lives in preparation for a non-earthly heaven after they die, abide by principles of morality organized primarily around governing their sexual practices, trust that their faith will lead them to personally successful and happy lives, and show their gratitude by giving a portion of their proceeds back to God, ostensibly by contributing to the ministry. One

day Jesus will return and *no more Mr Nice Guy*. The blood will flow in torrents as the earth is destroyed and your only hope is to be one of the few granted space on the heavenly transport out of here.

Of course, there is more, and this is an over simplification but if I watch any clip of "mainstream" religious television or most cultural references to Jesus in the media, I can expect to identify one or more of these themes.

This tidy narrative is popular, hardly questioned in American culture and if not a total fabrication at least a serious misrepresentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Like actual fake news (as opposed to provable events you just do not like) it takes true elements and bends them into a narrative that suits a particular agenda and purpose.

For 25 years as an ordained minister I have been struggling against this religious media creation of Jesus emphasizing that: 1) God does not hate us, 2) Jesus did not come to only or even principally to die, 3) Jesus' teaching matters a lot and it is about much more than sex, 4) Jesus (God) will never abandon the commitment to non-violence and, 5) a god who only manages to save a few while casting the majority of all who ever existed into an eternity of sadistic torture is not a god of love and not the God of Jesus Christ.

2020 has been a horrible year, will 2021 be any better? I cannot answer that question but what I can offer is an opportunity to take a deep dive into the study of who Jesus was and is and why his life and ministry, death and resurrection are such good news especially in difficult times. The real story of Jesus, the radical content of his preaching and teaching have something important to say to us, not only individually but as a society and as a world.

I am inviting you to join me in rediscovering Jesus and listening to what he may have to say to a world struggling with pandemic, our communities facing issues of social justice, and ourselves wrestling with our trust in God and hope for the future.

Beginning September 20 at 9:00 AM on Sunday mornings we will gather on ZOOM to discuss two short books by New Testament Professor Amy Jill Levine. The first is on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, a composite of

Jesus' teaching in Matthew, and the second deals with Jesus' teaching in parables. Jesus' teachings in parables are the key to understanding the direction of his ministry as a demonstration of the Kingdom of God; the new reality the baptized are called into in this life and the next.

Looking for something new this fall, something to fill in some content and meaning in your masked up, physically distant existence? Come meet Jesus again for the first time. Look for the Zoom study link in an upcoming edition of St. Paul's Eblast.

--Pastor Frey

**--WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER--**

September 3	9:00 A.M. – Holy Communion (high risk)
September 5	6:00 P.M. – Holy Communion
September 6	8:00 & 10:30 A.M. – Holy Communion
September 10	9:00 A.M. – Holy Communion (high risk)
September 12	6:00 P.M. – Holy Communion
September 13	8:00 & 10:30 A.M. – Holy Communion
September 17	9:00 A.M. – Holy Communion (high risk)
September 19	6:00 P.M. – Holy Communion
September 20	8:00 & 10:30 A.M. – Holy Communion
September 24	9:00 A.M. – Holy Communion (high risk)
September 26	6:00 P.M. – Holy Communion
September 27	8:00 & 10:30 A.M. – Holy Communion

**If you do not have internet access for the livestream service (8:00 A.M.), you may use a phone-in option. If you are on the mailing list for our weekly bulletin, the number to call will be included. If you would like the phone number (it is different each week), please call the church office.**

**FROM THE PARISH RECORDS.....**

**Baptism: Skylar Stewart**

**Funerals: July 27 – E. Gerald Levensgood  
July 29 – Pauline Trout  
Aug. 25 – June Rhoads**

**Wedding: August 23 – Kevin Bambrick & Brittney Brown**

Contributions to the **Memorial Fund** in memory of **Gerald Levensgood** given by –

