

# THE EXPRESSION

## AUGUST 2020 ~ NEWSLETTER



**CHRIST'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
5330 Old Logan Ferry Road  
Murrysville, PA 15668  
(412) 795-1212

Pastor Wayne Gillespie  
Email: [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org)  
Website: [christsmurrysville.org](http://christsmurrysville.org)  
Sunday School for Children & Adults: 9:00 am

**Services**  
Saturday Contemporary – 6:00 pm  
Sunday Worship – 10:00 am

## 2020 Vision



People are referring to the last few months in a variety of ways. I have referred to these days as being “unusual” many times; but, as the months continue to pass, that seems to be a bit of an understatement. The coronavirus has forced us to close our building and to hold online worship services. Statistics indicate that the US is grappling with record-high unemployment and that nearly one quarter of Americans are not going to be able to pay their rent (or mortgage payment) this month. I have noticed that some businesses in our area have permanently closed while other businesses are struggling to remain open with the help of the Paycheck Protection Program and the promise of increased government aid and financial support. We can certainly refer to these days as unusual, but we might just as easily refer to them as difficult, challenging, uncertain and even scary.

What if we began to refer to these day as being a part of our “changing” times?

We have been forced to change the way that we worship on Sunday mornings, and we have needed to rely upon electronic communication more than ever. We have jumped from being a church with a website, a Facebook page and a small electronic data base to being a church that is live streaming worship services, holding online meetings, posting audio and video recordings of weekly pastoral messages and joining hands with the other Lutheran churches to provide an online Vacation Bible School. We now have a weekly online newsletter called CLC's Online Connect that we are using to provide you with our weekly announcements and prayer lists; educational and devotional materials that you can use as an individual or as a family; updated information about our plans to reopen our building, our church office hours and visitation/funeral policies. And, through it all, we have been blessed by a dedicated Council and church staff, faithful partners in ministry who are continuing to support our ministry through gifts of time and financial resources, and many faithful well-wishers and cheerleaders who have sent many emails and cards to encourage those who are trying to help us navigate through this time of change.

We read in **Proverbs 29:18**: “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

The word “*perish*” in this verse is the Hebrew word “*paw-rah*.” “*Paw-rah*” is often used in Biblical proverbs to refer to a situation where a woman’s hair is left to fly freely with the breeze. Picture a woman with long hair removing a hat on a windy day. Her hair blows in many different directions as the wind changes. And this familiar image was often used by ancient writers to describe groups of people. Surveys indicate that only about 13% of all employees feel that they are engaged in the mission of the company that pays

them, and the other 87% report that they do not feel enthusiastic and committed to their work at all. We've all heard about the 80/20 Rule which suggests that 80% of the work that needs to be done in organizations is completed by only about 20% of the organization's members. And yet, even in this time of organizational (think "church") malaise, many people are still investing billions of dollars to unlock their potential because, deep inside, we all have the desire to put our fingerprints on the world and make a lasting difference, don't we?

We are all moving through a time of radical change and the same thing can be said about the life and ministry of Christ's Lutheran Church.

Our Council has already begun the process of creating a much-needed partner database that can help us to more efficiently share important information with you. The coronavirus has challenged us to update our church's communication system for both those who are electronically connected and for those who are not. We are exploring ways to broadcast our worship services both online and using telephone lines even after we start gathering in our building again. And, now, we need to stretch our wings in even more directions and revisit some old questions. Here are some of the things that I believe it is important for us to embrace and explore together:

- **2020 Vision** points us toward our need to revisit issues of ministry-partner activity and retention. What does it mean to be a church where we affirm our baptism on a regular basis and where we lift up the fact that we're all baptized into the ongoing work of Jesus in the world? What would it look like if we more intentionally focused upon the gifts and talents

that God has given to us and if we worked together in a way that was intentionally designed to overcome the 80/20 Rule? **2020 Vision** is challenging us to revisit what it means to be a church that is called to “Equip and Empower” God’s people in life and in ministry.

