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

Monthly Newsletter --- February 2023

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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:**

**Useful Applications of Scripture (Part 4): Training in Righteousness**

*The following is the fourth in the series of “Useful Applications of Scripture”. Previous parts can be read online in the October, November, and December 2022 issues of our newsletter (*[*www.saintspeterandpaul.net*](http://www.saintspeterandpaul.net)*).*

In previous articles, we handled: Doctrine, Warning, and Correction. Now, we venture into Training in Righteousness. *“For all Scripture, inspired by God, is useful for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness, that a man of God may be complete, ready for all good work”* (2 Tim 3:16–17)  and, *“Whatever was written previously was written for our teaching, so that we through patience and consolation of Scripture might have hope”* (Rom 15:4). It, hopefully, would seem obvious for the Christian who loves God’s word ought also to love to live by God’s Word.

People often quote Psalm 119:105, *“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.”* This is a great passage and you can couple it with Saint Paul’s words in Ephesians 2:10, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* Since the Reformation, accusations have arisen that the Lutheran Church does not admonish toward good works, speak of good works, and even has forbidden doing good works. But this cannot be further from the truth.

What we are taught is this, *“ First, that our works cannot reconcile God or merit forgiveness of sins, grace, and justification, but that we obtain this only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ’s sake, who alone has been set forth the Mediator and Propitiation*, 1 Tim. 2:5, *in order that the Father may be reconciled through Him…”*(Augsburg Confession Art. XX).

Good works are just that:  “good”. They are “good” because they are given to us by God that we should walk in them. Good works are also possible, which means that you can in fact carry them out. As you search the Scriptures and as you hear your pastor preach, you are bound to come into contact with many examples of the saints doing works which are pleasing to God. When you encounter these pious examples of Christian-living in the Scriptures, you should imitate them. I’ve heard objections toward doing these works of God. The most common one is, “How can I do good works that please God when I am a sinner and all my works are stained with sin?” A faithful Christian’s good works are never going to be perfect this side of glory, but these works are purified in Christ and sins of weakness are forgiven. No one should let the thought of imperfection drive him away from loving God and serving his neighbor, for God has called him for such things as this.

Outward works and pious living are not the only things which are covered in training in righteousness. Sanctification includes all of God’s Word's effects on the person. Therefore, it also must include the change of heart. Luther encourages every Christian to wake up each morning and remember his baptism so that the Old Adam is daily drowned with all his sin and evil desire and the new man rises to live before God in righteousness and purity. In this use of Scripture, one should find all teachings which consist in drowning the Old Adam, the denial of self, humility, turning away from the world, and amendment of life.

This all seems like so much, but let us not forget that God has not left us as alone, but has poured out His Spirit upon us. It is the Spirit who helps us in our weaknesses. *“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would”* (Galatians 5:17). By this we know that, when we are not living according to God’s Word, the Spirit of God will fight against us to lead us back to what is right. Also, we should consider that the Spirit produces in us the fruits which flow from faith. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law”* (Galatians 5:22-23). Romans 12:1: *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”*

As the pastor works to train the flock in righteousness using the word of God, you can see that it is not by force or command because those who gather there are the baptized and redeemed children of God who ought, by God’s grace, to be eager and excited to awake and live in the new life given them by God.

In Christ,

Pastor Deal

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**2023 CIRCUIT CONFERENCE**

Sts. Peter & Paul’s will be hosting the 2023 Circuit Conference Tuesday and Wednesday, February 7-8. Several pastors and their guests will be in attendance.

 There will be a special Divine Service Tuesday evening at 6 pm. All are welcome to attend.

 If interested in helping out with conference meals (setting up, serving, and/or clean-up), please speak with Ana Deal.

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**Thank You for Serving in February:**

**Elder:** Jonathan Baisch; **Altarware:** Marie Flaugher (prior) and Cheryl Fedele & Clara Krivosh (after).

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN AT A GLANCE**

Blue: Pledged as of 01.22.2023 $184,320 (92.16%)

Orange: Remaining

$15,680(7.84%)

Total Contributions

as of 01.22.2023:

$160,304 (80.15%)

Previous: $158,923 (79.46%)

New: $1,381 (0.69%)

Remaining: $39,696 (19.85%)

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.

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The next **VOTERS’ ASSEMBLY**

will take place following worship

Sunday, March 5, 2023.

***Please keep the following***

***in your prayers:***

Evelyn Baisch

128 Wilcox Rd.

Austintown, OH 44515

501-253-8292

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Millie Elavsky

1209 Maple Dr.

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-342-0345

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Anson & Hank Holcroft

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Hermitage, PA 16148

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Diane Riefstahl

740 Tamplin St.

Sharon, PA 16146

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Nancy Robertson

P.O. Box 1358

6 Stone Ridge Blvd.

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-977-0107

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Viola Sakony

616 Smith Ave.

Sharon, PA 16146

724-272-1905

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Rudy & Jean Tomko

2629 Romar Dr.

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-979-4360

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Betty Ann Wolf

7777 Arthur St., SC

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

**TRUSTEES’ UPDATE**

 **By Mike Flaugher, Chairman**

Thank you to all who helped with taking down the Christmas decorations!