Mary Graefe	Jake & Donna Rothermel
Bill & Angie Kutz	Mary Miller
Frank & Kathy Jablonski	Dave & Jan Sobotka
Sharon Danks	Chris, Tammy & Sophie Sowers
Russ & Suzy Lander	Marie Hausman, Al, and Stauffer Kutz
Marie & Bill Stupak	Doug & Lois Moser
Glenna & Donald Albitz	Barry & JoAnne Oxenford
John & Kathy Meehan	William & Ethel Hughes
Fred & Mary Ellen Hoffert	Barry & Susanne Leier
Carol Pearson	Ray & Pat Oxenford
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Galada	Calvin & Ellen Sheeler
Deborah & Gary Dorshimer	Jane Kinder
Robert & Jean Wolf	Pat Levensgood
Peggy Nailon	Rob & Sandi Levensgood
Hank & Gloria Rhoads	Pat Roland
Charles & Fern Brown	Jan Schell
Betty Brumbach	Barbara Keim
Guy & Marianne Graefe	Darvin & Mary Levensgood
Howard & Connie Hunter	Gary & Cindy Weidner
Sue Walley	Rick & Judy Weiler
James & Michelle Sauppee	Bonnie Moser

Contributions to the **Agape Fund** in memory of **Gerald Levensgood** given by –

Helen Strain  
Anna Brown

Contributions to the **Memorial Fund** in memory of **Pauline Trout** given by --

Pat Roland	Gary & Cindy Weidner
Jan Schell	Susanne Leier
Pat Levensgood	

**--YTD Giving thru July2020--**

	<u>Jan- July,2019</u>	<u>Jan-July,2020</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>% chg.</u>
Offerings	\$ 215,700	\$ 209,851	-5,848	-2.71
Vision 2020 Contr.		35,948		
Total Giving	\$ 215,700	\$ 245,799	30,099	12.24

*thank you!*

Thanks to all who have been faithfully mailing their contributions to the church office and to those who signed up for electronic giving through Simply Giving.

#### **THOUGHTS ON STUMBLING BLOCKS JOY GERHART**

I do research each week to share a little lesson via email with our Sunday school children. I quoted the Episcopal source "Lesson Plans that Work" last month, and found another passage worthy of sharing with you this month. The lesson from Matthew 16: 21-28 was paraphrased this way:

*Now that the disciples understood that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus told them what was going to happen. He let them know that he would suffer, be killed, and rise up again on the third day. Peter could not believe what he was saying and told Jesus that they could not let this happen. But Jesus told Peter, "Get out of my way, you are a stumbling block and do not understand." Then Jesus told his disciples, "Anyone who wants to follow me must let me lead them. You must leave behind what you usually do and follow what I tell you. Do not run from what is ahead of me, rather embrace it. Follow me and I will show you the way. You have to leave your way behind and follow my way in order to truly be a disciple. I promise, there will be great reward at the end." (I'm not sure the disciples really understood, but this was written for young kids, and the first part of the passage was read a whole week ago!) (This is a gentler way of saying "take up your cross and follow me.")*

We are used to hearing "Get thee behind me, Satan!" or at least I am. Our translation and this paraphrase both call Peter a stumbling block in the same verse, 16:23. In the discussion for adults, the lesson suggests these questions (and answers):

- *After getting it so right last week, I wonder why Peter gets it so wrong this week? (While Peter understands that Jesus is the Messiah, he still does not understand fully what that means. He probably is also shocked to hear what his mentor and teacher is telling him.)*
- *Now, instead of being a rock, Peter is a stumbling block. What do you think Jesus meant by this? (Peter is worried about things of this world and not the things of heaven. If he keeps this up, he will not be following the way Jesus had taught him.)*
- *I wonder what might be stumbling blocks for us? I wonder what gets in the way of us following Jesus?*
- *Jesus tells us that if we want to follow him, we must lose our lives in order to save them. I wonder what this might mean? (In order for us to really follow Jesus, we have to stop worrying about earthly things and instead focus on following God and what God is calling us to do.)*
- *What might you have to leave behind in order to more fully follow Jesus?*

That "lose our life to save it" sounds rather frightening. Most of us lead calm, complacent lives without thinking about ever having to put our life on the line. Although there may come a time, maybe it is more realistic to ponder what might be stumbling blocks for us. What gets in our way of following Jesus? That's something we can only answer individually. Of course, it is related to Sin, which we all fight daily, that tendency to turn our backs to God or separate ourselves from a right relationship with God. That's why we need Jesus to reconcile us to God, build a bridge over the chasm that separates us, blow a hole through the wall that keeps us apart.

