

Pastor Carl's Castings



May summer's advent bring you refreshment and new joy! "Happy trails, to you", if you travel, and safe and healthy days, always.

Busy days here: plenty is happening. Of course! Our ministries are many, even now, and God's (plentiful) blessings are growing new and rich returns for members and friends. Just in the



Learning Ministries alone, Vacation Bible School will come soon enough, so please be prayerful about whom God is asking you to invite to attend (even if you are too old to, yourself). Our Sunday School Superintendent and others are very busy preparing for a busier new school year beginning this fall.



No matter where you are and what ministries you are part of, please ask God for continued guidance and blessing on all we do, and for whom we are in ministry. There is something for EVERYONE to do. Please ask IF you would like to know how, and look to our HELP WANTED article in this SPIRE.

"COOOOOL!" That's right. Worship is in the Fellowship Hall, with air conditioning! We will be trying out some ways to use the space to increase BOTH our fellowship and our worship of God. We hope you will be here having a 'cool' time with us...and with God, most of all.





Of course, the OUTDOOR worship services are *special*, *very different*, and the CHURCH PICNIC, on July 25th, promises great events for everyone of all ages. Talk about GREAT food for both body and spirit!

Speaking of worship, although Ina and I see great reasons to continue two services in the fall, a request to consider staying at one is driving Worship and Music Team members



to find research on the costs and benefits of doing that. We expect that in August there may be informal ‘meetings’ after worship to discuss these developments with anyone interested. Their timing is all dependent on developments. Share your thoughts with team members Kim Warshel, Barb Smith, Liz Schucker, Val Miller, Ina, myself. Beginning all things with prayer, the considerations AND any choices we make together, will become ways God can bless us. Open and constructive communication, always best, will be our first way of supporting any decision AND the work God is doing among and through us, God’s family by faith.

With those they visit, visitors are discussing taking the Lord’s Supper to those who could not come to be with us at the altar on a communion Sunday. Lay people who are already visiting such persons are exploring whether and how they, by God’s call are (or are not) ready to bring Holy Communion with them on visits. They would be like those who help distribute to you and me here, as they drive to bring it beyond the pew, to others who were absent.



Simply, as is said to us before the altar, they would say “the Body (Blood) of Christ given (shed) for you”. This ministry does two things: it is ADDED to visits Pastors Wenzel or Landis make, and when brought by a fellow member (more often) adds a special feeling of being included as if they are WITH all the family they miss at worship. To be clear, ONLY those who welcome this means of receiving, and those visitors

who are ready and prepared to distribute the bread and wine/grape juice will participate. For others the regular visitation continues as before. Your questions and interest about any of the above are welcome, as always.

Lots of blessing, excitement...God's mercy, mission, and peace, be yours, and OURS, in Christ,

Pastor Carl

ADAM'S APPLE SERVICE – THANKS!

What a wonderful worship service we enjoyed June 13th! Thank you one and all, especially our youth (of all ages) and Ina.

A PASTORAL NOTE

Please call the church office or Pastor Wenzel if you would like to schedule a home visit or receive communion at home. If you need to contact him in the event of an emergency, Pastor Wenzel's cell phone number is 610-223-6555, (please note: he will not be able to answer the cell phone when visiting in the hospital).

Wedding Showcase Display
Date Postponed

The Archives Committee wedding photos display originally planned for July 18, has been postponed until a further date.

From our Recipes from the Flock Cookbook

President's Message

The other day I attended a Bible study meeting at work. Yes at work! It is a small group of five or six individuals who get to get together once a week to discuss matters of faith. One of the members of the group asked me if I was interested in joining. I said yes. I listened mostly, to see how the meetings go and what types of issues are discussed. Following a traditional format, they start with Prayer, then read the weekly Bible verses, and follow it with a discussion of what was read. During the discussion someone asked, "I wonder how many different religions there are in the world?" According to the web site www.ReligiousTolerance.org there are 19 Major religions in the world. One of the most interesting comments on the website was that 34,000 separate Christian groups have been identified worldwide. It would seem that Christianity and the Bible are open to interpretation even among Christians. But I think the most reveling thing is it seems Christianity has more divisions than any other religion. Although Christianity is still growing, Islam is growing slightly faster.

