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

Monthly Newsletter --- May 2020

699 Stambaugh Avenue, Sharon, PA 16146

Phone: 724.347.3620 Little People Pre-School: 724.347.3620 (option 4)

E-mail: church@saintspeterandpaul.net [www.saintspeterandpaul.net](http://www.saintspeterandpaul.net)

“THE ROCK and THE SWORD”

“Built upon the Rock of Christ and wielding the

Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.”

**Your Church is Here for You!**

During this period of time, we want you to be assured that your church is here for you. It may be a while before we are back to “normal”, but there are still several ways in which you can hear the Word of God and share in His message and promise for us all.

**Weekly Services:** There are several different ways in which you can participate in weekly worship.

1. Schedule a time with Pastor Deal for in-person worship. Generally, there will be one Saturday service (at 4 pm) and one Sunday service (at 10 am) held weekly. Space is limited to be in compliance with government regulations. Services last approximately 30-40 minutes and include the Lord’s Supper. Please phone Pastor at 724-347-3620 (opt. 2) by noon Friday of each week to schedule your time. **Note:** As the state of Pennsylvania opens up, services will be less and less restrictive of the number of attendees. Eventually, scheduling will fall away. Phone the church and select option 1 for more updates as the month goes on.
2. Not comfortable attending a service in person? There are still several different ways you can hear His word.
	1. Weekly sermons can be listened to on the phone by calling 724-347-3620 (opt.6).
	2. Sermons are also posted on our webpage: [www.saintspeterandpaul.net](http://www.saintspeterandpaul.net). Additionally on this site, you can access the standard weekly bulletin and special bulletin (used at the in-person services) which include all Old and New Testament readings.
	3. Are you a Facebook user? Make “Jacob D” a friend and hear his special messages about the Lord’s plan for you or check out the church’s Facebook page, “Saints Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church”.
	4. Additionally, we now have a YouTube site! Check out “Saints Peter and Paul LCMS” for a weekly service. Many thanks go out to those who have been assisting Pastor Deal with taping a weekly Matins service for posting on YouTube.

**Bible Study:** Join us Sunday mornings between 11 am and noon for our virtual Bible Study by either phoning 1-443-892-2834 and using pin 641 634 446 *or* getting online at meet.google.com/seu-jzio-xpu. Currently, we are studying the Augsburg Confessions. If you need a copy of Bible Study materials, let Diane in the church office know (724-347-3620, opt. 3) and a copy will be mailed out to you.

From the Pastor…

**Like the Golden Sun Ascending**

When God made the universe and all things in it, He filled it with light. In Genesis 1, the Lord creates the lights in the expanse of the heavens, and we read, “And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars.” The sun is the king of the day adorned in the brightest and warmest light. Its luminance unveils the majesty of God’s creation, which would otherwise be hidden in darkness. There is no light that compares to its rising. Even on the coldest days in the darkening nights of winter, the rising sun brings such great and comforting warmth. Even the rain cannot hide the sun’s beauty as it reveals the marvelous colors of the rainbow when it peeks from the clouds. As spring and summer now gather before us, I think back to when I was a child staring out over the waters of Lake Erie watching the blinding light rise in the east over the horizon. There is joy that comes with the morning when the sun’s beaming rays pierce through the clouds of night and send running the chills of darkness. It’s serene to watch its warmth lap up the dew that has gathered on the grass and flowers as it dries the tears of the earth.  I’m almost left without words to describe the essence of joy that comes from first light each morning as the golden sun ascends into the heavens. I’ve stared at the photos of my past beholding a transcendence of peace that was held in time when that shutter closed and preserved the image of the sun's orange glow, the pink skies, and the purple clouds in the reflection of the water. The Lord paints the sky with the glory of His majesty as He makes the sun to rise each morning over all creation, over the evil and the good.

 We speak of what we know; and we describe that which we can see with our eyes. People from all over the world have looked upon the same rising sun for millennia and praised its beauty in song, poem, and narrative, but only the Christians have gathered its splendor and compared it to the greater rising of Christ from the grave. A well-known Danish hymn writer of the 17th Century, Thomas Kingo, expressed the glorious hope in the rising of the Son in the

beautiful hymn *Like the Golden Sun Ascending*. This 10 stanza hymn begins with these words:

Like the golden sun ascending,

Breaking thro’ 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.