- **2020 Vision** also reminds us of the importance of families in Christian education. Martin Luther wrote his Small Catechism to provide a tool that parents (and that includes grandparents and guardians in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America) can use to teach Christians beliefs to their children. We remain strongly committed to Christian Education at Christ’s Lutheran Church; and, as we move forward, we need to explore ways to promote faith-building activities in our partner-families. We have already joined hands with several other Lutheran congregations to provide an online Vacation Bible School. We are already providing FaithBuilders material that is updated each week. We are currently exploring ways to offer Bible studies and Catechism and Sunday School classes online. **2020 Vision** is challenging us to explore new bridges that we can build between our congregation and families and individuals, so that our education ministry remains strong and vibrant.
- **2020 Vision** is further challenging the entire Church to more clearly define what it means to be a “gathering.” We are planning to continue broadcasting our services online and through telephone connections after we can gather again, but what will that mean as we move into the future as a congregation? How can we help you to remain connected to your partners in ministry at Christ’s Lutheran Church while we worship online? What will our ministry look like when some of our partners worships online while others gather for worship in our building? How can we help our church to grow

now that sharing the Gospel is as easy as inviting someone to watch an online service at home? What can we do (in addition to broadcasting a weekly worship service) to strengthen our ministry and do the work of Jesus even when the entire face of ministry seems to be changing?

- **2020 Vision** reminds us, ultimately, that our church is not a building – and yet, we still have a building that needs to be maintained and serviced. What can we do to encourage you to continue to support our ministry during a time when we are not able to gather in our building? How are we going to handle the drainage issue in our parking lot that is going to require a costly repair? **2020 Vision** is calling us to continue to reach beyond the walls of our building (if for no other reason than we are going through a time when it is empty) while maintaining a building where much of our outreach has traditionally happened. How are we going to handle the added expenses associated with using our building when we can return to normal use?
- **2020 Vision**, finally, reminds us that innovative leadership is needed as we are moving through times of dramatic change. Scott had been a fantastic President of our Council and many of the other Council members have stepped forward to keep our church's ministry moving forward during these changing times. Nobody who is serving on our Council could have ever imagined what this year would be like. We have needed to make many hard decisions. We've needed to find our way through changing times while realizing that mistakes could cost people their lives. **2020 Vision** reminds us that a vital part of Christian ministry always involves helping and encouraging and spurring each other on. Christian ministry always involves supporting the decision that leaders are making (especially in changing times like these). Christian

ministry required men and women who are willing to lead. How can we support and encourage our church's leaders in these changing times? How can we continue to do that during a time when change is necessary and during a time when we are all being forced to reach far beyond what we have known at any other time in our lives?

Thank you for your continued partnership and faithful support of our life together. We are moving through changing times, but I continue to believe that we can come through these times as a community and as a church that is stronger and more vibrant. Jesus is with us in these changing times and there are many opportunities in every crisis. That is why we need to have **2020 Vision** as we continue to move through these times together.

Pastor Wayne

Scott Ritenbaugh — President  
Judy Bernardini — Vice President  
Michelle Gravante — Secretary  
Barb Hall — Treasurer  
Bela Molnar — Financial Secretary

Cindy Lott  
Ron Spagna  
Joe Kelly  
John Reed  
Linda Paulovitch  
Sandy Buehner

**CHURCH**COUNCIL

**Church Council Highlights ~**

**Meetings were held virtually due to  
Pennsylvania State regulations  
because of COVID-ID impacts**

A summary of Council discussions/decisions

The Council has discussed many issues in the last 4 months and made many decisions on behalf of the congregation. Some of the highlights include the following:

- Building Safety and Best Practices
- Addressing Our Debt
- Electronic Giving
- Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Grant
- Online Worship Service Technology - Upgrades to Our Existing Equipment
- Updating and Upgrading the Church Communication System (Church Directory, Email List, Communication Platform)
- A Return to In-Person Worship Strategy - Moving Forward Safely
- Finding Volunteers - Ushers, Reconcilers, etc.
- Parking Lot Drainage Issue
- Capital Funds Campaign