One might think, "If Peter IS a stumbling block, what chance do I have?" That's why Peter is so great: he is so human and makes lots of blunders, but shows us that we all can be forgiven and can go on to do great things and be great disciples.

I'm also fascinated by the word "rebuke." (Who even uses that word today???) It means chide or reprove—other words we don't use

much.) I recall learning that it is appropriate for God to rebuke people, but humans should not rebuke God. What does Peter do? He rebukes Jesus! (Bad form, Peter!) Earlier this summer in our readings, God rebuked Elijah for hiding out in a cave on Mt. Sinai, and Jesus rebuked Peter for having little faith when he stepped out of the boat and onto the sea. But in this reading, Peter improperly rebukes Jesus! Wow! Does he have nerve! Jesus then rebukes Peter. Peter doesn't understand what being the Messiah means. Probably none of the disciples did, but might have been too afraid or embarrassed to say so. We can look back at Jesus' whole life and how he fulfilled so many things in Scripture, including Isaiah 52-53 describing the suffering servant. The disciples didn't make that connection yet. No one published the exact conversation that the resurrected Jesus had with the people on the road to Emmaus where he said, "The Messiah must suffer and then enter into glory," and then starting with Moses explained all things in the scriptures about him.

Of course, Peter didn't want to hear Jesus saying he had to suffer and die. We don't either! (Do you think he even heard the part about rising again?) We have to deal with pain, but I don't think anyone welcomes it. We have to deal with trials but don't enjoy them. I don't know about you, but I have this weird sense in my head that things SHOULD always go smoothly and life is intended to be happy and successful. Where does that come from? I don't think God ever promised us a rose garden, to use an old cliché. Somehow, though, I still expect life to be easy. When I think of stumbling blocks, I guess I associate them with hurdles and obstacles. I don't know how anyone in their right mind runs hurdle races, although their legs are probably much longer than mine. (At least the hurdles DO fall down if you hit them.) Hurdles and obstacles are rather scary for me, I think, because I don't like to fail (or fall). Failure can, however, make us stronger. So, what does all this have to do with stumbling blocks? Jesus recognized Peter's rebuke—his refusal to believe Jesus would have to suffer and die-- as a stumbling block.

Jesus said this stumbling block must be moved for Jesus to accomplish his mission. We need to recognize the stumbling blocks that keep us from living fully in Christ and then proceed as God's redeemed children, called to live in God's grace and share the Good News with others.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATES.....

### --Sunday School Classes this Fall

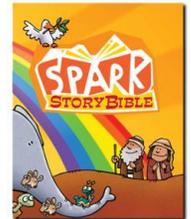
Our Christian Education Committee is working very hard to try to contact all families with children Ages 3-Grade 6 to determine what they are comfortable with and what they would participate in for Sunday School. Although it has not been completely decided, it looks like we may be offering a live multigenerational class online for families at the regular Sunday School time starting at 9:15 am. The offering may be shorter than an hour, but we hope to share Bible stories, activities and maybe even crafts for families to do at home. Families will be contacted when we have more information.

### --Rally Day September 13

The Christian Education Committee is working on putting together an outdoor scavenger hunt or outdoor orienteering event to initiate the new Sunday school year. Families of all kinds are invited to join the fun at 9:15 am on September 13. More planning needs to be done, so watch for further details about where we'll start, what we'll do, if you need to bring chairs, etc.

### --Bibles for Children

We have ordered and received a new shipment of Children's Bibles, the SPARK Story Bible that we use in our classrooms for Sunday school which has vibrant attractive artwork for 150 Bible stories. (The Bible is geared to Age 2-Grade 2 children but older children enjoy it too.) We are offering these FREE to families. All you need to do is call and pick one up at the church. Please call Joy Gerhart at the church office.



