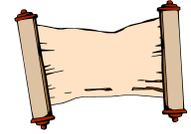
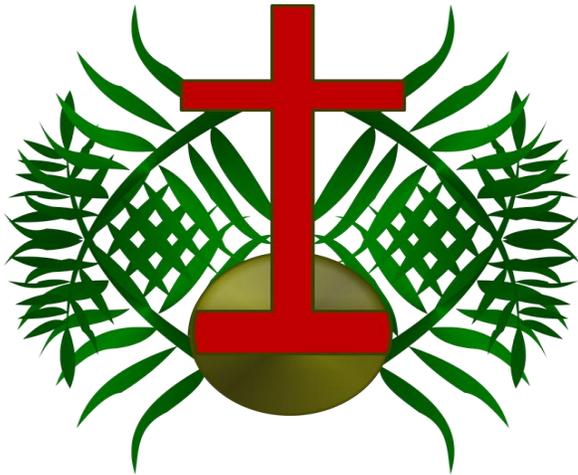


Parish Parchment



The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish
The Reverend Christine Kirchner, Pastor
1558 Rock Glen Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9207
March 2021

Return Service Requested



This newsletter is sent with a prayer for...

The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish Newsletter

News and Information About Emanuel, Saint Peter's,
and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Churches

Rev. Christine Kirchner, Pastor

March 2021

Phone: 570-384-4125

E-mail: mglp@frontier.com or pastorkirchner@gmail.com

MISSION STATEMENT OF MOUNTAIN GROVE LUTHERAN PARISH

"To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through a ministry of worship and outreach"



O Lord, we pray that the visitation of your grace may so cleanse our thoughts and minds that your Son Jesus, when he shall come, may find in us a fit dwelling place; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PASTORS PAGE

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

One of the more important things we do in our lives of faith is read the Bible. It seems like it should be one of the easier things we are called to do as Christians and yet *how* we read the Bible is an often debated subject. Simply read different English translations of the same Bible story, and you will notice discrepancies in how the stories are told. Or, simply read the same story as recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke, and you will see differences in how they describe the events. Given these differences, how then do we read scripture and still say it holds the authority of God's Word for us?

As a girl, I was taught to read the Bible at the same time I was taught to read other books. It was basically a **monologue** form of communication which is speaking in one direction. The author wrote the words, I read them verbatim, and then I would be able to repeat what the author wrote to show that I knew the text. It is a good and necessary form of communication. When giving instructions to your children on how to learn to drive it is good to have monologues. Here are the rules of the road; you learn them and then you have the right to drive. If you break them, there are consequences you will bear. No discussion.

But is this the way God intends to communicate with us as we read the scriptures? Perhaps parts of the Bible should be read this way, but an uninterrupted monologue is not a loving way to communicate with people. Monologues are controlling, domineering and one-sided. The more I read scripture the more I see the love of God, and God's intent to recreate loving relationships with God's children - with me.

Love is created in **dialogue** not monologue. So, how do we read scriptures in dialogue?

When people begin dating and they sense they are falling in love with each other, dialogues are involved. Dialogues are conversations beginning as one person reveals things about themselves: their hopes and dreams, their hurts and disappointments. Then there is space for the other person to respond and in a growing awareness of each other your relationship is born. It is not one person or the other, but the interaction between the two that takes on life. One of the amazing things we discover in the dialogue of relationships is that the more you think you know the other person, the more you become aware of what you don't know. There is always more to share and learn.

I am trying to read scripture more as a dialogue than a monologue. It is not just the words on the page (*as important as they are, for they are the words of the one that loves you*) but it is what happens between you and God's Word, as you bring your hopes, dreams and fears to the text and the text brings God's presence to you. It is not one or the other, but the new reality that is being created between you.

Have you ever had the experience of reading a Biblical text you have known all your life, but for some reason, this time when you read it there was a new insight or understanding you had not known before. You knew the text (monologue) but this time something new was communicated between you and the text (dialogue).

