**Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church LC-MS**

Monthly Newsletter --- April 2024

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“THE ROCK and THE SWORD”

“Built upon the Rock of Christ and wielding the

Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.”

**From the Pastor:**

**Like the Golden Sun Ascending**

A couple of years ago, I was introduced to Thomas Hansen Kingo. He was born and raised in Denmark. Kingo was a Danish bishop, poet and hymn writer born in Slangerup, near Copenhagen. He became fascinated with hymn writing and poetry and was one of the most gifted hymn writers of the 17th century. Below is a hymn that one, who loves Christ, cannot but help fall in love with as it confesses our hope in both life and death! May it richly fill you all with hope in believing this Eastertide! Christ is Risen!

Like the golden sun ascending,

Breaking through the gloom of night,

On the earth his glory spending

So that darkness takes to flight,

Thus my Jesus from the grave

And death’s dismal, dreadful cave

Rose triumphant Easter morning

At the early purple dawning.

Thanks to Thee, O Christ victorious!

Thanks to Thee, O Lord of life!

Death hath now no power o’er us,

Thou hast conquered in the strife.

Thanks because Thou didst arise

And hast opened Paradise!

None can fully sing the glory

Of the resurrection story.

For my heart finds consolation,

And my fainting soul grows brave,

When I stand in contemplation

At Thy dark and dismal grave;

When I see where Thou didst sleep

In death’s dungeon dark and deep,

Yet didst break all bands asunder,

Must I not rejoice and wonder?

Though I be by sin o’ertaken,

Though I lie in helplessness,

Though I be by friends forsaken

And must suffer sore distress,

Though I be despised, contemned,

And by all the world condemned,

Though the dark grave yawn before me,

Yet the light of hope shines o’er me.

Thou hast died for my transgression,

All my sins on Thee were laid;

Thou hast won for me salvation,

On the cross my debt was paid.

From the grave I shall arise

And shall meet Thee in the skies.

Death itself is transitory;

I shall lift my head in glory.

Satan’s arrows all lie broken,

Death and hell have met their doom;

Christ, Thy rising is the token:

Thou hast triumphed o’er the tomb.

Thou hast buried all my woe,

And my cup doth overflow;

By Thy resurrection glorious

I shall wave my palms victorious.

As the Son of God I know Thee,

For I see Thy sov’reign pow’r;

Sin and death shall not o’erthrow me

Even in my dying hour;

For Thy resurrection is

Sur’ty for my heav’nly bliss,

And my baptism a reflection

Of Thy death and resurrection.

Unto life Thou shalt arouse me

By Thy resurrection’s pow’r;

Though the hideous grave shall house me,

And my flesh the worms devour;

Fire and water may destroy

My frail body, yet with joy

I shall rise as Thou hast risen

From the deep sepulchral prison.

Grant me grace, O blessed Savior,

And Thy Holy Spirit send

That my walk and my behavior

May be pleasing to the end;

That I may not fall again

Into death’s grim pit and pain,

Whence by grace Thou hast retrieved me

And from which Thou hast relieved me.

For the joy Thine advent gave me,

For Thy holy, precious Word;

For Thy Baptism, which doth save me,

For Thy blest Communion board;

For Thy death, the bitter scorn,

For Thy resurrection morn,

Lord, I thank Thee and extol Thee,

And in heav’n I shall behold Thee.

Som den gyldne Sol frembryder

Thomas Kingo, 1689

Tr. George T. Rygh, 1908

Source: Sts. 1–2, 4–5, 9–10, The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, No. 207

Sts. 3, 6–8, Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary, 1913, No. 325

In Christ,

Pastor Deal

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Beginning Wednesday, April 3, 2024, a weekly **10 am Matins Service** will be held in our sanctuary. This service will focus on the historic, midweek Biblical readings observed by our church for hundreds of years. We will follow the Matins service as presented in the Lutheran Service Book and no service bulletins will be printed.

 Join us for worship at this special time! Please contact Pastor Deal if you should have any questions.