### --Adult Class in the Fall

Have you missed Sunday morning adult studies? Well, very soon, you will be able to enjoy a course Pastor Frey will be offering on The Sermon on the Mount. The course will include videos by Amy Jill Levine, University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University. The classes will be entirely on-line, and will start Sunday, September 20 at 9:15 am. Look for eblast notifications to a link for the class.

### --Adult Evening Study in September

Mark your calendar for Monday, September 21 when Pastor Frey will resume the monthly evening Bible study, on-line. The topic has not been announced, but it is bound to be fascinating. Look for an announcement of the link for this class.

### --Confirmation Class this school year

Our plan at this point is to combine grades 7-9 and have an online class on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am –hopefully with a game component, a video component, and a discussion/teaching component. We are thinking of focusing on the Old Testament for the first half of the year and the New Testament for the second half of the year. The teachers would be Kathy Jablonski and Meridith Gaskins. This would probably be done through Zoom or some comparable program. If you have not been contacted yet by phone or email and want your child registered for our confirmation class, please call Joy Gerhart at the church at 610-385-6616.

10th grade confirmation is still being discussed with its participants to decide what form it will take.

### SCHOOL CHILDREN NEED OUR HELP.....

There is still a lot of uncertainty about how school will be conducted this fall. Some area districts that were planning to hold in-person classes have recently reconsidered. Daniel Boone, as of this writing, is planning mostly in person classes for students but this could change. Our Child Care Center is making plans for how to offer support to school aged (Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade) children if all or more of their learning goes virtual. Some kids thrive in virtual classrooms and some really struggle. Our school age classrooms are staffed at a 1 to 10 ratio, but we realize that this will not be enough to offer the kind of attention some of our students will need to be successful in virtual classrooms.



Therefore, we are looking for people who might consider volunteering to spend a few hours a week as a helper to school aged children

learning online in our child care center. You do not need a teaching certificate or teaching experience, only a willingness to be present and give encouragement to students who need help. We are reaching out now, before the need, in order to establish a volunteer pool and do the advance planning necessary to activate our volunteers if the need arises.

Might this be a ministry you feel called to in these difficult and uncertain times? Our students deserve the best education possible and the leadership of St. Paul's believes this is a crucial ministry opportunity where we may serve some of the most vulnerable in our community during this pandemic crisis. If you are interested or simply would like more information, please contact Nancy Stewart at [nancy.ellen.stewart@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ellen.stewart@gmail.com) or 484-343-6457.



**Mark your calendar! The next Blood Drive** is on Monday, September 14, from 2—7:00 P.M. right here at St. Paul's. Online registration is available at [www.GIVEaPINT.org](http://www.GIVEaPINT.org). Use sponsor code 2050 or contact Rhonda Maloney at 610-858-9236.

Pat Levengood would like to express her gratitude to everyone for the prayers, words of comfort and cards she received following the death of Gerald.



### SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE UPDATE.....

The Social Ministry Committee is asking for donations to defray the cost of providing a meal to the residents of Safe Berks once a month. During the pandemic they plan to use a catering service. When the pandemic is over, the committee is looking for volunteers to prepare the meal. Please indicate on your donation that it is for the "Safe Berks meal".

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED.....

The Social Ministry Committee is again collecting school supplies for students at the Daniel Boone Middle School. The following supplies are those most needed:

Binders - (1, 1 1/2 and 2 inch)	Graph Paper - (3 hole punched)
Lined Notebook Paper (3 hole punched)	Yellow Highlighters
Tab dividers	Spiral Notebooks (one subject)
3 Ring Pocket Dividers	3x5 Index Cards
3 Prong Folders	Earbuds
#2 Pencils	Stylus (for ipads)
Pencil Case	Mini White Boards
Small Pencil Sharpener	Small Hand Sanitizer
Colored Pencils	IT 34 Calculator
Pens	
Book Covers or Book Socks (large and extra-large size)	



Your donations may be placed in the box in the narthex or may be dropped off during the week in the box provided between the double doors at the CDC entrance.



