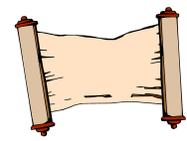


# Parish Parchment



The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish  
The Reverend Christine Kirchner, Pastor  
1558 Rock Glen Road  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9207  
July 2020

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**

**July 2020**

Phone: 570-384-4125

E-mail: [mglp@frontier.com](mailto:mglp@frontier.com) or [pastorkirchner@gmail.com](mailto: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 siblings in Christ,

Last year I began taking a pottery class through Bloomsburg University. It was one of those mini courses that the university offers: six classes, three hours each, and by the end you know how to throw a pot! While I have always enjoyed doing creative-type things, I have never been a particularly skilled artist. But the course sounded like fun and it seemed like a good way to meet people, so I figured I'd give it a try.

When the class started, the instructor showed us the clay and how to prepare it. Then she threw it onto the pottery wheel, the wheel began to spin, and soon she had a cup where before there was only a lump of clay. She made it look so easy. Just touch the spinning clay and soon something beautiful will form.

Having watched the demonstration, it was now our turn and I quickly realized throwing pottery is not nearly as easy as it looks! In order to shape the clay, you need to use a decent amount of force. But use too much force, you will break the clay and have to start over. If you don't apply pressure evenly or if you are slightly off balance, the clay becomes misshapen and you have to start over. I had to start over a lot!

Finally, after all my mistakes and do-overs, I had a cup sitting in front of me. The clay was even and the walls of the cup were perpendicular. I showed it to the instructor to see if it was finished. "The walls look a little thick. Why don't you make one last pass to make them thinner?" I didn't want to work with it anymore because I was afraid I would mess it up. But I started up the wheel anyways...

It didn't take long for my perfect cup to become completely misshapen.

How often do the events of our lives seem to mirror this story? We work hard, do what we think is right, and yet in the end nothing goes according to plan. What once looked so promising is now misshapen and unable to return to what it was.

And yet we hear in the Bible that even though our lives are misshapen, God chooses to love us. Regardless of our shape, God claims us and values us even when the world says we are beyond repair. God uses us in ways we never imagined or thought possible.

The class was almost finished and I didn't have time to start over on my cup. I placed it, flaws and all, on the shelf to dry. The next week went easier and I was able to make several nicely shaped bowls and a cup. But as I looked at the shelf with all of my pottery, my eye kept going back to the misshapen cup. Despite all of the frustrations, it holds a special place in my heart.

Despite our flaws and frustrations, we also hold a special place in God's heart.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Christine



**Families & friends of:** *Bonnie Bolinsky Keszowski* June 23, *Deborah Schoppe* June 21 (Bob Schoppe's wife)

**Also:** *Thelma Williams, Emily Sutherland & babies, Minnie Hess, Randy Hack* (friend of Dale Michael), *Justin Gonzales* (friend of Chuck Henry), *Kathy Brady* (friend of Susie Spudes), *Robin Baker, Marie Welsh* (friend of Janet Cool), *Don Swartz* (friend of Chuck Henry), *Sandee Knecht, Pat* (Kathy Brior's friend), *Jerry Bodman, Kim & Hailey Boysha, Wyatt Laubach* (friends of Diane Derr's Aid), *Kathy Schell, Shirley Oxenrider* (Susie Spudes), *Annabelle Davis, Allison Jumper* (Susie Spudes), *Janet Matyas, Emery Tweehues* (Susie Spudes), *Annette Hoffman* (Nancy Chulock's cousin), *Beverly J Michael, Jimmy Denoia* (Ray & Nancy Chulock's brother-in-law), *Patsy Millard, Doris Schell, 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](mailto:shartzell@ptd.net)