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**CELEBRATING IN APRIL!**

**Birthdays**

Dillon Hamilton 4—2

Patricia Parker 4—3

Bill Nelson 4—7

Kim Revale 4-13

Henrietta Holcroft 4-24

\*If birthdays or anniversaries have been omitted, please let the church office know. Thank You!

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN AT A GLANCE**

Blue: Pledged as of 03.24.2024 $184,320 (92.16%)

Orange: Remaining

$15,680 (7.84%)

Total Contributions

as of 03.24.2024:

$201,173 (100.59%)

Previous: $195,882 (97.94%)

New: $5,291 (2.65%)

In Excess of Goal: $1,173 (0.59%)

*Amounts used are based on weekly deposits reported.*

It’s not too late to submit a Capital Campaign pledge card! Pledge cards are available on the table outside Pastor’s office. If circumstances have changed and you need to update your pledge card, please see Jonathan Baisch. Updated pledges help our Trustees plan more effectively and efficiently.

If you have fulfilled your original pledge, prayerfully consider whether you can continue to donate to this fund. We still have outstanding projects to address and although a few projects have come in underbudget, there have been others which have exceeded initial projections.

Let’s work together to achieve all our capital campaign goals!

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**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN STATUS:**

**(As of March 6, 2024)**

Prepared by Jonathan Baisch

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project** | **Actual Cost** |
| Roof and Fascia | $64,500 |
| Gutters | $7,950.00 |
| Drainage Repair | $9,387.64 |
| Mold Mitigation | $29,000.00 |
| Masonry Repoint & Seal | $43,975.50 |
| Air Conditioning – Nave & Offices | $40,500.00 |
| Interest | $2600.12 |
| **Current Total** | **$197,913.26** |

**Campaign unpledged giving** - $32,865

**Campaign pledged giving remaining** - $26,161

**Total expected campaign funds if all pledges are fulfilled:** $220,610

The **Finance Committee** will meet following worship Sunday, April 7th in the Fellowship Hall.

In addition to the Council’s Vice President, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary, those serving as auditors and on the financial staff are asked to attend.

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Collected pop tabs can be left for Marie Flaugher in the library.

**NEWS FROM THE TRUSTEES**

March was a busy month for the completion of some projects. Among the items addressed were…

* **Downstairs Youth Room:** A big “thank you” to Bess Kleindienst & Linda Tomko for taking on the challenging undertaking of categorizing, organizing, and cleaning out of the Youth Room in preparation for mold mitigation and, then, painting. Items which were no longer needed were offered to congregation members and unwanted items were donated or discarded.

 Volunteers will be needed to paint the room, so feel free to let a Trustee know if you wish to help with this project.

* **Hymnal holders** on the backs of all the pews have been tightened. If you notice any other holders which need attention, please let a Trustee know so they can be addressed.
* A **lock box** for keys has been installed and the stray keys have been placed in it and categorized. Good job, Jerome Thomas!
* **Nursery:** The final “touch up” items in the nursery have been completed and the room is now finished.
* **Attic Fan:** Resolve Service has been scheduled to do the repair and upgrade of the attic fan.

The next **Trustees’ meeting** will be Wednesday, April 10th at 7 pm in the library.

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**LIKE & FOLLOW our Church’s Facebook page**

**(Saints Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church)!**

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**Trustee Projects and Capital Campaign Items**

At their February meeting, Trustees decided to divide up projects and named one or more individuals who would spearhead each project. Please direct questions or concerns to those who have accepted the responsibility for the task.

* **Doors:**  Mike Flaugher will work with Pastor Deal to quote doors. One quote is currently in and plans are to get at least two more quotes.
* **Air conditioning work:** Mike Flaugher, Jerry Krivosh & Pastor Baisch
* **Painting to finish mold remediation this spring:**   Bess Kleindienst
* **Key lockbox:**  Jerome Thomas
* **Exhaust fan in steeple of old church:**  Mike Flaugher & Jerry Krivosh (This will be done in conjunction with the A.C. installation.)