## CROP WALK 2020.....

We will have a Crop Walk this year! But our walk will be virtual rather than in person. I am encouraging congregations to form small groups or for individuals and families to conduct a walk either on October 11<sup>th</sup> (when the walk would normally be) or another time to raise money for Church World Service and the Southeast Berks Ministerium emergency fund. Begin by visiting the walk website at: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/birdsboropa> and register for the walk. You can then send sponsorship requests to your friends, church and family by email or on social media. Coronavirus has disrupted so many things it is vitally important not to let it take our ministry of care away from us. Participate by visiting the website or you can also contact Pastor Frey at [gfrey@stpaulsdouglassville.com](mailto:gfrey@stpaulsdouglassville.com) or (610) 385-6616 with any questions or participation ideas.

## WEEKLY PRAYER SERVICE—Wednesdays—9:00 A.M.

Our Wednesday morning prayer group will resume when the pandemic restrictions are lifted. We pray for every member of the congregation on Wednesday



mornings at 9 am. If you see your name here it is not because we think you have a specific need for prayer, but to let you know you are in our prayers whatever your need may be. On Wednesday mornings we also pray for churches around the world, leaders in the ELCA, our staff and council members, our political leaders, those in the military, special requests, and many more. If you are free a Wednesday morning, stop in and join us. We are always finished before 9:30 AM. Please include in your prayers this month: John McCalicher, Claudia McCalicher, Daryl McCleary, Deanna McCleary, Darby McCleary, Delaney McCleary, Harper McCord, Amy McCormick, Michael McCormick, Debra McCoy, Lida McManus, Jay McClafferty, Pat McClafferty, John Meade, Cheryl Meade. If you have anyone to add to the prayer list, please fill out a Prayer Request Card found in the pew racks or call the church office. Please pray for those with special concerns: Makayla Becker, Angela Bell, Avery Boorse, Michael Burd, Carole, Barbara DePrefontaine, Emily, David Friedman, Gary G., Lee Hart, Sara Hartline, Connie Hunter, Terry Johnson, Sue Keay, Garry Kopp, Jean Korf, Margaret Koury, Ralson Kutz, Wendy Magargal, Richard Pool, Audrey Serrian, Patsy Smale, Stefanie, Bob Wendel, Beth Yoder, Sandi Zelinski, family and friends of Jan Haas, June Rhoads, Eva Thomas, Pauline Trout, Gerald Levensgood, and all others listed below or those we name in our hearts: Jake Campbell, Karin DiSanto, Ron Glaser, Diana Gower, Charles Heffner, Larry Herbst, Bobby Hubert, Linda Loshnowsky, Karen McGavin, Edith Moyer, Jerry Muller, Ron Mutter, Richard Randolph, Lenore Robinson, John Shaner, Vernet Spence-Brown, Jason Stalneckner, Craig Williams, Jane Williams; homebound -- Dorothy Brown, Peggy Burns, Jennie Clouser, Carol DeLong, Betty High, Arlene Hildebeitel, Ellen Sheeler, Alma Shirey, Dale Szajek, Richard Wise.

## CANDY SALE TO SUPPORT UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS.....

The Peppermint Stick Candy Store, located at 26 E. Philadelphia Ave, Boyertown, is selling our candy for us. This includes, peanut butter, coconut and butter cream eggs. The cost is \$12 a lb., and we will get \$8 of that back to go toward the mission trips in upcoming years.

## SUPPORT THE BOONE AREA LIBRARY.....

Due to Covid, the ducks will not be floating down the creek, but they are getting restless so they are throwing a

### VIRTUAL POOL PARTY!

**Saturday, Sept. 5**

**4:00 P.M.**

Watch as the winners are pulled on Facebook

Duck ticket \$5.00

Quack Pack 5 for \$20.00

10 cash prizes – Top prize \$250.00. Tickets available at the library (129 N. Mill St., Birdsboro) or through FB on Eventbrite.



Follow the Birdsboro Street Fair and Duck Derby FB page for fun contests and prizes leading up to the pool party.

