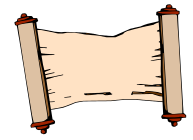


# Parish Parchment



The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish  
The Reverend Christine Kirchner, Pastor  
1558 Rock Glen Road  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9207  
September 2024

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**

**September 2024**

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### MISSION STATEMENT OF MOUNTAIN GROVE LUTHERAN PARISH

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



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 siblings in Christ,

I thought I would start this letter off with a question: how often do you think about your baptism? Perhaps your family reminded you of its importance as a child by celebrating the anniversary of your baptism each year. Or maybe you learned to appreciate it later at confirmation or as an adult after baptizing your own children. While we know our baptism is important, I have a feeling that for most of us, our baptism isn't something we think about on a daily basis.

And yet baptism is one of, if not the, most important events in our Christian lives.

Through this sacrament, we are named and claimed as children of God and that identity remains with us forever. Regardless of who we are or what we have done, through baptism we know that we are accepted by God and part of God's family. As the water is poured over our heads, we are connected to the death and resurrection of Jesus and receive the promise that Death will not have the final word.

The gospel writer of Mark illustrates the importance of baptism in his retelling of Jesus' baptism in two ways. First as Jesus rises from the water, the heavens open up and God declares, "You are my beloved Son. With you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11) These words are personal, poignant, and powerful. Wrapped in these words are the blessings of identity, worth, and unwavering regard.

Second, unlike the gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mark doesn't include any of Jesus' birth narrative in his gospel. Mark does not write about shepherds, wisemen, or angels. There are no stories of Jesus as a precocious child teaching in the temple. Instead, Mark begins his gospel with the baptism of Jesus. By beginning in this way, we see that baptism isn't incidental to Mark's story about Jesus, but rather foundational. It is the highpoint and climax of Jesus' story in a nutshell. Again and again, as Jesus casts out unclean spirits, heals the sick, feeds the hungry, and welcomes the outcast, he is only doing to others what has already been done to him. Jesus is telling them via word and deed that they too are beloved children of God with whom God is well pleased. And at the end of Mark's gospel, the darkest moment of the story (when Jesus feels absolutely abandoned) is followed immediately by the story of the resurrection. When the women go to anoint Jesus' body, they instead find an empty tomb and hear from the angel that God has kept God's baptismal promise – God continues to accept and honor Jesus as God's own beloved Son, even in death.

This means that when we are at our low moments, we can remember that the God who raised Jesus from the dead is the same God who promised in baptism to never abandon us and to love and accept us as beloved children, even when we have a hard time loving and accepting ourselves. This is why baptism is so incredibly important. It offers us the acceptance of the Creator of the Cosmos and consequently empowers us to accept others in turn. Baptism reminds us that wherever we may go and whatever we may do, God continues to love, accept, and hold onto us.

I hope throughout the upcoming month you may experience the acceptance which God has already bestowed upon you.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Christine

### Prayer List

#### The family & friends of:

**Also:** *Karen Baylor, Steven Storaska, Dan Davis, Tami Wiehe* (Nancy Bauman's daughter), *Frank & Loretta Baldwin* (friends of Karen Henry), *David Frenz* (Dan Davis' son-in-law), *Loretta Baldwin* (friend of Karen Henry), *Sheri Eley* (Charlotte Thomas' niece), *Taylor Thomas* (Charlotte Thomas' granddaughter), *Diane Derr, Donald Cool Jr.* (Janet Cool's grandson), *Jayme Keller* (Jordan Keller's daughter), *Pearl Spudes, Albert Bellum* (Susan Spudes), *Elsie Buehler, Pastor Stan & Carole Bower, Dale Schoepf, Jen Beaver* (Dale Michael), *Judy Petrewicz* (Janet Cool), *Roberta Pepe* (Lois Levan's daughter), *George Lynn* (Susan Spudes), *Gloria Fritz, Lori Yutko* (Susan Spudes), *Jean Bankes, Robert Fritz, Russ Ebright* (friend of Dale Michael), *Paige Thomas, Tyson Neal* (Emily Sutherland's son), *Patsy Millard, Don Davis, Shirley Omalia* (Mark Hartzell's mother), *young people of our congregation.*

**Please pray for all the people of MGLP**, especially those in need of healing; suffering from chronic health issues; & members confined to their homes or long-term care facilities

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

## Prayer Ventures for September 2024

**1** “It is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, folly” (Mark 7:21-22). Recognizing that evil intentions and actions come from the human heart, confess your weakness to God, who is rich in mercy and loves us even in our imperfection.