The following projects still need “project managers”:

* Windows
* Plaster work
* Inventory of church assets

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**CHURCH COUNCIL**

will meet Monday, April 22nd at

7 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Please email a copy of reports to Diane by noon that day so that packets may be prepared.

The next **Voters’ Assembly**

will be following worship

Sunday, May 19, 2024.

**Holy Smokes and Holy Smells: What’s the Point of Incense?**

By Vicar Wessel

 During Holy Week services especially, incense may play a more prominent role than it does otherwise. While it is traditionally used throughout the year, this special time often gets all the stops pulled out as to how the service is conducted, and so it’s more likely that you will notice incense being used. Naturally, this begs the question of why incense is used. In sum, it draws attention to the presence of Christ, but that takes on a few different nuances for how it is used.

 The use of incense has its roots in the Old Testament. It was regularly used in temple worship for anything that was associated with the Holy of Holies, where God’s presence was with the Ark of the Covenant. This meant that it was used for daily prayer at the altar of incense (Exodus 30:7-8) and also on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:12), when once a year the high priest went behind the curtain that set off the Holy of Holies to sprinkle blood on the Ark of the Covenant. The use of incense in the Holy of Holies covered the Ark with a cloud of smoke (Leviticus 16:13), hinting back at the pillar of cloud and fire that was the visible manifestation of God’s presence with His people. It was a reminder that God made Himself present and known by hiding Himself, contrary to human expectations. This way of doing things is, of course, most clearly seen and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, where God became present on earth among us by hiding Himself in the human nature to which He joined Himself. In this way, the smoke of incense is symbolic, whether in the Old Testament or today, of Christ humbling Himself and taking on our humanity to be present among us, and still being present among us in hidden form by His Word and Sacraments.

 Related to this, incense is also associated with prayer. Not only was it burned in the Old Testament temple at the daily morning and evening prayer, but also, in the Revelation to John, bowls of incense are referred to as representing the prayers of the saints (Revelation 5:8). Even in this case, incense still has to do with the presence of Christ. When we pray, it is always “through Jesus Christ.” He is the one Mediator, Intercessor, and High Priest, on the basis of Whose work and blood shed to redeem us, we are able to pray to God. So, when incense is used for prayer, it is a reminder that we pray through Jesus Christ; He is the One Who brings our prayers before the Father and makes them acceptable and pleasing in His sight, even as incense rises heavenward with a sweet aroma (Psalm 141:2).

 Additionally, incense is used to indicate the presence of Christ, because of its association with various points in His life. As a child, Christ was given frankincense by the Magi (Matthew 2:11). Additionally, some kinds of incense were also used in preparing bodies for burial, and, so, Jesus notes that when Mary of Bethany anointed Him with a sweet-smelling ointment, that she did this to prepare Him beforehand for His burial (John 12:3-7). Finally, when Jesus was actually buried, it was with myrrh, a common type of incense (John 19:39). Because of its use in Jesus’s death, the smell of incense is literally the smell of Christ crucified and risen for us. When you smell myrrh, that is literally what Jesus smelled like when His crucified body was packed with myrrh and placed in the tomb, and when He emerged from the tomb after three days of being bound up in it.

 For all of these reasons, incense has traditionally been used as a reminder of the presence of Christ and of the work that He did to accomplish our salvation by dying and rising. When we gather for worship, we try to get our whole person involved, and that includes the sense of smell. When we smell incense, remember Christ, Who came in human flesh to be present among His people, Who died and rose for our salvation, Who is still present among us in the hidden forms of the means of grace.

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**ATTENTION AUDITORS!** A **Quarterly and Monthly Audit** will take place following worship, Sunday, April 21st in the library. If unable to attend, please phone Bev Chlpka at 724-962-4806.

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**SCRIP Program:**

The next date for **SCRIP orders and payments** is Sunday, April 7th. Checks should be made out to Sts. Peter & Paul’s and are to be given to Matt Berent or placed in the offering plate. You should receive your gift cards the following week.