### APPLE FESTIVAL

Due to current pandemic and social distance requirements, we've reluctantly decided to cancel this year's Apple Festival at St. Paul's, normally held the first Saturday in October.

**EVENT  
CANCELLED**

### BEWARE OF EMAIL HACKS .....

Recently, emails have been going out under the names of Pastor Frey and Kitty and other members of the congregation asking for monetary help. These emails are scams, fraudulent and dangerous. The emails allegedly sent out by Pastor Frey have all been sent under fake email addresses using Pastor Frey's name. The email from Kitty was from her (old) hacked email address. You must be extremely cautious with online material, especially solicitations. **No staff member at St Paul's will solicit money or personal information from you online.** If you receive emails from organizations you are a part of, be aware that there is the possibility it may be fake. Make sure the email address is exactly the same as the email address you have received emails from before. The church, your bank, the Social Security Administration, even your email service will not ask for your personal

**SCAM  
ALERT!**

information online. Never supply any information or money without checking out the authenticity of any request. Do not call to verify using telephone numbers supplied in the email.

It is sad that we live in a world where people are preying on other people even in this time of pandemic, but this is the world we live in. Please be very cautious and if you receive an email from anyone including from the church that in any way seems suspicious or unusual, check it out. Use your best judgment and be cautious and if you have a question or concern about a communication received from the church do not hesitate to give the church a call.

### NEW AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT TO IMPROVE OUR ONLINE WORSHIP

At a special meeting of our council, members approved the purchase of a new camera (to be mounted on the ceiling of the sanctuary) and other equipment to enable us to better share worship online with words streaming in the lower 1/3 of the viewing screen. The funds will come from the Memorial Fund which is often used to finance things used in worship. The new equipment should arrive in October.

Our fine carpenters, Calvin Sheeler and Herb Schoenly, have built a platform and counter top or console in the back corner of the church to hold the equipment—laptops, monitors, etc.—and serve as the new recording space for our live streaming of worship services. Thanks to our Technology Committee members and all our camera people who have made our live-streaming possible and who are working to continue and improve this ministry in the future.

**COMMUNITY SHREDDING EVENT** (sponsored by Amity Township Crime Watch) on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020 at Redner's Market parking lot in Douglassville from 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. Open to residents and small businesses in Douglassville and surrounding areas. Shredding is done by ProShred Security of Paoli. Donations accepted to help defray the cost of the shredding trucks. For more information or questions contact Susan at 484-269-8181.



9/2	Carol DeLong	9/18	Arlene Wolfgang
	Bradley Schittler	9/19	Tina Hackett
9/3	Donna Saylor		Cheryl Meade
	Darlene Schoenly	9/20	John Buck
9/4	Carol Gross		Alexandra Chroscinski
	Jane Kinder		Herb Schoenly
9/5	Katie Sarro		Charles Weiser
9/8	Brooke Eidell	9/21	Hadlynn Berzins
	Pat Roland		David Johnson
	Weston Zepp		Danielle Walt
9/9	David Prizer	9/22	Sherryl Kasprzewski
	Courtney Rhoads		Matthew Mueller
	Claude Shaner		Brandon Price
9/10	Jessica Smith	9/23	Kevin Frankenfield
9/11	Mason Betts		Audrey LeGrand
	Elizabeth Burns		Colin Mooney
9/12	Wendy Hasara		Eileen Swavely
	Dori Shingle	9/24	Logan Day
	Joel Steever		Judy Grabowicz
9/13	David Alexander		Alexander Musetti
	Sandra Hart		Noah Tindall
	Bill Kutz		Benjamin West
	Brandon Strain	9/25	Robyn Berger
9/14	David Stauffer		Keith Forster
9/15	Kendall Freitag	9/26	Gerald Kupp
	Todd Mosteller		Hunter Moyer
	Cynthia Yetter	9/27	Suzanne Kupp
9/16	LuAnne Martin		Denise Price
	Anna Raneiri		Bob Wendel
9/17	Marylynne Endy	9/28	Robin Rohrbach
	Patrick Magner		Keith Royer
9/18	Dena Gephart		John Serrian, Jr.
	Wesley Leck	9/29	Bruce Cope
	Ashleigh Weidner		Michele Fisher
	Brittany Weidner		Zachary Waring