**2** *Labor Day* Recognize and pray for the work people do to sustain their families and benefit their communities and society. Pray that all will receive fair wages, work in safe environments, be renewed through times of sabbath, and experience joy and fulfillment in their labor. Pray for those who seek employment and for the care, support and well-being of people unable to work.

**3** *National Suicide Prevention Month* Pray for those who feel lonely, depressed and hopeless, that they will find compassion and spiritual renewal in times of darkness and suffering. Ask the Spirit how we might best respond to our neighbors and siblings in Christ who are struggling.

**4** Ask the Spirit to help us be doers and hearers of the word of God, looking beyond our own needs and attending to the needs of our suffering neighbors.

**5** Give thanks for the thousands of young people who attended the ELCA Youth Gathering in July and raised nearly \$100,000 for Generation Zero-Hunger, supporting ELCA World Hunger in its work to end hunger and poverty and to transform lives, families and communities around the world.

**6** Pray for communities and congregations vulnerable to the hurricanes, that they will be prepared, resilient and ready to serve their neighbors impacted by severe weather. Give thanks for the many ways — immediate and long term — that Lutheran Disaster Response gathers resources to relieve suffering, support recovery and healing, and stir hope.

**7** Pray for ELCA campus ministries across the country as they engage students, faculty, staff and others to experience God’s abundant grace through worship, study, fellowship, service and pastoral care.

**8** *“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday* On this annual day of service, give thanks for the opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. Give thanks for our partnerships of compassion, service and advocacy with other congregations and ecumenical partners, Lutheran health and human service agencies, and community organizations.

**9** “I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long” (Psalm 146:2). Thank God for all we have and for God’s loving and merciful presence in our lives.

**10** Remember those who deliver food, goods and other resources by truck, merchant ship or train, across the country and around the world. Pray for their safety and well-being, especially when they are separated from family, friends and community. Pray that their loneliness might be eased by the knowledge that we are always connected, as children of God and siblings in Christ, through a faith that has no bounds.

**11** Pray for ELCA missionaries and International Women Leaders serving alongside our global companions in the Middle East and North Africa to share the good news of Jesus Christ, advocate for justice and peace, support communities and leaders, and invite all to journey together as children of God.

**12** Ask the Spirit to strengthen our faith in God’s immeasurable power to heal, renew and create hope where there is tragedy, suffering and despair. Pray that God will equip us to respond to our neighbors in need and to bear hope, healing and love into the world.

**13** Remember in prayer young adults using their faith, gifts and passion in the church, the workplace, the military, volunteer organizations and community service agencies.

**14** Racism and bias are persistent and perplexing problems that infect our society, church, institutions and systems. Ask God to forgive us when we disparage and separate ourselves from children of God whom we perceive to be different and less valued. Pray for the courage, wisdom and humility to confront our biases and to strive for love, respect, equity and unity.

**15** *First Day of Hispanic Heritage Month* Give thanks to God for the gifts, contributions and rich cultural diversity of our Latiné neighbors and siblings in Christ. Pray for the growth and vitality of the ELCA's 147 Latiné ministries as they share the gospel, support rostered and lay leaders, promote inclusivity and diversity, and serve their neighbors. Pray for the Spirit to guide and further the work of the ELCA Latino Ministries Association.

**16** "[Jesus] asked [the disciples], 'But who do you say that I am?'" (Mark 8:29). Pray for the Spirit to help us express our faith in Jesus Christ as Son of the living God — our savior, liberator, teacher, healer and true hope for the world.

**17** Give thanks for the Christian Education Network of the ELCA, which connects professionals and volunteers and encourages their mutual care and support as they serve in vocations of lifelong faith formation in congregations and other ministries.

**18** "[The Lord has] delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling" (Psalm 116:8). Give thanks and praise to God for hearing our pleas, responding, and accompanying us through every difficulty.

**19** Pray that we might honor our Creator by treating people with love and mercy, giving thanks for what we have, practicing generosity, managing natural resources responsibly and telling others of God's amazing power and grace.

**20** Recognizing that we each have strengths and shortcomings, pray that we will attend to one another's needs, mindful of God's forgiveness and grace that surround us and of our renewal in the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

**21** Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the United Church of Christ, a full communion partner since 1997. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength, resources and encouragement for the work of sharing the gospel, serving our neighbor and growing the church.

**22** Pray for a spirit of humility and attentiveness to the needs of our neighbor, a spirit shaped by the example of Jesus Christ and uninterested in personal recognition, reward or praise.