Forms for ordering gift cards are available on tables in the narthex and next to the nursery.

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Submissions for the May issue of **“The Rock and the Sword”** newsletter and calendar are due to the secretary’s office Monday, April 22nd at 9 am. This includes meeting dates and times for the church calendar.

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**Altar Guild News**

* The **bookcase** for the Memorial Book display has arrived!  Take a look at the beautiful, new 2-tier bookcase which was crafted by a friend of Cheryl Fedele!  The case is in the Narthex with the memorial case on top.  Retired and memorable items will be placed on the 2 shelves.  Great job, Cheryl!
* A **Ladies’ Spring Salad Luncheon** will be held Saturday, April 20, at 11AM.  A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex if you would like to contribute and/or attend.  Please note number of guests so we can plan accordingly.  Drinks and desserts will be provided with fellowship and lots of fun planned!

Our Altar Guild sister in Christ, Judith Furey, suffered a medical emergency and is recovering at home.  Please keep her in your prayers for fully restored health!

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**REMINDER:** Please let the church office know of any changes to your address, phone, cell phone or your e-mail address!

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**Women’s Craft Fellowship!** A women’s craft fellowship continues to be held the second and fourth Fridays of each month at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your knitting, crocheting, needlepoint and other crafts and join us! Don’t have a craft? Come for the camaraderie! Please enter the church using the Clover St. entrance. You are welcome to bring a snack to share if you’d like!

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**Please keep the following**

**in your prayers**

 PVT Alexander Carr

(New address currently unknown.)

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Anna Mae Daris

1865 Hofius Lane

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-962-5079

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Millie Elavsky

1209 Maple Dr.

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-342-0345

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Rudy Tomko

Rm. 8

Nugent Convalescent Home

500 Clarksville Rd.

Hermitage, PA 16148

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Jean Tomko

2629 Romar Dr.

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-979-4360

lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll

Betty Ann Wolf

7777 Arthur St.

Masury, OH 44438

330-448-1080

lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll lll

Ed & Millie Zachar

1320 Old Forge Rd.

Niles, OH 44446

330-652-9316

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**HEALTH UP-DATES:**

* Judith Furey continues to recover at home after suffering a heart attack the evening of March 20th. Fortunately, there were no blockages in her heart. Although weak, she will return to good health with a little medication and some stress-relieving sewing. Cards may be sent to Judith at 196 Tower Rd., Jamestown, PA 16134.
* Bob Kozar, Diane Riefstahl’s friend, is doing remarkably well following a heart attack March 12th. A stent catheterization was able to remove 100% blockage from a main artery. Each day brings marked improvements from the after-effects of the use of an AED. Bob’s address is 266 W. Park Ave., Hubbard, OH 44425.

Your prayers for these individuals have been greatly appreciated.

**llllllllllllllllllllllllllll REMINDER:** If you do not have an email account or do not receive emails from the church, but wish to be notified of significant information concerning your fellow church members, please put a note in the secretary’s mail slot asking to receive a phone call. Every attempt will be made to phone you within 24 hours of an email being sent out.

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**Coffee Fellowship**

**is April 14th!**

Join us following worship, Sunday, April 14th for **Coffee Fellowship** sponsored by Isaiah Deal in celebration of his First Communion, March 30th.

The 2024 Fellowship Sponsor sheet has been posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. If interested in being a sponsor, please sign your name on the sheet. Sponsors are asked to drop off 2-1/2—3 dozen “treats” and a quart of juice in the Fellowship Hall kitchen prior to church on their given Sunday. Coffee preparation, set-up, and clean-up will be done for you.

Please speak with Diane if you should have any questions.

***Christian Adoption Provider Wins! More Challenges Ahead***

Submitted by Pastor Emer. Arthur H. Baisch

***You*** . . . With the help of Alliance Defending Freedom [ADF] attorneys and your support, New Hope family Services, a Christian adoption provider and pregnancy resource center in New York state, recently won an important settlement from the state.