**Items worked on this past month**:

*Radiators and boiler systems.* Central Heating was in to inspect both boiler systems. There were several recommendations suggested for us to do to help with the systems.

1. Add a Hartford Valve on the stream systems to prevent a blow-back on the system.
2. Replace all the thermostatic radiator traps, of which we have 24. This will improve the regulation of radiator temperatures.
3. Insulate the pipes on the steam system. This will result in a definite cost savings.
4. Rotate the hot water system pumps monthly.

Central Heating is quoting the Hartford valve addition and the thermostatic radiator traps. They are also going to quote a service agreement.

Insulation has been added in the boiler room and we have started insulating the 2” pipes going to the radiators. A longer drain pipe was added to the boiler drain.

**Other completed projects:**

* Replaced *outside lights* on the Stambaugh Street entrance and washed the light fixtures.
* *Reorganized* the back corner of the Trustees’ maintenance area.
* *Replaced motion sensor* on the 2nd floor elevator entrance.
* *Received quotes* for the replacement of the stage door and the door exiting the Fellowship Hall. These will be brought to Council.

**Up-coming projects:**

* We will need to schedule and plan the painting of several rooms before things are moved back into them.

 As always, please feel free to speak with a Trustee with any concerns or place a note in my library mailbox.

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES IN TRUSTEE MEETING DATES:**

**April 10, 2023 7pm\***

**June 12, 2023 7pm\***

**August 14, 2023 7pm\***

**\*Subject to change.**

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Submissions for the March issue of **“The Rock and the Sword”** newsletter are due to the secretary’s office Monday, February 20th at noon. This includes meeting dates and times for the church calendar.

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**STOCK THE**

**FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY**

The second Sunday of each month will once again be designated as “Stock the Food Pantry Sunday”. Your financial contributions will be greatly appreciated! Donations may be placed in a pew envelope and placed in the offering plate. Please be sure to indicate your envelope number and designate the donation to the Food Pantry.

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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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**CELEBRATING IN FEBRUARY!**

**Birthdays:**

Beverly Chlpka 2 - 4

Jennifer Russell 2 - 20

Bradley Dirgo 2 - 21

Traudi Sulek 2- 28

**Anniversary:**

Joseph & Beverly Chlpka 2 - 10

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

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**CONGRATULATIONS**

**to Joe & Bev Chlpka**

who will be celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary February 10th.

Joe and Bev will be affirming their wedding vows during the Divine Service Sunday, February 12th and invite all to join them for **Coffee Fellowship** following the service.

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If interested in serving as an **usher**, please speak with Elder Jonathan Baisch as soon as possible.

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**Please continue to save pop tabs!**

Collected tabs may be given to Marie Flaugher or left on the table in the library.

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**BIBLE STUDY FOCUSING ON**

**MINOR PROPHETS**

The Sunday morning Bible Study has started up again! Join us at 8 am in the Fellowship Hall as we learn about the 12 Minor Prophets of the Old Testament. If unable to attend in person, but wishing to join online, contact Pastor Deal so he can send you a link.

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**OUR 1st QUARTER MISSION:**

**Sts. Peter & Paul’s Annual Community Day**

Our First Quarter Local Mission this year will once again be **Sts. Peter & Paul’s Annual Community Day.** Started in 2017, the purpose of our Community Day has been to provide a safe, family-friendly community gathering for our church members, friends, and neighbors.

 Over the years the event has evolved with our 2022 celebration including chickens roasted over a spit along with several different side dishes, a bounce house for children, crafts for all ages, musical entertainment, and Bingo for adults. Church members have graciously provided raffle baskets for our guests to win.

 If you would like to be involved with this year’s planning, please speak with Pastor Deal, Jesse Riffle, or Diane Riefstahl.

 A date for this year’s event has yet to be set.

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**ATTENTION AUDITORS!** A **Monthly Audit** will take place following worship, Sunday, February 19th 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, February 5th. 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 in both the narthex and on the parking lot entrance sign-in table.

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**Mission Outreach Project…**

**LCEF PROVIDES INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

* One-Year Term Note: With a low $500 minimum to open, you can earn 4% on any investment amount without limit.
* ConnectPLUS: Open to new investors only, this two-year term note earns 4.25% on balances up to $50,000.
* PartnerPLUS: For current LCEF investors, the PartnerPLUS term note offers 4% for two years and 3.75% for four.
* Church Worker Steward Account: An exclusive investment for Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) rostered and lay church workers. Earn 3% on balances up to $50,000.

For more information about the **Lutheran Church Extension Fund**, contact Church Council President, Jonathan Baisch.