**Next Council Meeting –  
Tuesday, AUGUST 18, 2020 at 6:30 pm**

**The Storm Water Drainage Pipe:**

A major backup has caused our storm drain to clog and overflow. After several thousand dollars to dig up the culvert, we uncovered a major problem, that the sewer pipe is rusty and needs to be repaired or replaced. Estimates run from \$12,000 to \$50,000. Doing nothing will likely lead to replacing the lower parking lot, which could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The good news is our generous friend, George Truby, left our congregation a significant amount of money. About \$75,000 has been put aside as the Council determines the needs of our congregation. However, our Support Team is challenging the congregation to match this donation. Let's raise the funds to pay for the stormwater repairs and help reduce our debt.

**Introducing the CLC Adopt-A-Parking-Spot Campaign**

How it works: From now until early next year, virtually reserve your parking "spot." Choose an affordable amount within your budget.

1 full spot at \$995.00

1/2 spot at \$515.00

1/4 spot at \$250.00

1/8th spot at \$125.00

After you make your donation, you now own your "Spot"! Once your commitment is met, you will receive a certificate of 'adoption' as a Thank You!

Keep in mind, this is a "virtual" adoption, but if we adopt 80 parking spaces, we will raise almost \$80,000!!!

**Mail your donations to:****5330 Old Logan Ferry Road, Murrysville, PA 15668**

**Make sure you place a note in the envelope that describes your gift as an "Adopt-A-Spot"**

Or use the [tithe.ly](http://tithe.ly) app to make your donation. Make sure to put "Adopt-A-Spot" in the note section.

Finally, we would like to thank George Truby, and his family's generous donation... so that our light may continue to shine!

We kindly ask that you continue to pray for our CLC members, family, and friends of members who are included in our weekly bulletin prayer list. Thank you.

*Damian Arenth - grandson of Holly Kirsch*

*Harry & Amy Ayres - friends of Inge Pizzica*

*Linda Bradish - mother of co-worker of Sandy Buehner*

*Ed & Sandy Buehner & Family - CLC members*

*Bob & Gail Byrne - CLC members*

*Joe & Doris Cashell - CLC members*

*Rev Bob Dain & Family - friend of Kimberly Moore*

*Judy Daum - daughter of Shirley Daum*

*Beth Ann DeSimone - daughter in law of Gloria Frick*

*Marlene Earl - CLC member*

*James Eddy - son of Arlene Eddy*

*Chuck & Irene Evans - CLC member*

*Julie Fallin - friend of Dwight & Carolyn Schuetz*

*Bob Glunt - son of Nancy Glunt*

*Gary Hanning - friend of Marion O'Donnell*

*Jarl Hansson - cousin of Cindy Dutt*

*John Heilman - brother of Jane Montgomery*

*Peggy Henry - CLC member*

*Abby Johnson - friend of Wally Utley*

*Oren Keibler - CLC member*

*Patty Kelley - friend of Marianne Trainor*

*Holly Kirsch - CLC member*

*Gary Lemon - brother-in-law of Carol Tamenne*

*David Little - son of Roger and Barb Little*

*Grace Lucas - CLC member*

<i>Donna Magerl - friend of Sandy Buehner</i>
<i>Audrey Mauro - sister of Louise Fitz</i>
<i>Derek McClemens - son of Greg &amp; Debby McClemens</i>
<i>Christopher Molnar - son of a friend of the Marion O'Donnell</i>
<i>Bob Nozzolio - friend of Marion O'Donnell</i>
<i>Walt Obidowski - friend of Marion O'Donnell</i>
<i>Michael O'Donnell - CLC member</i>
<i>Caroline Pernick - friend of Marion O'Donnell</i>
<i>John Ring - brother of Mary Wentroble</i>
<i>John Russell - son of Theresa Russell</i>
<i>Theresa Russell - CLC member</i>
<i>Denny Saddler - brother-in-law of Denise Shanter</i>
<i>Tony Santacasa - friend of the Bernardini &amp; McClemens</i>
<i>Peter Schreiber - son-in-law of Karen Palestra</i>
<i>Vi Shipman - friend of Arlene Eddy</i>
<i>Pat Sisco - friend of Arlene Eddy</i>
<i>Patti Smith - daughter of Frieda Cushing</i>
<i>Mary Sorrells - request from Pastor Wayne</i>
<i>Wilma Stewart - mother of Tammy Scanga</i>
<i>Marion Surgent - daughter of Theresa Russell</i>
<i>Gerry Suter - friend of Kris Meade</i>
<i>Arlene Switzer - friend of Oren Keibler</i>
<i>Jeff Weber - friend of Nancy Sheehan</i>
<i>Mary Wentroble - CLC member</i>
<i>Dawn Werner - niece of Sue &amp; Mike Werner</i>
<i>Bob &amp; Donna Yoder - CLC members</i>
<i>Gloria Zagorac - CLC member</i>