New York tried to shut down the provider for placing children only in homes with a loving mom and dad . . . consistent with their belief that a home with a family as God designed it is the best home for children.

But Christian family services like New Hope are facing increasing pressure across the country because of government officials forcing them to align with radical views on marriage and the family.

ADF attorneys are also defending Oregon mom Jessica Bates, a widow with five children, after state officials discriminated against her because of her Christian views. (Jessica) felt convicted to help children in need and signed up to adopt a sibling pair.

According to Oregon Dept. of Human Services rules, those seeking to adopt must “accept” and “support” the sexual orientation and gender identity of any child the state could place in their home.

This means that parents must agree to use opposite-sex pronouns, take children to LGBT-affirming events like Pride parades, and facilitate a child’s access to dangerous drugs like hormone shots. Jessica said she would accept any child into her home, but she cannot say or do anything that goes against her Christian faith.

If the state of Oregon can continue to discriminate against Jessica, then it can bar anyone else who holds biblical beliefs from adopting in Oregon.

That’s why Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church’s partnership with Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) makes a difference – standing for the truth!

**YOUR** support for ADF’s efforts is making a path to victory possible. Together with ADF we will stand for the truth that:

* Religious freedom means that all people have the right to follow their conscience and peaceably to live out their faith.

From ADF’s ***Freedom Insider, Year End Report 6/23***

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**Word of Hope: 1-888-217-8679**

The only 24/7 CONFIDENTIAL Hotline that is distinctly Lutheran, bringing healing found in Christ, to those whose hearts have been broken by abortion.

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The second Sunday of each month has been designated as **“Stock the Food Pantry” Sunday.** Your financial donations to this important outreach mission will be greatly appreciated.

 If you would like to know how you can help with our Food Pantry, please speak with Director Ana Deal!

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**2024 Church Finances Report**

**YTD Giving/Budget**

**(as of March 17, 2024)**

General Fund: $24,847.00 / $29,837.72

SELC: $656.00 / $846.12

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Remember thefollowing in prayer…

**~The Hurting and Healing:** *Amy, Steve, Ralph, Mary Jane Anderson, Steve Antolovich, Ellen BaronCA, Amy Blomenberg, Lois BortnerCA, Sara Brubaker and her son, Canaan; Dee Bullock, Bev & Joe Chlpka, Susan Davies, Don BaxterCA, Tim Dudash, Judith & Eddy Furey, Griffin, Pastor Charles Henrickson, Joan, Keith Jozwiakowski, Bob Kozar, Darla Krajci, Barbara Kreske, Jess Lavoie, Paul LucasCA, Sandy Marshall, Drew Martz, Lynn Price, Juanita Rentschler, Richard ReuningCA, Nancy RobertsonCA, Kriss SvidroCA, Rudy Tomko, Bob Usnarski, Joel & Peggy Wasson, Angela WeserCA, and Ruth Wolf.*

**~The Homebound:**  *Anna Mae Daris, Millie Elavsky, Jean Tomko, Betty Wolf, and Ed & Millie Zachar.*

**~Serving in the Military:**  *Alex (Sasha) Carr, Duncan Vaupel, Curtis Sinewe, and Joshua Solyan.*

**~Community & World Needs:**  *Those suffering from or affected by the coronavirus; those suffering due to the conflicts in the Middle East and between Ukraine and Russia; those suffering from loss and dislocation because weather disasters; those suffering from addiction and their families; Local, State, and National Government Leaders; safety for all Police Officers, Firefighters, & First Responders; the unemployed; our First Quarter Local Mission: Community Outreach. \*CA represents cancer.*

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**Bible Memory Verses for March**

**For Adults:**

Mar. 3: Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

Mar. 10: My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. *Proverbs 6:20; 23:22*

Mar. 17: Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. *Ephesians 4:26-27*

Mar. 24: Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” *Hebrews 13:5*

Mar. 31: I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. *John 11:25-26a*

**For Children:**

Mar. 3: The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. *Matthew 20:28*

Mar. 10: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. *John 12:24*

Mar. 17: Christ says: “For their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.” *John 17:19*

Mar. 24: He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and…bore the sin of many. *Isaiah 53:12*

Mar. 31: I am the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. *Revelation 1:18*

**OUR 2nd QUARTER MISSION:**

**Donation to a Concordia, Fort Wayne Seminarian**

As determined by Voters at our December 2021 Voters’ Assembly, our 2nd Quarter Mission will be a donation to a Concordia, Fort Wayne seminarian.