The Pastor, Darlene, and I attended the 23rd Annual Synod Assembly the weekend of June 19. After all the reports, there were several interesting speakers. Dr. Rev. Mark Allen Powell from the Trinity Lutheran Seminary of Columbus Ohio spoke several times during the weekend. His last presentation was the most interesting to me, because it touched on what I had written above, before we went to the Synod Assembly. The story he told was how people from different cultures like Americans, Russians, and Tanzanians may interpret bible parables like the Prodigal Son & the Good Samaritan differently. The term he coined was "Social Location". When we hear the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37) we tend to identify with the Samaritan. It turns out that Samaritans were not thought of too highly because they were different. They were Jewish, but had progressive ideas. The Tanzanians associated themselves with the beaten man in the ditch.

What? Have any of us ever even considered identifying ourselves with the man in the ditch? With cultural differences like these, it's not hard to understand how someone from a different culture may interpret the Bible differently.

I have to admit I have never been a student of the Bible, but this weekend I found true enlightenment on one particular issue. The question asked in the parable of the Good Samaritan was, "How do I inherit eternal Life?" The answer was, "**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind**" and "**Love your neighbor as yourself.**" Seems pretty simple doesn't it.

The other comparison was the American and Russian interpretations on the parable of the Prodigal Son. In particular verse 14. **Luke 15:14. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country and he began to be impoverished.** When American students were asked to recount the story the best they could, most of them mention squandering his inheritance, but very few mention the famine. In Russia the students mention the famine, but inheritance seems to be a foreign concept. These students were from St. Petersburg. Dr. Powell went on to mention that 700,000 people starved to death in the City in 1941 due to a Nazi blockade, a famine that still exists in the culture of the city.

No matter how we interpret the Bible, one thing is for sure. Jesus gave a direct answer on how to achieve eternal life, Love God and love thy neighbor as thyself.

May you have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,
Mark S. Qualio
St. John's Congregational
Council President



Congratulations to our 2010
GRADUATES

Jesse Miller graduated from Fleetwood Area High School.

Jessica Parkes graduated from Elizabethtown College with a Masters of Science Degree in Occupational Therapy.

Katelyn Remp graduated from Kutztown Area High School.

Elizabeth Schucker graduated in May from Kutztown University with a Masters Degree in Elementary Education and obtained a Reading Specialist certificate.

Anne Wenzel, graduated from Messiah College in May with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education.

If you or someone you know has graduated since last June or graduated this spring, please contact the church office (610-683-3140). For college graduates, please include the name of their major along with their name and school. **We don't want anyone left out so please send Janice the information and she will list this again in the August Spire. Thank you!**

Applying Bible Principles

We've all heard the expression, "Money talks." That's true. Money does talk. Oh, not in words or phrases that constitute a language, but money talks. Because it is valuable to us, how we use it communicates volumes to those about us. People tend to spend their money on things that are important to them. With the exception perhaps of taxes, all of us vote with the contents of our purses, wallets and checkbooks concerning what means the most to us.

In fact, we could even go so far as to say that a person who does not spend money on something which is supposedly very important in his or her life really does not place much value on that item or activity. Suppose for a moment that you think "little league" baseball for kids is very important. You talk about it wherever you go. You attend the games. You enroll your own children in the program. But when someone calls you to ask you to be a sponsor of a team, or when someone "passes the hat" at a game to pay for equipment, you refuse to participate.

Would you not agree that an impartial observer of such behavior would conclude correctly that little league baseball really does not mean much to you? Your lack of financial support would outweigh the other positive aspects of your attendance, enthusiasm and participation.

The same thing is true in the spiritual realm. It is one thing to talk about Christianity. It is yet another to demonstrate our faith by how we use the money which God has entrusted to us. And that is especially true in our support of the ministry of St. John's Lutheran Church. As someone said recently in one church just before the offering was received, "Lord, in spite of all we say and do, this is what we think of you."