**International Christian Literature Distributors, Inc.** focuses on getting the Bible and study materials to learn the Bible into the hands of Christian leaders in the least-fortunate places of the world. They supply churches and schools of Bible learning throughout the English-speaking world. Copies of old Portals of Prayer are greatly appreciated; however, note that our church-provided copies of Lenten/Advent devotions are not accepted by ICLD. (These items can be recycled in the regular paper recycling bins.) **Please recycle items by dropping them in the basket in the hallway by the offices. Thank you!**

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**Additional February**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**Opportunities!**

**Women’s Bible Study**

Saturday, February 18th at 1 pm

**Men’s Bible Study**

Saturday, February 18th at 4 pm

**llllllllllllllllllllllllllll** The **2023 Altar Flower Sign-up Sheet** has been posted in the narthex. Speak with Diane Riefstahl if you should have any questions.

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**Pastor and Ana Deal** will be out of town February 15th through the morning of February 18th. Please contact Elder Jonathan Baisch (724-816-6866) or Pastor Emeritus Arthur Baisch (501-253-8292) if in need of pastoral care at this time.

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ALTAR GUILD NEWS

The Altar Guild held its first meeting of 2023 on January 21st. The following were among the items discussed.

* *Remembrance book:* Marie will be contacting a local craftsman to discuss the making of a display case for the new Remembrance book. Altar Guild members authorized a set amount of money which can be used for this project from the special memorial donations which we have received over the years.
* The repair/replacement of the Eternal Flame in the sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall kitchen stove and ovens will be turned over to the Trustees.
* All committee chairs will remain the same for 2023.
* Members voted to hold business meetings bi-monthly. (Our next meeting will be March 18th at 2:15 pm.)
* The Women’s Bible Study group will continue to meet monthly on the 3rd Saturday at 1 pm.
* Marie will assist Ana Deal with food prep and serving at the February Circuit Conference. If interested in helping, speak with Marie.
* The next polishing session will take place Wednesday, March 22\* at 1 pm. \*Wednesday, March 29, same time, if weather is bad.
* Payment of 2023 AG dues ($25/member) is due. Half of the dues collected will be given to a chosen charity in October.  Please turn your dues in to AG Treasurer Evelyn Baisch. Make checks out to Sts. Peter & Paul.

**New members are always welcome!!!!**

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**Coffee Fellowship is February 12th!**

Join us following worship, Sunday, February 12th for **Coffee Fellowship.** This month’s sponsors are Joe & Bev Chlpka.

 If you would like to be a 2023 Fellowship sponsor, please sign the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. Sponsors are asked to bring 2-3 dozen donuts/muffins/treats along with 1-quart juice to the Fellowship Hall kitchen prior to worship. Set-up, clean-up, and the making of coffee will be done for you.

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**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 (such as births or deaths), 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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**Church Office Hours for February** will be flexible and depending on the secretary’s availability.

 Please call ahead if needing someone to let you in to the church to make certain someone is here to let you in.

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**Join us Wednesday, February 22nd at 7 pm for a special ASH WEDNESDAY Divine Service.**

Remember thefollowing in prayer…

**~The Hurting and Healing:** *Amy, Gerald Arthur, Evelyn Baisch, Ellen BaronCA, Lois BortnerCA, John Burdette, Bev & Joe Chlpka, Kathleen Coughenour, Kim, Anna Mae Daris, Susan Davies, Tim Dudash, Millie Elavsky, Joseph Fleet, Judith & Eddy Furey, Tim Haenftling, Austin Hamilton, Anson Holcroft, Neil Huston, Darla Krajci, Barbara Kreske, Michelle KellyCA, Donna Kennedy, Gerald Krivosh, Jess Lavoie, Paul LucasCA, Sandy Marshall, Ernie Meszaros, David Nelson, Linda Parkany, Juanita Rentschler, Richard ReuningCA, Diane Riefstahl, Nancy RobertsonCA, Viola Sakony, Marty Scott, Kara, Fred Tonty, Angela WeserCA, and Ruth Wolf.*

**~The Homebound:**  *Rudy & Jean Tomko, Betty Wolf, and Ed & Millie Zachar.*

**~Serving in the Military:**  *Curtis Sinewe and Joshua Solyan.*

**~Community & World Needs:**  *Those suffering from or affected by the coronavirus; those suffering due to the conflict 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; the unemployed; our First Quarter Local Mission: Sts. Peter & Paul’s Community Day 2023.*

**REMINDER:** If you would like someone’s name to be added to or deleted from our prayer list, please put a written note in the secretary’s mail slot by the office door.

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**LIKE & FOLLOW our Church’s Facebook page (Saints Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church)!**

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**JANUARY BIBLE MEMORY VERSES**

***FOR ADULTS***

**January 1:***Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30*

**January 8:***The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1*

**January 15:** *But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9*

**January 22:** *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Psalm 111:110*

**January 29:** *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.  Galatians 2:20*

***FOR CHILDREN***

**January 1:***For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. Psalm 91:11*

**January 8:***We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. John 1:14*

**January 15:** *The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17*

**January 22:** *People will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. Luke 13:29*

**January 29:** *God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6*