

THE EXPRESSION

JULY 2021 ~ NEWSLETTER



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

Pastor Wayne Gillespie

Email: office@christsmurrysville.org

Website: christsmurrysville.org

Services

Saturday Contemporary – 6:00 pm

Sunday Worship – 10:00 am

Adult Sunday School – 9:00 am



From the Pastor

Independence Day

We will be joining in a celebration of independence and freedom this month. America's Founders dreamed of a nation where people would have a voice in their government, and they created a Democratic Republic where government officials are elected by the people and serve for a specific term. Many folks try to trace the roots of American freedom all the way back to the day when King John "Lackland" signed the Magna Charta in 1215 AD, but the comparison between the Magna Charta and our own Declaration of Independence is a bit of a stretch. America was founded upon representative government and the fact that all people are created equal. The earliest dreams for American life were built upon the idea that we all have the right to life, to liberty and to the pursuit of happiness.

The Bible speaks about freedom, independence, and liberty in several places. Jesus tells us that the truth will set us free (**John**

8:32). Jesus also says, “*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed*” (**John 8:36**) reminding us that He came into the world to set us free from the power of sin and death that we cannot escape in any other way. And lastly, in his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul talks about our freedom, as Christians, in a different way (**I Corinthians 8:1-13**) as he speaks about Christians eating food that has been sacrificed to idols.

Corinth was a very unusual place in the time of St. Paul. Corinth was a major city where people came from all around the known world to sell their products. Corinth was, also, a place that was religiously diverse. There were hundreds of temples in Corinth, so that people who wanted to worship their god could easily do so. St. Paul even talked about the fact that the Greeks had built a temple to an unknown God (**Acts 17:23**) because they wanted to make sure that all of the bases were covered. And this created a big problem. Christians who wanted to eat meat did not know if the meat had been carved from an animal that had been sacrificed to another god just hours earlier. Early Christians struggled because they were trying to figure out what it means to be free in Christ while they also tried to be careful to avoid eating meat that had been offered to other gods.

St. Paul’s response to this dilemma was an interesting one. He reminded the Corinthians that he had been set free by Jesus, and that he could celebrate his independence by eating meat without worrying about where the meat originated. Imagine St. Paul simply eating a hamburger on July 4th without worrying about its source. Christians do that all the time even though people from other religious traditions would never do that.

Then St. Paul throws in a twist. He reminds the Corinthians that he is free in Christ to eat his July 4th hamburger; however, because he sees that doing that is causing other people around him to feel uncomfortable, he says, “I’m not going to do it.” In fact,

St. Paul writes: *“Take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block for the weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol’s temple will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?”* (I Corinthians 8:9-10) What St. Paul is saying is: “I have freedom and independence, but I need to be sensitive to others when I am exercising my personal rights and liberty.” St. Paul reminds us that personal freedom and liberty are wonderful things; however, as we live our live-in community with other people, we need to live in ways that are considerate and respectful of others. This is, also, an important part of good citizenship.

And so, as we celebrate our independence, liberty, and freedom on July 4th, let’s also remember the fact that we live in a diverse nation and that living well with each other is always built upon the foundation of respect and care for others. We have been set free from tyrannical government, but our nation is still built upon creating community with each other and caring for each other. We are free in Christ, and we live in a nation where we have many rights and personal freedoms to celebrate, but our Founders also realized that our nation can only be strong and healthy when we respect and care for one another.

Pastor Wayne

Scott Ritenbaugh — President
 Joe Kelly — Vice President
 Ron Spagna — Secretary
 Dave & Barb Hall — Treasurer
 Bela Molnar — Financial Secretary

Sandy Buehner
 Fran Spagna
 Mary Huffman
 John Reed

Sharon Pfeiffer
 Linda Paulovitch
 Lauren Huffman
 Michelle Gravante

CHURCH COUNCIL



Church Council Minute Highlights

June 17th, 2021

- Huge thank you to all of our teams for doing a lot of great work during a very challenging time.
 - Reminder to try to keep an eye out for who you can invite to church with you to help expand our ministry and teams.
- Refocusing on our church mission and connection. There is no going back to twenty nineteen and that can be very scaring yet exciting at the same time trying to ‘navigate” a new normal as a “hybrid church”.
- Confirmation class was held at fifteen confirmands last month and held a very beautiful & successful outdoor celebration.
- Holy Communion will be offered at each service moving forward – you can respectfully make your own decision to receive or pass on communion.
- Vacation Bible School is happening July 19th-23 from am to noon. There are still spots open if you haven't signed your child up yet.
- Relaunching of the capital campaign for the outside drain pipe is in the beginning stages of the process.
 - Vote passed from congregational meeting on June 13th.
- Think of someone who you could invite to join you in a worship service this month.