Or as the Lord Jesus put it, ". . . let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

- *Stewardship Committee*



Thank You Notes

Dear St. John's,

Heartfelt thanks to Pastor Wenzel, Joe Piscitelli, and all our parishioners who remembered me with prayers, cards and well wishes.

Sincerely,
Perma Dreibelbis

Dear St. John's,

Thank you very much for the altar flowers. Your kindness is appreciated.

Rudy and Jean Leimbach

Dear St. John's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for the beautiful flower arrangement delivered to Charles Mertz. It was very much appreciated.

Hilda Mertz

Dear Visitation Committee,

Thank you for your continuing visits to my mother, Anna Warmkessel. Our family is appreciative of the church's continuing acts of thoughtfulness. Mom will be 92 on June 16. St. John's has been such an important part of her life.

Sincerely,
Brenda Winkler



Note from the New SCS Superintendent

– Diane Fenstermacher

I recently found something in my youngest daughter Caroline's stash of treasures. I know it is hers because of the handwriting. It's a modern day version of a scroll, made with pop icicle sticks and a piece of paper. The scroll's message was simple and powerful in just six words -"Jesus learned and taught about God".

What a wonderful way to think about Sunday Church School, just replace Jesus' name with yours, your child's or grandchild's. I think we, as adults, often forget that any child, even Jesus, needed to learn about God before teaching about God. The Sunday Church School plays a key role in nurturing the faith of our future generations.

Speaking of future generations, allow me to introduce myself and my family. My husband Tim and I have two daughters, Victoria (age 8) and Caroline (age 6). We joined the St. John's family in March 2009. Victoria and Caroline are involved in the children's choir and Sunday Church School, and Tim is the St. John's Financial Secretary. As for myself, I assisted the Junior Youth

Committee with planning and organizing the Fall and Winter youth events. I am pleased to further contribute to our youth program by filling the Sunday Church School Superintendent role.

Melissa Miller, the Superintendent for the 2009-2010 Church School year, will continue her involvement as a Sunday School Teacher for the Pre-school to 1st Grade class. Melissa has been very helpful to me during the transition – her guidance and patience with my endless questions has been a blessing. I thank her for that and especially all the work done over the past year with the Sunday Church School, as a teacher, superintendent and service project coordinator.

As we move forward, the saying “many hands make the work light” comes to mind as we start to plan the 2010-2011 Church School year. The Sunday School bulletin board has many hands, paper hands that is, which list volunteer opportunities for the Sunday School – substitute teachers and assistants, special Sunday School events, Rally Day, Christmas Program, etc. - stop by and grab a hand so you can lend a hand!

One upcoming event is the Church Park Service and Picnic on July 25, 2010. Following the service, a special at the Park Sunday School event is planned. We will have a short story about what is a “Bad Sport”, and then practice what we learn by playing some summertime outdoor games. If you are able to assist with the games, or have some outdoor games (bean bag toss, bocce ball, sacks for races) that you could loan to us for this event, please contact me at 610-682-0013.

I am looking forward to embarking on a journey of faith building with our youth over the next year, always remembering those six simple words on the scroll – “Jesus learned and taught about God”.

Memorial Contributions Received

In Memory of Mary Arnold

David and Beverly Tyson

In Memory of Pearl Schaeffer

Larry and Sharon Davis

HOSPITALIZED

Here are the appropriate codes assigned to us by the respective hospitals in Allentown and Reading. Lehigh Valley Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital – 282; Reading Hospital – 512; St. Joseph's Hospital – LU 60. You can use these codes if you are undergoing elective surgery or you can call the chaplain's office at each hospital and ask them to list you under our congregation's code for that institution.

Redner's Save-A-Tape Program

St. John's participates in the Redner's Save-A-Tape Program. By collecting receipts and sending them to Redner's Corporate office, we can earn 1% of the totals. Each person should stop by the store office or Customer Service area to get a Save-A-Tape card. Each time you shop at Redner's with your card, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape receipt. Please place receipts in the box in the coat area. We appreciate the funds raised through your efforts in saving your Redner's receipts!