It is the work of the Holy Spirit allowing the Scriptures to speak anew to us, as we continue to speak to God's Word in our lives. It is not just one or the other, but what happens between us. This is the language of love as God continues the dialogue begun in the waters of Baptism.

Good reading this Lenten season!
Pastor Christine

Prayer List

The family & friends of: *Edna Makara* (Sister of Minnie Hess)

Also: *Janet Matyas, Tara Bauman Seely, Caroline* (Kathy Brior's friend), *Lloyd Fisher* (Susie Spudes brother), *Bonnie Book, Diane Derr, Annabelle Davis, Pulmonary Critical Care Unit & medical workers at Geisinger, Joseph Fisher* (Susan Spudes brother), *David Frenz* (Dan Davis's son-in-law), *Carl Rittenhouse, Charlie and Danny Fisher* (Susie Spudes nephews), *Shirley Omalia* (Mark Hartzell's mother), *Susie Spudes Audrey Bronson Danny Hale* (Chuck Henry's friend), Beth *Karnes* (Mark Hartzell's sister), *Elsie Buehler, Gloria Baylor, Tom Bauman, Tara Carr Erney* (Linda Adler's friend), *Donna* (Bill Brior's sister), *Emily Sutherland & Tyson, Minnie Hess, Randy Hack* (friend of Dale Michael), *Robin Baker, Marie Welsh* (friend of Janet Cool), *Sandee Knecht, Pat* (Kathy Brior's friend), *Jerry Bodman, Kim & Hailey Boysha, Wyatt Laubach* (friends of Diane Derr's Aid), *Kathy Schell, Annette Hoffman* (Nancy Chulock's cousin), *Beverly J Michael, Jimmy Denoia* (Ray & Nancy Chulock's brother-in-law), *Patsy Millard, Dick Baker, Carol & Debbie Chyko, young people of our congregation. Please pray for all the people of MGLP*, especially: those in need of healing; those suffering from chronic health issues; & members who are confined to their homes or long-term care facilities.

UPDATES: Sharon Hartzell at 384-4107 or shartzell@ptd.net

-----PLEASE REVIEW PRAYER LIST AND UPDATE AS NECESSARY-----

Prayer Ventures for March 2021

- 1 *Women's History Month*** Give thanks for women throughout history and in our lives who have shared their gifts and leadership in the church and society, raised and cared for us, taught us and nurtured our faith, and fought for justice, equality and healing. Pray for women everywhere who suffer injustice, demeaning stereotypes, violence and poverty, that they will not lose hope but will be delivered from their suffering and persecution to live freely and boldly.
- 2** Give thanks that we can trust completely God's promises, love and forgiveness, especially when we feel unlovable, unfaithful or uncertain.
- 3** The Spanish word *amparo* means protection of a living creature from suffering or damage. Pray for the ELCA's Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) strategy, and pray that we will join in serving the most vulnerable children and their families as they seek safety and the opportunity to live in welcoming, humane communities and congregations.
- 4** Pray for our synod bishops, the presiding bishop & the secretary, who are meeting online for the Conference of Bishops. Ask that the Spirit guide & inspire their discussions, prayerful deliberations & decisions, which impact the ELCA, the work done together & Future Church goals & structure being implemented in the churchwide organization.
- 5** During our Lenten journey, pray that God will help us reflect on aspects of our life and faith that we find difficult to examine and confess, and that we will remember we are always loved and made new through the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ — our Savior, redeemer and source of hope.
- 6** Ask God to bless and guide our efforts to worship, commune, study Scriptures, socialize and care for each other online, and to find safe ways of gathering in person. Give thanks for the inspiration of the Spirit and the creativity of our siblings in Christ, who help us envision and practice new ways of being church together.
- 7** Pray that the theology, values, traditions and practices of our church and congregations will be centered in the good news of Jesus Christ and the ways of God, and that God will guide us back to this center when we are distracted or drawn away from our purpose and identity as the body of Christ.
- 8 *International Women's Day*** Pray for women everywhere, for gender equality and equity, for the elimination of gender bias and stereotypes, and for opportunities for women to develop and use their gifts, skills, insights and passions without barrier or discouragement.
- 9** Pray that in the sign and symbol of the cross we will see the power of God at work for our salvation through Jesus Christ — a gift of love and mercy for all people and nations.
- 10** Lift up prayers of joy for, and find ways to reach out to, those celebrating birthdays, marriages, anniversaries and other special occasions without being able to share those moments with others in person.
- 11** Give praise and glory to our wonderful God, whose ways and commands are revealed to us with clarity and who is merciful and gracious with us when we stray from them.
- 12** Pray that we'll continue to gain ground on vaccinating people against COVID-19, especially those who are most vulnerable & those who provide essential services for the sake of our health, well-being & daily needs, here & globally.
- 13** We are a publicly engaged church that participates in God's work of pursuing justice and peace and of restoring and reconciling communities. Give thanks for ELCA Advocacy, ELCAvotes, the Lutheran Office for World Community and the teachings of our church, which help us to understand the needs of our neighbors, equip us for social concerns and encourage us to respond as God calls us to serve and act.
- 14** "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." This is welcome news for everyone! Give thanks and praise to God!
- 15** Give thanks that God has created us to do good in the world and that, even in complex and difficult circumstances, the Spirit is always at work teaching and emboldening us to love and serve our neighbor.
- 16** Give thanks that God loves us, hears our pleas — spoken and silent — and grants us hope, comfort and relief amid our troubles. Ask that the Spirit will show us how to respond with wisdom, compassion and hope when our neighbors experience difficulties.