**23** Pray for those gathered in Portland, Ore., for the conference offered by the ELCA Stewardship and Generosity team in partnership with the Presbyterian Foundation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Ask God to bless their time together, to strengthen stewardship leaders, to equip them with tools to encourage congregational generosity, and to cultivate new approaches to supporting Christ's mission in the world.

**24** Ask God to bless our synod bishops, presiding bishop and secretary as they gather in Chicago for the Conference of Bishops, that they might support and encourage one another and help identify, invite and equip new leaders in the church.

**25** Pray that our actions, words and relationships will reflect the love of God, which stirs humility, joy, kindness and generosity.

**26** Pray that God will strengthen and guide us in the essential work of ending poverty, hunger and homelessness, here and around the world, for the sake of humanity and to honor God as our creator and source of life.

**27** Give thanks that God is our help and strength in every situation, and that our faith will be sustained through the work of the Spirit and the care we receive from our siblings in Christ.

**28** "Could it be that we are called for such a time as this?" (*All Creation Sings* 1003). In this time of unrest and uncertainty we may feel that we have nothing of significance to offer. Pray that we will hear and respond to God's call to use our unique gifts, experiences and wisdom to be an active, compassionate and faithful presence in the world.

**29** Rejoice and give thanks to God for empowering us to gather our strength and resources as communities of faith, serving our neighbors in need in ways we could never imagine on our own.

**30** Pray for the new members of your congregation, that they will feel included in a faith community that responds to their need for spiritual growth, shares in their joys and sorrows, and welcomes their diverse gifts for doing God's work in the world.

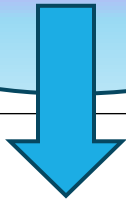


**Adult Sunday School**  
 Pastor Christine will lead adult Sunday School after worship until the end of September.

**Kauffman's BBQ Chicken Dinner**

St Peter's will be holding another Kauffman's BBQ Chicken fundraiser on Wednesday, Oct 16<sup>th</sup>. It will be take-out only from 4-6pm and tickets are \$13. The dinner includes ½ BBQ chicken, baked potato, & veggies. For tickets see Pastor Christine or any member from St Peter.

The parish began holding joint Sunday morning services again. There will be one service each Sunday at 9:30am alternating between the different churches. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to Pastor Christine. You can find the schedule below or on a handout at the back of the church.



**Joint Service Schedule**  
 July – September 2024

9/1	Pentecost 15	Emanuel	9:30am (HC)
<b>9/8</b>	<b>Pentecost 16</b>	<b>St. Peter</b>	<b>8:30am</b>
9/15	Pentecost 17	Trinity	9:30am
9/22	Pentecost 18	Emanuel	9:30am
9/29	Pentecost 19	St. Peter	9:30am

**Be sure to check out worship times as two of the services begin at 8:30am**

**Sundaes on Sunday**

**St Peter's will be hosting another Sundaes on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm. We will have free ice cream sundaes and hot dogs. Everyone from the community is invited.**

**Trinity's council meeting will be held after worship on Sunday, September 15.**



## September Birthdays

- 09/01 Allen Hons
- 09/04 Kaitlyn Henry
- 09/09 Lauren McGinty
- 09/10 Julie Wolforth
- 09/12 Brent Book  
Patsy Millard
- 09/14 Jordan Keller  
Tyler Chulock
- 09/15 Elsie Buehler
- 09/16 Dan Davis  
Robert Thomas
- 09/18 Lisa Book  
Garth Book  
Dan Pitonyak
- 09/19 Irene Fisher
- 09/20 Kay Rossachacj
- 09/21 David Creasy
- 09/22 Thomas Livziey, Jr.  
Nathan Huff
- 09/23 Bill Brior
- 09/27 Charlotte Thomas
- 09/28 Zoe McKenna Bankes  
Tara Bauman-Seely
- 09/29 Robert Fritz  
Virginia Rupert

## St. Peter Worship Service Schedule for September

8:30 am on September 8

9:30am on September 29

## Emanuel Worship Service Schedule for September

9:30 am on September 1 & 22

*Pastor contact info:*

*The Rev. Christine Kirchner*

*pastorkirchner@gmail.com*

*808-652-6740 or 570-384-4125*



## September Anniversaries

- 09/10 Matt & Lindsay Huff
- 09/23 Amy & Connie Minzola, Jr.

Emanuel's volunteers for Heat/AC &  
Communion for September are  
Cheech & Jelly