 Monies which are collected during this time will be sent to a randomly-assigned seminarian. These monies may be used in any way needed (books, tuition, living expenses, etc.). It is hoped that this gift will bring some joy and relief into the life of one dedicated to the study of His word in preparation for the ministry.

 Donations may be placed in a pew envelope and put in the offering plate. Please be certain to specify 2nd Quarter Local Mission and note your name and envelope number.

 Thank you for helping to brighten the day of a servant of God!

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**Thank You for Serving in April**

**Elder:** Jonathan Baisch; **Ushers:** Cheryl Fedele, Mike Flaugher, & Jesse Riffle; **Altar Ware: prior~**Elizabeth Haenftling (04.07), Marie Flaugher (04.14), & Diane Riefstahl; **after~**Evelyn Baisch & Traudi Sulek

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**We were chosen!** By directing designated Choice Dollars through Thrivent Choice, eligible Thrivent members choose where Thrivent Financial for Lutherans distributes some of its charitable outreach grant dollars among thousands of participating Lutheran nonprofit organizations and congregations.

 **Many thanks** to Thrivent Financial members **Janelle Gabriel, Kati Laird, and Betty Wolf** who recently directed Choice dollars to our church!

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**Additional Opportunities for Worship this April**

In addition to regular Sunday morning Divine Services at 9 am and Wednesday Matins Services at 10 am, the following will be observed this month:

* **Thursday, April 25th**

7 pm Vespers Service celebrating The Feast of Saint Mark, Evangelist

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**April Church Office Hours**

The secretary’s office will be open as follows in April:

* Weeks of April 1 & 15: Mondays & Thursdays from 8:30 am – 5 pm.
* Week of April 8: Tuesday & Thursday from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm.
* Week of April 29: Monday & Friday from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm.

If needing to enter the building during the week, please phone first to make certain someone is there to let you in.

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**The Flowering Plants which adorned our Sanctuary this Easter were generously donated by the following:**

Catherine Carr: *In Loving Memory of Rev. Timothy Carr and In Honor of my Children and Grandchildren: Eric, Nora, Edven, Ronan, Alex, Michael, Allie, Levi, & Noel Carr and Pastor, Ana, Isaiah, Titus, & Loretta Deal (1 Easter lily & 1 daffodil)*

Marie Flaugher: *In Honor of All Who Help with the Church (2 daffodils)*

Bonnie Fleissner: *To the Glory of Our Risen Lord! (1 Easter lily)*

Mark Gabriel: *In Loving Memory of Denny Gabriel and Pete & Anne Gabriel (1 daffodil)*

Judith Furey: *In Loving Memory of Judith E. Boal, Dorothy Shoenberger, & Viola Sakony (3 daffodils)*

Henrietta Holcroft: *In Loving Memory of Anson (1 Easter lily)*

Elizabeth Loughan: *In Loving Memory of Bill Loughan and James & Iris Reigelman (2 Altar Easter lilies)*

Chris Nelson: *In Memory of my Beloved Husband, Barry Nelson; my Parents, John and Mary Ann Krajci; his Parents, Bill and Marge Nelson; and All Loved Ones (1 Easter lily)*

Diane Riefstahl: *In Loving Memory of Parents, Donald & Lucile Riefstahl; and Brother, Donnie (1 daffodil)*

Edeltraud Sulek: *In Loving Memory of Husband, Robert Sulek (1 Easter lily)*

Linda Tomko: *In Loving Memory of Parents, Paul & Lillian Tomko and All Loved Ones (2 daffodils)*

Easter Reminds Us to Thank God for Our Many Blessings

For Pastor Deal, who faithfully preaches the Word of God and administers the Sacraments…

For organists Rebecca Marquette, Catherine Carr, & Chris Nelson, and the members of our choir, who joyfully share their musical talents with us…

For our Board of Elders, who prayerfully

watch over the spiritual welfare of our church family…

For our elected officers and boards, who guard the general welfare of our church…

For our church workers, who help with the day-to-day operations of this church…

And for you,

member of our church family,

for whom the greatest sacrifice of all was made.