 He, like us, never saw the resurrection, but from the Scripture he read the account of the women coming at the break of dawn to the tomb. Surely he remembered the words at the beginning of Luke’s Gospel from Zechariah: “because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:78-79). It was with the beautiful inspiration from the Word of God that Kingo poetically crafted a hymn which brings us to picture the glorious hope of the resurrection like the golden sun ascending from the shadows of night. If the rising of the sun over the earth has such power to bring joy and peace as it breaks through the night, how much greater is the golden rising of the Son of God from the grave as He pierces through the darkness of sin and death?

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.

 When sin’s dreadful gloom of guilt condemns you, when the devil’s dark visage looms over you, and when the cold nature of death pricks you with its icy fingers, Jesus, the light of hope shines down upon you. He will not cease to shine the light of hope from the heavens. The light of hope for you is this:

Jesus died to pay the price of your sin. He bowed his head in guilt and shame so that you could lift your head in glory. He was raised for your justification and your great accuser has been cast down. Jesus has, like the golden sun, ascended and you now have an advocate with the Father. Death, the undertaker, cannot trap you in the shadows nor can he lock you inside the dark tomb. Jesus has promised that you too shall arise from the dead with a warm and glorified body like His. You shall stand at the last to behold the radiance of the Son of God with your own eyes. Remember, when Christ arose from the tomb, He sent running the frightening chills death. So powerful was Christ’s resurrection that “...many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many” (Matthew 27:52b-53).  The resurrection is our greater light of hope. Just as the sun dries up the dew of the earth, so also does Christ shine down in the warmest light to dry the tears of mourning when loved ones go with Him to the Father in heaven.

 At one time we sat in darkness and the horizon was lost to us, but now, in the radiance of Christ’s glory, we see by faith a marvel beyond all telling. The resurrection of Christ paints the skies of eternal life with splendid colors. Surely, there are a great many things that make us sorrowful, but what can ever displace from our hearts the warming message of the Easter Resurrection? What can cause us to doubt our eternal rising? When you go to sleep at night, you do not question whether or not the sun will rise in the morning. Even if you cannot see it behind the stormy clouds, you know that it is there without a doubt. You know that nothing can stop the sun from rising from the darkness, so also believe there is nothing which stops the sun of righteousness, Jesus, from raising the dead to new life. Jesus Christ is the light of the world; the light no darkness can overcome. The Lord proclaims, “...for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall” (Malachi 4:2). So if you, like me, have been captivated by the beauty of the king of day rising over the earth each morning light, then take hold of God’s promise by faith and rejoice in the transcendent peace of the King of glory in rising from the darkness of death to light of life.

Oh, then, draw away your hearts

Now from pleasures base and hollow.

There to share what He imparts,

Here His footsteps ye must follow.

Fix your hearts beyond the skies,

Whither ye yourselves would rise.

God’s blessings,

Pastor Jacob Deal

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**Membership Information needed!**

Just as the United States government asked for all citizens to participate in its 2020 Census, we are asking all members to *check over*, *correct*, and *send back* a membership information sheet. This will help us update our records, correct errors, and consolidate information to make it more easily accessible for those needing it.

 Membership information sheets are done by “households”. Please take a couple of minutes to look yours over and neatly note any corrections needed or fill in missing information if known. Please return your form whether changes have been made or not. Sheets can be dropped off at the church or returned by mail (Diane at Sts. Peter & Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, 699 Stambaugh Ave., Sharon, PA 16146). Please return your form by May 15, 2020 if possible.

**MAY MAILING**: The following items were included in your May mailing:

1. Letter from Barry Nelson, Board of Elders’ chairman.
2. Copy of “Engage” magazine.
3. May issue of “The Rock and the Sword”
4. Member information sheet
5. May weekly scripture reading schedule and texts of selected hymns
6. Individual 1st quarter financial statements
7. Church Council minutes\*

\*Reports were unavailable at the time of printing, but are available upon request.