**Next Council Meeting –
Thursday, July 15th, 2021 at 6:30 pm**

In person & Zoom



*Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:
9:15 am - 2:15 pm*

5330 Old Logan Ferry Road, Murrysville, PA 15668

You can contact the office at office@christsmurrysville.org
or by calling 412-795-1212

Caring Hearts & Hands



Volunteers will be meeting in the downstairs fellowship hall on Wednesday, July 14th at 9:15 am to pack and deliver lunches to many on our caring list.

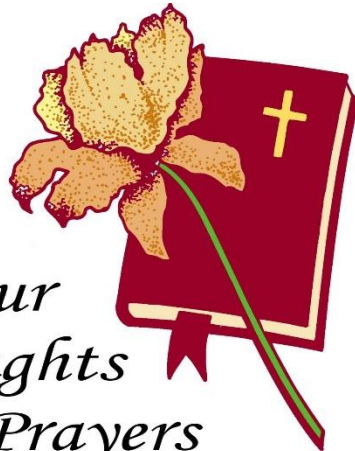
If you have been wanting to get involved and help, give back to our community, this special opportunity is perfect for you! Or maybe you are wondering how you could grant this friendly gesture to someone, including yourself? 😊

All you have to do is call Romaine Miller at 412-996-4915; to sign up or get your name on our Caring List.

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 Arentz
Harry & Amy Ayres
Ed Bertelsen
Linda Bradish
Beth Ann DeSimore
Irene Evans
Julie Fallin
Dan Feibig
John Heilman
Abby Johnson
Anthony Johnston
Pat Kvale
David Little
Donna Magerl
John Magnus

Derek McClemens
Bob Nozzolilo
Caroline Pernick
Denny Saddler
Tony Santacasa
Vi Shipman
Pat Sisco
Patti Smith
Mary Sorrells
Wilma Steward
Gerry Suter
Arlene Switzer
Jeff Weber



*In Our
Thoughts
and Prayers*

JULY BIRTHDAYS

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

JULY 1st – 9th

Tessa Van Orden
Benjamin Westerlund
Cooper Suhadolnik
Gloria Zagorac

Marjorie Wagle
Fran Spagna
Cameron Guercio

JULY 9th -13th

Barbara Hall
Paul McClintock
Jesse Scanga
Brandy Yurisinec
Erich Still

Aaron Madden
Kelly Roperti
Brett Andree
Joseph Lasher

JULY 14TH – 23RD

JJ Tensuan
Kate Kelly
Karen Palestra
Jen Peters

Sandra Thompson
Nancy Hollard
Brandon Towle
Erin Guzzie

JULY 25th – 31st

Jacqueline Stempfer
Edward Buehner
Ian Kaniecki
Aaron Tamenne

Michael Werner
Jordan McCormack
Madison Gestrich

If you don't see your name, and you have an MAY 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 an amazing birthday month!

VBS 2021 INFORMATION



CLC is excited to host Mystery Island VBS this summer from July 19th-23rd from 9 am-Noon at the church. We would like to provide a fun but safe environment for the kids and bring some normalcy back.

YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO SIGN UP! Registration forms are in the main entryway or you can give the office a call or email brettmelandree@gmail.com

We can't wait to see your children back at church! 😊

Many thanks to all of you who expressed your concern thoughts, words, prayers, cards and emails during my recent recovery from surgery.
Harry Replogle



PRAYER CIRCLE

If you have a prayer request, special concern or a thanksgiving to share, please contact Audrey Ferris, the Prayer Circle coordinator, at: (724) 327-3738 or audrey.m.ferris@gmail.com

(Please indicate on the subject line that it relates to the prayer circle).

WE PRAY FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS:

July 4th

Kelly Rogers
Mrs. Kelly Roperti
Patty Rowland
Lori Ruggiero

July 11th

Ed & Susan Rupert
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ruzomberka
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Salenske
Fred Salenske II

July 18th

Mr. Daniel Santimauro
Mrs. Kim Sarnowski
Debra Saula
Mr. & Mrs. James Scanga

July 25th

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Schmidt
Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Schultz
Mr. & Mrs. John Schultz
Mr. & Mrs. Martin Schultz





Church Grounds Volunteers Needed

The church is looking for a new volunteer(s) to help maintain the church grounds & team. This includes the basic needs of planting flowers, watering and weeding. This will not include mowing of the grass, luckily that is already taken care of.

Thank You in Advance and Thank you to all who have weeded and helped out already!