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**Bible Study Classes**

* The **Sunday Morning Bible Study** (8 am)

continues its study of the Minor Prophets. This class is open to all.

* **Women’s Bible Study** resumes Thursday, April 4th! Join us for our study of the book of Romans. We will be picking up with Romans, chapter 6.
* The monthly **Men’s Bible Study** is temporarily suspended until a new meeting day/time is determined.
* Join Pastor and Ana at their home (695 Crowder Ave., Sharon) for a twice-monthly **Sunday Evening Bible Study** at **6 pm** the second and fourth Sundays of each month. This Bible Study is open to all church members and all ages are welcome!

**VOTERS’ ASSEMBLY APPROVES**

**AIR CONDITIONING INSTALLATION**

At the March 3rd Voters’ Assembly, a motion to hire Resolve Services to install air conditioning in the amount of $40,500.00 was approved.

 Included in the work to be done will be the installation of two 3-ton heat pumps and two head units in the nave; one 4-ton heat pump with three head units for the children’s room (nursery), church office, and Pastor’s office; and all electrical upgrades.

 This project will be funded from the Capital Improvement campaign and is scheduled for this spring.

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# Good Samaritan Hospice Virtual Support Group

Good Samaritan Hospice will host a Virtual Support Group for adults who have experienced a loss. The group will meet from 10 to 11:30 a.m. every Friday from April 5 to May 10 and provide participants the ability to share with others who have also experienced the loss of someone close to them.  These small, informal groups normally have about 4 to 7 people in each session.

Many people find it helpful to listen to each other’s stories, discovering that none of us is as alone as we might think we are.

Attendees will need to register before the group to receive a link to join.

For more information or to register, call Brittany Foy at 1-800-720-2557, ext. 4428 by March 28.

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**Concordia Open House Events**

The Concordia Haven Retirement Living Apartments will host open house events featuring educational seminars at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 3, and Thursday, April 4 in the Haven I dining room at 112 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023, Entrance 2A.

Each event will start with a brief educational seminar, titled “Smart Questions to Ask: What Other Retirement Communities Won’t Tell You.”

Attendees can enjoy complimentary hors d’oeuvres and happy hour, tours and learn more about the Concordia Haven worry-free lifestyle.

Walk-ins are welcome, but registration is preferred.

Call Admissions Counselor Peggy Trettel at 724-352-5378 (or email at PTrettel@concordialm.org.)

Concordia of the South Hills will host open house from 1 to 3 p.m. April 14 and 15 on its campus, 1300 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243.

Concordia offers the best in quality, security and value, and we’ll explain how we set ourselves apart in a brief information session, followed by tours and delicious appetizers and refreshments.

Registration is preferred for these events, but walk-ins will be accepted.

Register by calling Director of Marketing Christie Wahlen at 412-294-1351.

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**A note from Pastor Deal:** *Please let me know if you or a loved one are in the hospital or have a special need. Also, please ask the hospital or family members to phone me or the church office as I wish to visit those who may be hurting.*

# Concordia Fishing Derby 2024

Concordia will host a free fishing derby for kids ages 14 and under from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 18, at Saxony Farm Estate, located at Addy Boy Lane, Saxonburg, PA 16056.

A fishing license is not needed for kids under 16, but all children will require a chaperone.