17 Pray for our ELCA missionaries serving alongside companion churches and organizations in Africa, including the Rev. Elisabeth Johnson (Cameroon), Anne and Willie Langdji (Madagascar, West Africa and Central Africa), the Rev. Alex Lachapelle (Kenya), the Rev. Brian Palmer and the Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo (Liberia), the Rev. Lancelot Themba and Kwena Mkhabela (Madagascar, West Africa and Central Africa), and the Rev. Amanda and the Rev. Grant Applehans (Madagascar).

18 Ask God to prepare and equip congregations and communities — physically, emotionally and spiritually — to respond to the severe weather that often comes in spring, and to help one another endure.

19 Give thanks that God, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, rescues us from darkness, sin, death and all that separates us from our loving and merciful Creator. Pray that we will take to heart Paul's reminder that "by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."

20 Thank God for our special relationship with the Reformed Church in America, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 1997. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, and pray that together we will find strength and new resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor, especially in these uncertain and challenging times.

21 We grieve the suffering and death of Jesus, yet we also rejoice in his resurrection and the promise of salvation that comes with it. Pray that we will follow Jesus wherever he leads us — through challenges and joys — and that our lives will glorify God throughout the journey.

22 Pray for the lay leaders of our church, who respond to God's call to serve, accept invitations to share their gifts and skills, and give of themselves to grow the church, serve neighbors in need, nurture the faith of others and equip disciples of all ages.

23 Pray for God's mercy and love every day. Ask that God will instill in us joy and hope, create in us a faithful spirit, teach us truth and wisdom, and stir gratitude in our hearts for all that God has done and continues to do for us and all humanity.

24 Due to the lasting impact of COVID-19 and the uncertainty surrounding vaccine rollout, the ELCA has decided not to send Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers for its 2021-22 program year. Pray for young adult applicants who are eager to serve and share their faith, and for the enduring relationships we have with our companion churches and partner organizations around the world.

25 Pray for all those who grieve and suffer the loss of a loved one, friend, co-worker or neighbor, especially those impacted by the death of someone from COVID-19.

26 We see humility, sacrifice and unconditional love in the suffering Jesus endured for our redemption. Pray that the Spirit will make us humble, loving servants willing to sacrifice convenience, reward and emotional comfort for the sake of sharing the gospel and caring for our neighbors in need.