**Sts. Peter & Paul’s Food Pantry is able to assist those in need of emergency food!**

If you or someone you know is in need of emergency food during this time, please contact John Dyll (724-734-7016). Anyone who is currently out of work due to COVID-19 and currently has NO income is eligible for SFPP (State Food Purchase Program) and TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program).

 Similarly, anyone who has lost hours, etc. because of COVID-19 and has a reduced income may be eligible for SFPP and TEFAP.

 As we anticipate an increase in demand on our local food pantry as the days go by, please consider making a financial donation to this important function of our church. Please note that we are unable to accept food donations at this time. Also, families will only be able to receive food once a month for the time being. If you are able to assist with either the packing or distribution of food items, please let the church office know.

‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ Matthew 25:40

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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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**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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**To listen to Pastor Deal’s sermons, phone 724-347-3620 and press Option 6.**

Remember the following in Prayer…

**~The Hurting and Healing:** *Vicki Bell, Sue BenderCA, Lois BortnerCA, Richard Brandes,Beverly Chlpka, Kim, Bradley Dirgo, Marjorie Dirgo, Tim Dudash, Donna Kennedy, Betty KnauffCA, Regis Knauff, Jess Lavoie, Virginia LehmanCA, Paul Lucas****CA****, Rhonda MoatsCA, Sandy Marshall, Tom MulliganCA, Iona OltmanCA, Richard ReuningCA, Marty Scott, Martin Weisenborn, and Angela WeserCA.*

**~The Homebound:**  *Helen Bender, Mary Chmielewski, Dan Davis, Edna Krajci, Mary Ann Krajci, Virginia Lehman, Robert Murchek, Marion Roberts, and Barbara Vasconi.*

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

**~Community & World Needs:**  *Those suffering from or affected by the coronavirus, victims of violence and terrorism; 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 Second Quarter Local Mission: Sts. Peter & Paul’s Annual Community Day.*

*\*CA represents cancer; number after other names represents weeks on the prayer list. After 4 weeks names may be resubmitted. This helps us to remember people’s specific needs and reminds us that God is providing healing as people get better and no longer need our prayers. Please submit prayer requests in writing to the church office.*

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During these times, please keep those members of our congregation who may be confined to their homes or other facilities in your prayers. Many of them may be feeling lonely or scared. Consider dropping them a note or a card in the mail or making a phone call to brighten their day.

 If you are in need of any addresses or phone numbers, please contact Diane at 724-347-3620 (option 3). Phone calls are being forwarded to her cell phone, so you should get a response in a reasonable amount of time. Please feel free to leave her a voice mail.

**Homebound Members & Friends:**

***Please keep the following people in your prayers:***

Helen Bender

920 Pleasantview Dr.

New Castle, PA 16101

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Mary Chmielewski

87 S. Neshannock Rd.

Hermitage, PA 16148

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Dan Davis, Avalon Springs

745 Greenville Road

Mercer, PA 16137

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Edna Krajci, **Vista Center at The Ridge**
3379 Main St
Mineral Ridge, Ohio 44440
330-652-9901

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Mary Ann Krajci, John XXIII

2250 Shenango Valley Freeway

Hermitage, PA 16148

724-981-3200

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Virginia Lehman

92 Wet Track Rd.

West Middlesex, PA 16159

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Robert Murchek

394 Fisher Hill St.

Sharon, PA 16146-5801

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Marion Roberts

The Lakes at Jefferson, Room 221

7271 W. Market St.

Mercer, PA 16137

717-798-5330

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Barbara Vasconi

880 Mayfield Rd.

Sharpsville, PA 16150

724-962-7960

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**2020 Buhl Day Participation Canceled**

Due to the uncertainty surrounding large social gatherings at this time, Sts. Peter & Paul’s will not be taking part in this September’s Buhl Day festivities. We hope to return in 2021!