HELP WANTED

Nursery help needed for the fall during the 10:30 AM services which resume Sept. 12th

For more information please call the church office at 610-683-3140.



Snacks Needed



To all St. John's parishioners

Since we will be worshipping in the fellowship hall for the summer months we will be having coffee, tea, juice, etc. We would also like to have a little pastry with the service. The Worship team – Social Activities Committee is looking for any folks who might be willing to bring a snack item. The snacks do not have to be homemade. Store bought is fine! If you would be willing to provide something, we ask that you let the church office know (610-683-3140), or you may contact Barb Smith (610-683-7742).

Thank you on behalf of the Worship Team & Social Activities.

JULY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Summer Worship Schedule – 9 AM combined worship through August 29. Holy Communion will be celebrated the 1st Sunday of each month.

LAY READERS:

- July 4: Marianne Yoder and Warren Grapenthin
- July 11: Tim Haring
- July 18: Larry Schappell
- July 25: Diane Haring

ACOLYTES:

- July 4: Kendra Smith
- July 11: Evan Steigerwalt
- July 18: Valerie Miller
- July 25: Katie Goodbrod

GREETERS:

- July 4: Deb and Sarah Johnson
- July 11: Daniel and Barbara Smith
- July 18: Connor Koenig and Paula Kutz
- July 25: Rudy and Jean Leimbach

USHERS:

- July 4: Larry and Sharon Davis, Randy and Joan Rentschler
Zakary Frederick, Nicholas Mills
- July 11: Marty, Tyler and Avery Wolfinger,
Mark and Darlene Qualio
- July 18: Mark and Amanda Weida, Macy Drey,
Bailey Shade
- July 25: Elmer and Christine High, Ned and Sue Parkes

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

Articles for The Spire should be submitted to the office by Tuesday, July 15. We will assemble the newsletter Thursday, July 27. Volunteers always needed. Please call the office if interested.



July Sponsorships

The following people are scheduled to sponsor bulletins, candles and flowers during July:

BULLETINS

7-4	Diane Haring
7-11	Open
7-18	Open
7-25	Marie Moyer

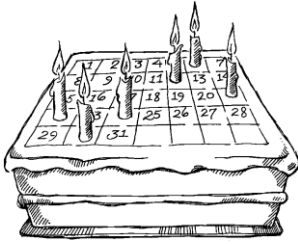
CANDLES

7-4	Feryl Stein
7-11	Open
7-18	Carol Diehl
7-25	Crystal Johnson

FLOWERS

7-4	Walter Eck
7-11	Barbara Smith
7-18	Donna Jones
7-25	Diane Piscitelli

Please complete the sponsorship form and submit it along with your payment to the office at least one week before the date of your sponsorship. To ensure proper credit on your giving statement, please submit a form to the office.



July Birthdays

July 1	Carl Billig	July 18	Kimberly Miller
July 3	Elizabeth Fritch		Joyce Savage
	Lily Zimmerman	July 19	Andrew Hill
July 4	Joline Stein	July 20	Kaitlyn Goodbrod
July 5	Nancy Hausman		Anna Krause
	Fern Sterner	July 21	Dennis Jordan
July 6	Mary Krumanocker	July 22	Oscar Snyder
July 7	David Eberly	July 25	Macy Drey
	Ronald Schappell		Valerie Miller
July 8	Christine High	July 26	Alyssa Warmkessel
	Joshua Hill	July 27	Crystal Johnson
July 9	Amanda Davis	July 28	Joseph Piscitelli
	Charles Nester		Cynthia Smith
July 10	Andrew Miller	July 29	Jonathan Quier
	Kim Schwartz		Katie Reed
	Lois Wenzel	July 30	Matthew Bortz
July 11	Daniel Smith		Elmer High
July 13	Mark Yoder		Kathy Miller
July 15	Amy Koenig		Karen Snyder
	Kendra Smith	July 31	Shannon Sanders
July 16	Katherine Wessner		

If you notice that your birthday or the birthday of someone you know is not listed among those in The Spire, which means that the birthday information is not entered in the church's computer. Please contact the church office and let us know of anyone missing from the birthday list. We want everyone to be included.