**HAPPY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY TO --**

Kristopher & Jennifer Moyer	9/1	14 yrs.
Tim & Sharon Loscig	9/3	21 yrs.
John & Fawn Schroeder	9/3	43 yrs.
Richard & Rita Christman	9/5	56 yrs.
Warren & Donna Saylor	9/6	51 yrs.
Laine & Deb Kasdras	9/7	24 yrs.
Zachary & Carey Coyle	9/8	13 yrs.
John Gallagher & Anne Cormier	9/12	28 yrs.
Michael & Kendra Day	9/12	6 yrs.
Ryan & Jen Davidheiser	9/15	13 yrs.
Robin & Sandra Levengood	9/16	25 yrs.
Brian & Courtney Gougler	9/18	16 yrs.
Rich & Sue Kucharik	9/18	21 yrs.
Frank Brown, Jr. & Marianne Brown	9/20	40 yrs.
Rich & Lisa Bowersox	9/21	24 yrs.
Donald & Diane Levengood	9/21	52 yrs.
Daryl & Deanna McCleary	9/21	35 yrs.
Scott & Rose Potts	9/21	35 yrs.
Howard & Connie Hunter	9/26	61 yrs.
Mike & Brittany Weidner	9/26	5 yrs.
Matthew & Brittany Cloutier	9/29	8 yrs.
Sean & Jennifer Kochert	9/29	29 yrs.

**ANNOUNCING DATES FOR OUTDOOR SERVICES.....**

Our next round of outdoor services will be held October 3rd and 4th. All three normally scheduled services (Saturday evening at 6:00 pm, Sunday at 8:00 am, and 10:30am) will be outside. At the 10:30 service on Oct. 4, we will celebrate the Feast of St. Francis and will include an animal blessing for pets which are encouraged to be brought to this service. The following weekend will be the rain date for outdoor services and the pet blessing.



# SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

## Bear Creek Camp Confronts the Pandemic

### New Ways for Ministry in Summer Season 2020

When COVID-19 forced the suspension of the summer camp program for this season, the staff and Board of Directors of Bear Creek Camp quickly grappled with the challenge. They moved toward new ministry opportunities that could still provide for the safety and health of their community. Two programs emerged from their work: **Family Vacation Rentals** and the **Bear Creek Camp Conservation Corps** (BCCCC).

Family Vacation Rentals was a unique opportunity for families to visit the camp, stay in cabins, eat meals prepared carry-out style, and enjoy the nearly 3000 acres of forest and streams through swimming, hiking, and relaxing time together.



Family Camping

The BCCCC was a select group of twelve returning summer staff who had previously made the commitment to serve as counselors this summer. Throughout the four weeks of their time together, they lived as a cohort and formed an intentional Christian community.

Each day the team worked on maintenance projects including improving trails and overnight sites, building new high and low ropes elements, constructing bridges, and painting anything they could get their hands on.

They also connected with the campers and their families, creating digital content to share on social media and assisting with programming on-site.



Painting Crew

Above and beyond these duties, the group spent each day in devotion and worship with one another. They also took time to focus on professional development and on building skills to benefit the summer camp experience in 2021.

As Bear Creek Camp moves towards the Fall and beyond, your prayerful financial support will be more important than ever before. To learn more about programs at BCC throughout the year, visit [www.bearcreekcamp.org](http://www.bearcreekcamp.org).



Trail Blazers

## Assembly 2020 - A New Way of Being Church Together

Friday evening, October 16 & Sunday afternoon, October 18

Friday evening, October 23 & Saturday morning and afternoon, October 24

Because of concern for the safety of the voting members in this time of pandemic, Assembly 2020, including the election of a bishop, will be conducted online. The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod is not the first to hold an online assembly this year; and based on the experience of other synods, especially the South Carolina Synod, the assembly planning team has full confidence that our assembly will be able to conduct its business and elections efficiently and in good order.