*Pray for Us*

**AUGUST BIRTHDAYS**

Please join us in extending the happiest of Birthday Wishes to the following Mission Partners who celebrate Birthdays in the month of **AUGUST**:

**AUGUST 1-12**

Holly Kirsch  
Pam Kuhn  
Marianne Trainor

Mirabella Andree  
Robert Wilson  
Cara Monroe

**AUGUST 13-16**

David Hall  
Anna Sheasley  
Scythe Ho  
Denise Shanter

Noah Madden  
Santini Ho  
Audrey Mauro

**AUGUST 17-25**

Gavin Rodgers  
Justin Pastucha  
Mackenzie Favero  
Adrienne McCurry

Jason Pastucha  
Ed Rupert  
Ruby McClintock

**AUGUST 26-31**

Joshua Porter  
Miranda Crofutt  
Jamie Koteles

Amy Heberling  
Eric Ruzomberka  
Maxwell Martin

If you don't see your name, and you have an AUGUST birthday, please forgive the oversight and give the church office a call so that we can record your birthdate in our parish records.

Thanks, and have a



**WE PRAY FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS:**

**AUGUST 2**

Daniel Santimauro  
Kim and Matthew Sarnowski  
Debra Saula  
Jim, Tammy, Abigail, Jesse, Annalise Scanga

**AUGUST 9**

Dwight and Carolyn Schuetz  
John and Kathy Schultz  
Harriet Schwartz  
Cynthia, Justin, Brian Sell



**AUGUST 16**

Cindy Shaner  
Randy, Sidney, Britney Shanter  
Rudolph and Denise Shanter  
Anna Sheasley

**AUGUST 23**

Nancy Sheehan  
Mark, Kathy, Brandon, Katlyn Shemak  
Scott, Leanne, Tanner, Mallory Shick  
Erich and Leslie Sill

**AUGUST 30**

Nancy Smith and Michael Peterson  
Debra and Rebecca Somple  
Ron and Fran Spagna  
Joseph and Jacqueline Stempfer



We are starting a monthly collection of items for Operation Christmas Child. Wait...Christmas? Yes, Christ-mas! If you are not familiar with Operation Christmas Child, it is a project of Samaritan's Purse, and is the world's largest

Christmas outreach of its kind. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has delivered gift-filled shoeboxes to over 124 million children affected by war, poverty, natural disasters, and other crises in more than 150 countries and territories. Each month, we will be collecting specific items that can be placed in the collection bins in the lobby of the church. Our collection schedule is:

**August** – Sunglasses, Band-Aids, hair brushes, hair ties

**September** – Harmonicas, musical recorders, yo-yo's, jump ropes, marbles, toy cars

**October** – Reusable plastic ware: small plates, bowls, water bottles, sippy cup, utensils

**November** - put boxes together and drop off at collection site!

***Each box is a true blessing to the child receiving it.  
Help us make a bigger impact this year!***

### **PPP Loan/Grant and church finances:**

In early April the church council made the decision to apply for a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Grant. In early May the church was approved for the program and received a one-time payment of \$30,000. The grant proceeds were used to cover payroll costs over the course of the summer months. Our financial team has done a wonderful job of documenting all expenditures from this grant per the requirements of this program, and we are confident that the church will not be required to pay back the amount that was received. A big thank-you to everyone who was involved in getting these funds approved for our church.