**CELEBRATING IN MAY!**

**Birthdays:**

Evan Reichard 5 - 7

Marion Roberts 5 - 14

Anna Mae Daris 5 - 15

Shirley Cerbus 5 – 20

Catherine Carr 5 – 21

Ralph Dorman 5 - 21

Joe Chlpka 5 - 21

Madison McGowan 5 - 28

Kati Laird 5 – 31

**Anniversaries:**

Jim & Kathy McGowan 5 – 4

Robert & Traudi Sulek 5 - 15

Lennie & Kim Revale 5 – 16

Michael & Kati Laird 5 - 21

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

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Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, no orders are currently being taken for the Scrip/Gift Card Program. The program will resume once our lives get back to normal.

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**OUR SECOND QUARTER LOCAL MISSION: STS. PETER & PAUL’S**

**ANNUAL COMMUNITY DAY!**

Planning will soon be underway for our Fourth Annual Community Day celebration. Due to the unusual times we are living through, this year’s event will probably have a different “look”. As a mass gathering with our neighbors is doubtful, and we still want to keep our tradition going, it’s going to take some creative thinking.

 If you would like to be part of this year’s planning, please let the church office know by Friday, May 15th.

**Our Stewardship of Treasures for the Lord:** In order to do the Lord’s work, we need $2,487.81\* each week to meet our 2020 budget for general purposes and $39.62 for missions.

**Weekend of April 4 & 5, 2020:**

 General Offering: $3,865.00

 *Ahead for the week: +$1,377.19*

 SELC Missions: $105.00

 *Ahead for the week: +$65.38* Quarterly Missions: $10.00

 Other Offerings: $130.00

**Maundy Thursday April 9, 2020:**

 General Offering: $885.00

**Easter Sunday April 12, 2020:**

 General Offering: $2,710.00

 *Ahead for the week: +$1,107.19\**

 \*Includes Maundy Thursday offerings

**Weekend of April 18 & 19, 2020:**

 General Offering: $1,245.00

 *Behind for the week: -$1,242.81*

 SELC Missions: $49.00

 *Ahead for the week: +$0.68*

**Weekend of April 25 & 26, 2020:**

 General Offering: $1,070.00

 *Behind for the week: -$1,417.81*

 SELC Missions: $15.00

 *Behind for the week: -$24.62*

 Other Offerings: $120.00

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We are sincerely grateful to all who have been faithfully submitting their church offerings during this time. If unable to give your offerings in person, you may mail them to the church office at 699 Stambaugh Ave., Sharon, PA 16146. Additionally, we now have an option for online giving using your checking or savings account. This can be setup as a one time or reoccurring transaction. Check out the church website https://[www.saintspeterandpaul.net/online-giving](http://www.saintspeterandpaul.net/online-giving). This site is secure and payments have no transaction fees.

 Our worship together may have taken on a different look, but our “doors” are still open and there are expenses to be met. Your faithful contributions will help us to stay the course and meet the needs of our members.

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**In Memory of John Daris ~ Beloved father, grandfather, husband:** *Susan Daris.*

**In Loving Memory of John Daris:** *Anne Colt, Mildred Elavsky, Mark Gabriel, Sandra Kimmel, Mr. & Mrs. Edward Zachar, and John Zachar.*

**In Honor of John Zachar:** *Bob & Traudi Sulek (Food Pantry).*

**In Remembrance of Don’s Brother-in-Law, John Cerbus:** *Pat Voytik (Food Pantry).*

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**A Change in Altar Flower Policy**

If you would like to provide altar flowers for a given Sunday, you are asked to do the following:

1. Sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex at least one week in advance.
2. Leave a note for the church secretary as to the dedication to be listed in the weekly bulletin.
3. Purchase flowers from a vendor *of your choice* and deliver the flowers to the church by 9:30 Sunday morning ready to be displayed.
4. Remove the flowers from the altar following the church service.

This change in policy has been made due to problems with delivery and quality from our current provider. The change will go into effect once regular worship services have been reinstated.

 If you have signed up to provide altar flowers in the future and no longer wish to do so, please contact the church office so that your name can be removed from the flower calendar.

 Artificial arrangements will adorn the altar on Sundays for which there is no donor.

 Anyone who would like to research other providers who are able to deliver flowers Sunday mornings and provide flowers at a reasonable cost, is welcome (and encouraged) to do so. Gathered information may be given to Diane in the church office.