Concordia will provide bait, and prizes will be awarded throughout the day. A limited number of fishing poles will be available for kids to borrow, but participants are encouraged to bring their own if they have one. Free hot dogs and refreshments will be available. Bring lawn chairs or blankets as well, if possible. Registration is preferred. For more information or to register by phone, call Concordia Public Relations at 724-352-8268.

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Work has begun on a **new church directory**. Please notify the secretary *in writing* if you do NOT want your information included by April 14th or if there has been a change in information. Information to be included includes mailing address, email, landline and mobile phone numbers, names of spouse and children (if living at home), and birthdays/anniversaries.

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Please help us **RECYCLE!** There is a basket by the secretary’s office for recycling old “Portals of Prayer” and other non-denominational pieces of Christian literature. These materials are shipped periodically to ICLD (International Christian Literature Distributors, Inc.) who, in turn, send them to Christians in third-world countries.

81st **P**ittsburgh **A**rea **L**utheran

**G**olf **S**cramble

(**P.A.L**.g.**S.**)

Saturday, April 27, 2024

9:00 a.m. **SHOT GUN** Start

It's time for another P.A.L.g.S. (Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Golf Scramble) outing. It will mark 41 years of golfing participation of Lutherans and non-Lutherans from all over the Greater Pittsburgh area. This will be the 81st outing held over the past 41 years, where many golf enthusiasts have worked to make each outing a unique experience.

 Since 1983 the outings have been held at **Victory Hills** in Elizabeth, PA. To continue in the tradition the banquet will include the favorite and most delicious buffet, and recognition of participating golfers.

 There will be special prizes and awards to mark this 41st year milestone. **The registration fee is $90.00 per golfer.**

 Your guaranteed registration deadline is Monday, April 22, 2024, Call with your foursomes (412-271-7173), or send names and payment **(checks made out to CLC)** to:

**GOLF,** Christ Lutheran Church, 400 Barclay Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221.

 We encourage all golfers, past and present, to be a part of this memorable event, as we celebrate all those who have participated in these outings since 1983. To be part of this gala, to donate prizes, or to share memorabilia, please call 412-271-7173.

 See you on Saturday, April 27th!

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**The Paschal Candle**

This year during our Easter Vigil, our new Paschal Candle was introduced. Our new Christus Rex candle stands forty-four inches high and is made of 51% beeswax. The candle features a gold and green Christ the King motif.

To understand more about the history and use of the Paschal Candle, the following article was taken from the Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (https://concordia-seminary.ca/2013/04/22/paschal-candle-donated/).

A “Paschal Candle” could also be called an “Easter Candle”. The word “paschal” comes from “Passover [πάσχα]”, the great event of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt that reached a greater fulfilment when Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead. Jesus is our paschal lamb (I Cor. 5:7).

When Christ died upon the cross on the first Good Friday, the world was plunged into darkness for three hours. He rose on Easter morning at first light. Candles have always symbolized the light that Christ brought into the world (Jn 1:9), but at Easter they particularly recall the light of His resurrection life.

Many churches strip the altar at the end of the service on Holy Thursday and hold their Good Friday services without paraments or candles on the altar. At the Saturday service, called the Easter Vigil, it was traditional to bring “new fire” to a candle in the darkness of that most holy night while waiting for the resurrection of Christ on Easter morn. This new candle was known as the Paschal Candle. Some medieval examples were monumental, celebrating Easter with great exuberance: a candle at Salisbury Cathedral was 12 metres tall, and one at Westminster Abbey weighed over 700 kg. It should, in any case, tower above all other candles in the church to highlight this central mystery of our faith.

The Paschal Candle is traditionally decorated with symbols to remind us of Christ: the Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13), the year of our Lord to remind us that our times are always in His hands (Heb. 13:8), and a cross with five nails to represent His death and wounds for us. The candle is lit for the Easter season, from the Vigil until Pentecost, to symbolize the resurrected life of Christ, and placed at the north end of the altar. Subsequently it is placed by the font and lit at each Baptism to remind us that in Baptism we die and rise with Christ. Finally, it is placed at the head of the casket and lit for funerals to remind us that our bodies will rise because of their unity with Christ.

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