27 Pray for our ELCA missionaries serving alongside companion churches and organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Albert (Gustavo) Driau and the Rev. Rachel Ringlaben (Argentina and Uruguay), Karen Anderson (Chile), Linda Gawthorne (Colombia) and the Rev. Claudia Lopez Ortega (Nicaragua).

28 *Palm Sunday* Jesus endured persecution, inner conflict, betrayal by his closest followers, arrest and an unfair trial leading to his death — all for our salvation and the fulfillment of God's promises and love. Give praise and thanks to the Son of God!

29 Pray that we might reconcile our differences and embrace, teach and act on our values, appreciating the diversity of humanity and our communities, attending to our neighbors in need, practicing mutual respect and care, and pooling our diverse gifts, skills and perspectives to change our society, church and world.

30 Prayerfully reflect on who Jesus is and what we profess to believe about Jesus as Savior, teacher, servant, example, source of truth, man and Son of God.

31 Give thanks to God that "we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses" who support and encourage our faith and accompany us in our baptismal journey of service and witness.

UPcoming EVENTS

I would like to thank everyone for their flexibility during the pandemic. Thank you for your willingness to adapt our worship services in order to meet the changing safety needs. Planning for our worship services has proven difficult. The new schedule is listed to the right. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please contact Pastor Christine.

Worship Schedule

Starting March 7 all three churches will be worshipping in their sanctuaries at their normal worship times. We ask that while inside the building, everyone wears a mask and observes proper social distancing. The service will also be modified to reduce group speaking and singing. If you are uncomfortable worshipping inside, the service will also be available on the parish Facebook page. If you have any questions or concerns, please let Pastor Christine know.

I would like to thank all the people from St Peter & Emanuel that sent me cards. I really appreciated them.
Sandee Knecht



LENT

Midweek Lenten Worship and Devotional

There will be two ways to worship on Wednesdays this Lenten season. Pastor Christine will be posting a worship video every Wednesday morning on the parish Facebook page and Pastor Christine's YouTube channel. There will also be a Midweek Lenten devotional that you can use in correlation with the worship video or on its own if you cannot watch the video. Devotionals will be available to pick up at worship on Sundays or by mail. If you have any questions or need a devotional book mailed to you, please let Pastor Christine know.

TRINITY UCC, ROCK GLEN
ANNUAL PIZZA SALE

REMEMBER, DELIVERY OF
PIZZAS WILL BE MARCH 9

Any questions concerning your
order call:

Bonnie 570-384-3300 or
Kay 570-384-4441



March Babies

- 03/01 Leah Bankes
- 03/03 Donna Bankes
Miriam Rhody
- 03/04 Amy Matyas
Doris Longenberger
- 03/05 Sandra Robbins
Alexandra Bankes
- 03/08 Jared Keller
- 03/10 Kyle Maylath
Cynthia (Pam) Hummer
- 03/11 Matthew Davis
- 03/14 Patty Horn
- 03/15 Gloria Baylor
- 03/16 Barry Bower
- 03/18 Logan Hartzell
- 03/19 Kristina Brown
- 03/20 Pam Keller
- 03/21 Jeromie Brown
Keith Henry
- 03/22 Lauren Maylath Conston
- 03/25 Annabelle Davis
- 03/26 Colby Adler
- 03/29 Gail Horne
- 03/30 Laureen Hauck

St. Peter Worship Service Schedule for March

8:30 am on March 14 & 28

9:30 am on March 7 & 21

Emanuel Worship Service Schedule for March

10:15 am on March 14 & 28

10:45 am on March 7 & 21

Coffee Klatch will resume at later date.

Pastor contact info:

The Rev. Christine Kirchner

Contact info: pastorkirchner@gmail.com

808-652-6740 or 570-384-4125



March Anniversaries

- 03/15 Robert & Terri Mock

Emanuel's volunteer for Heat/AC &
Communion for March is
Peggy Pickin