### **Electronic (Mobile) Giving Information**

Our Electronic Giving option is designed to provide you with a convenient and easy way to support the ongoing ministry of Christ's Lutheran Church by using your Smartphone.

By just taking a few short minutes to set up an account, you can make regular or scheduled offerings, make contributions to our Memorial or Endowment funds, pay for the altar flowers that you've ordered, or even help us to reduce our debt.

Here's all that you need to do to get started:

- Open the app that you usually used to download new apps and type: **Tithe.ly Church App**
- You will find a number of apps. Download the app titled: **ELCA Giving Tool by Tithe.ly**. This logo will help you to identify the proper app:
- Open an account using your email address; and, then, enter a password that you will remember
- When you are asked to find a church, simply type the words: **Christ's Lutheran Church**
- Choose **Christ's Lutheran Church Murrysville** (You will recognize the picture of our steeple.)
- Select a payment option, and enter either a Credit Card number or details about a checking account from which your offerings can be deducted.
- You can, then, either make a one-time contribution to support our ministry or schedule your regular offering.

If there are any members of our congregation that need further assistance in setting up electronic giving with our mobile giving app Tithe.ly. Joe Kelly has produced a wonderful step-by-step guide to take new users through the set-up process. That guide is available by request. For any further "hands-on" technical assistance, please contact Joe Kelly 412-999-6060 or email [joekelly567@gmail.com](mailto:joekelly567@gmail.com)

If you would like to connect to the online streaming via ZOOM, please email [office@christsmurrys ville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrys ville.org) with your email so we can send you the link.

### **What does Sunday School look like in September?**

As you can imagine, the Congregational Life team is struggling with the same issues as regular schools during this pandemic. We know some people are ready to come back to church and ready to bring their children to Sunday School. But we also know that's not true for everyone.

To begin in-building Sunday School raises so many questions: how many children would come, will we have enough teachers willing to come, how do we ensure social distancing, what about cleaning, air filtration, masks & sanitizing requirements, what do we do if someone tests positive for COVID-19, what will our state numbers look like - will we even be allowed to open??? And what about parents who don't feel it's safe for their children to participate in person? What can we provide for them?

Some of the answers are relatively easy. Some, not so much. So, we're narrowing down options. They include:

- ❖ Providing an in-building Sunday School. (Without singing and we may need to combine some classes due to a limited number of teachers able to participate.)
- ❖ Providing interactive zoom Sunday School classes.
- ❖ Providing pre-recorded Sunday School lessons.
- ❖ Some combination of the above.

As you can see, it's a lot to think about and act on. We welcome and need your prayers, input and help if you are able. And we'll keep you posted.

Your Congregational Life team,  
Sandy Buehner, John Reed, Cindy Lott

## Technology Update

Over the past 4 months of this pandemic, the one thing we have all learned to become accustomed to is the new role technology is playing in our everyday lives. This is especially true when it comes to our worship service. Pastor Wayne and Nancy along with our worship assistants and "co-hosts" have done a fantastic job of bringing the worship service into all of our homes each and every week. We have come a long way from those first services, but we still have a long way to go. A major step in that process will be technology upgrades that will be made over the next few months to bring an even better online experience to all of you. Our first task will be to bring the church's internet signal inside of our sanctuary to be able to eliminate the temporary set-up that is currently in place. The plan is to run a new hard-line from the incoming router to the sanctuary. There are other tasks that will follow down the line. If this sounds like something that interests you, our new Technology Team is looking for individuals who are either have technology experience or those who are willing to learn on the job.

Please reach out to the Church Office or Joe Kelly or Scott Ritenbaugh if you are willing to help out.



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*Council is working to update our list of email addresses. If you have not been receiving information from the church, please email: [sandybuehner@gmail.com](mailto:sandybuehner@gmail.com), (subject line: "CLC updated email"), so that we can add you to our email mailing list. There is so much going on, and we don't want you to miss a thing.*

*Thank you.  
Sandy & council*