We have a production team, Events Staging, that has worked with our synod for a number of years to produce the video for our in-person assemblies. And we also have contracted with Lumi, a tech firm that specializes in online voting and that has been used by the ELCA for churchwide assemblies as well as by other synods for their local assemblies. With the support of these teams, and with the hard work of synod staff and some willing volunteers, Assembly 2020 promises to be a groundbreaking event!

### How will this work?

The entire assembly will be broadcast live and can be viewed by anyone with an internet connection. Unlike past years, there is no need to register in order to watch the assembly as a "visitor"; and you can do it from the comfort of your own living room! Voting members will need to register and will be given individual credentials to login to a more tailored experience, including the ability to vote, ask questions, and speak to resolutions or other matters.

### What if I'm not very tech savvy?

The assembly planning team is working to make participation as simple as possible. Detailed written instructions, as well as an instructional video, will be sent to each voting member well before the assembly. There also will be an opportunity to login to an orientation session prior to the actual assembly in order to discover and fix any issues a voting member might encounter. Finally, there will be a support line to contact a tech team for individual help with any question or problem.

### What do I need to participate?

To participate as a voting member you will need a reliable internet connection, for example, one that can watch a YouTube video without problems. You will also need either a desktop or laptop computer with a microphone and camera. It will be possible for two or more people to share a computer; however, each individual will need a separate device (like a smartphone or tablet) in order to vote.



We Are Church Together

NEPA Synod Assembly 2020

If your congregation has not yet selected its voting members, volunteer to participate in this exciting new experience. **Registration is now open.** Visit the synod website at [nepasynod.org](http://nepasynod.org).  
**We Are Church Together and We Can Do This!**

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2354 Grove Road, Allentown PA 18109; 610-266-5101. [nepsinfo1988@gmail.com](mailto:nepsinfo1988@gmail.com).  
View the full color edition online at <http://nepasynod.org>.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

# September 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Council persons in charge of services—Joanne Guss, Nancy Stewart, Sieglinde Fretz		<b>1</b> 2 PM—TOPS 6:15—Child Dev.	<b>2</b> 10 AM—Bible Study	<b>3</b> 9 AM—Worship for high risk Holy Communion	<b>4</b> 10 AM—Bible Study	<b>5</b> 6 PM—Holy Communion
<b>6</b> 8 & 10:30 —Holy Comm 9:30 AM -- Finance	<b>7</b> <i>Labor Day</i> Office closed.	<b>8</b> 2 PM--TOPS	<b>9</b> 10 AM—Bible Study 7 PM--Council	<b>10</b> 9 AM—Worship for high risk Holy Communion	<b>11</b> 10 AM—Bible Study	<b>12</b> 6 PM—Holy Communion
<b>13</b> 8 & 10:30 —Holy Comm 9:15—Rally Day	<b>14</b> 10 AM—Bible Study 2 PM—Blood Drive 7 PM—Pastoral Care	<b>15</b> 2 PM--TOPS	<b>16</b> 10 AM—Bible Study	<b>17</b> 9 AM—Worship for high risk Holy Communion 7:30—Crime Watch	<b>18</b> 10 AM—Bible Study	<b>19</b> 6 PM—Holy Comm 7:30 AM – Property 9-noon-Shredding event @ Redners
<b>20</b> 8 & 10:30 —Holy Comm 9:15—Adult Study on Zoom 9:15—Social Min	<b>21</b> 10 AM—Bible Study 7 PM—Bible Study	<b>22</b> 2 PM--TOPS	<b>23</b> 10 AM—Bible Study 7 PM—Worship & Music	<b>24</b> 9 AM—Worship for high risk Holy Communion	<b>25</b> 10 AM—Bible Study	<b>26</b> 6 PM—Holy Communion
<b>27</b> 8 & 10:30 —Holy Comm	<b>28</b> 10 AM—Bible Study 7 PM—Bible Study	<b>29</b> 2 PM--TOPS	<b>30</b> 10 AM—Bible Study			