If you or someone you know would be interested in helping, please contact the church office at office@christsmurrysville.org or 412-795-1212



Make a Joyful Noise

Look for our pretty little coin cans to be making an appearance again in the entryway! We will be collecting loose coins the first weekend of the month moving forward, starting in July. If you're not aware, we donate the spare change to benefit Trinity Lutheran Church on the North Side of Pittsburgh. No amount is too big or too small. We thank you in advance for your generosity.

Donations for Domestic Violence Victims

The Outreach Team will be working with the Blackburn Center as our next ministry partner. This organization advocates for the rights of all individuals to live free from domestic, sexual, and other forms of violence by eliminating the root causes of violence and providing for the well-being and safety of survivors and victims. Christ's Lutheran Church has supported Blackburn Center in the past and we are continuing that effort.

Blackburn Center has requested the following items:

- Kitchen towels and dishcloths
- Can openers
- Pillows
- Queen size sheets
- Body wash
- Hair conditioner
- Comforters
- Bath towels and hand towels
- Dinnerware sets
- Silverware sets
- Dish racks
- Laundry baskets

All donated items must be new. Monetary donations will also be accepted.

*Blackburn Center also accepts small appliances. If you are interested in donating a new small appliance, please contact the church office for more information.

Items are being collected now through August 29th. Donations can be dropped off at Christ's Lutheran Church, in the designated bin in the entryway.

If you have any questions, please contact Christ's Lutheran Church Office.

Have you been getting all of our emails?

As you may know, our Church Council, along with Pastor Wayne, has been working diligently to stay in communication with our Members and Ministry Partners. Currently, our live Zoom service has been working well and we want to be sure that you are getting all our emails about these services. We also will be streaming live from YouTube, as well as resuming our 10 am Sunday Morning Worship Service.

We are reaching out to you for help. If you haven't been receiving our emails, they may be landing in your PROMOTIONS/SPAM/JUNK email folder. Please search your mailbox for emails coming from office@christsmurrysville.org To adjust your settings, go to the end of the email and click on the link to "Add us to your address book."

Please use the following updated link to connect to our weekly e-Newsletter, and to find important announcements and information about our ongoing ministry.

<https://prezi.com/view/Zd1LlveQHziMT6Rb0ebY/>

If you would like to connect to the online streaming via ZOOM, please email office@christsmurrysville.org with your email so we can send you the link.

“God’s Work in the World – ON PURPOSE” *(a report on the 2021 SWPA Synod Assembly)*

Two weeks ago, I attended the virtual Southwestern PA Synod assembly. I have attended many Synod assemblies over the years and have always been inspired by the amazing work that we do in our congregations, in our Synod, and also as part of the ELCA.

This year was no exception! The theme was “on purpose” and I think that sums up the passion and steadfastness of our Lutheran body of believers. With so many obstacles in place this last year with the pandemic, I didn’t realize how determined we Lutherans were to help so many people in our own communities and throughout the world.

The daylong assembly was a day of storytelling. It was a day of sharing ideas. It was a day of prayer. Your contributions to Synod benevolence really DO make a difference. Here are just a few examples:

1. This spring, our Synod gave \$10,000 to the Northern Texas synod and Northern Louisiana synod when they had the power failure during a week of frigid temperatures.
2. Your contributions give financial assistance to new congregations in areas where they are badly needed.
3. Seminary students (future pastors and church leaders) can graduate without crushing debt thanks to scholarships from your contributions.
(I was a seminary student 40 years ago who benefitted from scholarship money. It changed my life!)
4. During the pandemic, loans have been made to individual congregations who were struggling to meet expenses in this difficult time.
5. Your generosity helps the hungry worldwide (World Hunger Appeal) and makes possible the work of Lutheran Disaster Relief.
6. Right here in Pittsburgh, Berkeley Hills Lutheran Church, through “Big Dream Hunger Grants”, was able to provide 600 boxed meals on 8 Saturday nights this past year, to people who needed food assistance during the pandemic.

7. Our Synod will be sending out information about helping our partner Synod in Madagascar. They have had one of the worst droughts in history, and with COVID-19, they are suffering a disastrous food crisis.

These are just a few ways that we make a difference in the world.

Our church is a “Team of Teams” ...

Congregation + Synod + National Church + Worldwide Lutherans.

Together with congregations all over the world, we can do God’s work, purposefully making a difference in the lives of millions of people.

Let’s celebrate that! God’s work, our hands!

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Finke Sheehan



A huge heartfelt thank you for all that you’ve done and donated with your Thrivent dollars. We are currently looking into purchasing a new office computer for the church. This will be beyond helpful in keeping our church database organized, emails, bulletins and newsletters efficient and effective moving forward. Bless your generosity!