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

## Prayer Ventures for July 2020

- 1** As this time of stress and uncertainty continues, pray that we will be persistent in our generous support for the mission of the church: comforting and caring for our neighbors, responding to the global impact of the pandemic, providing food and basic necessities for people in need, reaching out to the isolated and lonely, and aiding organizations that work for the health, well-being and restoration of our communities.
- 2** Give thanks for God's ever-present love and care, and for the message of the psalmist who proclaims, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."
- 3** Ask the Spirit to help us express our gratitude and concern for first responders, nurses, doctors and hospital employees, and to show us how to serve as God's hands and voice in caring for their spiritual, physical and emotional needs.
- 4** Ask God to help us cherish and not abuse the blessings of freedom and liberty, work to change our society where there is injustice and oppression, and accompany our global neighbors and companion churches striving for freedom, justice and voice.
- 5** Give thanks that God's love and truth are revealed to us through faith in Jesus Christ and that the Spirit is at work inspiring and equipping us to share the good news, spread truth and invite others to believe.
- 6** Pray for wisdom and patience as we navigate how to gather as congregations and discern what is appropriate, safe, caring and respectful of the ongoing concerns of our members, communities and nation.
- 7** We understand well Paul's struggle between the inclinations of human nature and following the ways of God and teachings of Jesus. Pray for forgiveness and strengthened faith when we are weak or make poor decisions; pray that we will be guided and encouraged by the Spirit of God that dwells within us.
- 8** Thank God for our special relationship with the Episcopal Church, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 1999. Pray for the church, its diverse ministries and its members and leaders, and pray that together we will find mutual support, new partnerships and new resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.
- 9** Give thanks that "the Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made." Pray that our joy and thanksgiving will move us to be witnesses to God's presence, grace and mercy in the world for the sake of all people.
- 10** Pray for the 120 ELCA companion synods that connect our congregations with Lutherans and ministries worldwide. Give thanks that together we participate in God's mission, support each other, share our joys and sorrow, and use our gifts and resources to respond to human needs and grow the church.
- 11** Remember in prayer refugees and immigrants throughout the world and at our borders who hope for and seek welcoming, safe communities where they can reestablish their lives and raise their families. Pray that they will have access to health services, food and resources to meet their daily needs during this time of heightened vulnerability and isolation.
- 12** Pray that we will sow the seeds of the good news of Jesus Christ without bias or judgment as to how people will receive it, and that we will trust the Spirit to accomplish what God intends through our witness and service in the world.
- 13** Reflect on the significance of the 50th anniversary of a Lutheran church choosing to ordain women in the US. Give thanks for the leadership, ministry & gifts of women who have served the church throughout history & for those women who endured the hardships & work leading to the ordination of women.
- 14** Pray for Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton, that God will sustain her faith and strength and guide her leadership and decisions, particularly during this difficult and uncertain time in our church and society when we are looking to her for guidance and vision.
- 15** Give praise to God, for God's word is powerful, clear, true, and trustworthy.

- 16** Pray for businesses that are struggling or reopening or have shut down, and for their owners, their employees and all the other people and businesses they impact. Ask God to help them make decisions and implement new health precautions that take into consideration the well-being and needs of their employees, the people they serve and their community.
- 17** Pray for voting members of the Western North Dakota Synod gathered for a special meeting and elections, and for members throughout the synod who will participate through livestreaming. Ask that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them in choosing leaders, proclaiming the gospel, growing the church, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in an ever-changing world.
- 18** Give thanks that God's word is a light to our path throughout life that guides us in our baptismal journey, fills us with hope and joy, and illuminates truth and justice.
- 19** It is a painful, nagging reality that there both good & evil in the world. Pray that the Spirit will renew our faith, trust & patience that God's righteousness, judgment & mercy will reign when the end of time comes.
- 20** Give thanks for rostered ministers in our church who are active in call, on leave from call, awaiting call or retired. Praise God for their faith, gifts, caring leadership, example and sacrifices in response to God's call to a life of ministry and service.
- 21** We are church together, many members of the one body of Christ. Pray that the Spirit will unite us in our commitment to condemn sexism, anti-Semitism, white supremacy and racism against indigenous people and people of color, whenever and wherever these sins occur.
- 22** Pray like God, we'll be "merciful & gracious, slow to anger & abounding in steadfast love & faithfulness."
- 23** Pray for our ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries and their faculties, staff and students as they work to adapt to and overcome the disruptions and difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pray that faculty and staff will find effective ways of caring for students, continuing educational experiences both in person and from a distance, enriching faith and helping students discern and prepare for their vocations.
- 24** Pray that we will be filled with and led by the Spirit so that our actions, words and faith reveal who we are — children of God, followers of Christ.
- 25** Remember in prayer the leaders, voting members and others gathered for the South Carolina Synod Assembly, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them in choosing leaders, proclaiming the gospel, growing the church, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in an ever-changing world.
- 26** How do you envision and understand the kingdom of heaven? Pray that we might stay well-rooted in Scripture and the teachings of Christ to better understand the kingdom of heaven, and to be cautious in embracing cultural myths, traditions handed down and false promises about the kingdom of God.
- 27** Pray that we will continue turning to and prayerfully studying Scripture — individually and together. Pray that doing so will strengthen and deepen our faith, comfort and encourage us, guide us in loving our neighbor, and be a source of joy and thanksgiving.
- 28** What gives you cause for happiness and hope these days? Give thanks and praise to God for desiring joy, healing, renewed life and freedom for us and all humanity.
- 29** Praise God for the joy and reassurance of knowing that there is nothing — absolutely nothing — that can separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ.
- 30** Give thanks for the special gifts, skills & minds of scientists, researchers & explorers who strive to better understand creation, improve the human condition, solve complex problems that cause us suffering, & restore & steward creation with a long view of sustaining future generations. Pray that they will make wise, responsible and just use of their research and discoveries for the well-being of all people and our planet.
- 31** Lift up in prayer our neighbors who are unemployed or underemployed and seek safe, meaningful work that will help them develop self-sufficiency and confidence and meet the needs of the people for whom they provide care, assistance and support.

# UPcoming EVENTS



Bible Study will be taking a break until mid-summer, please contact Pastor Christine with any comments or suggestions for topic.



## Worship Services

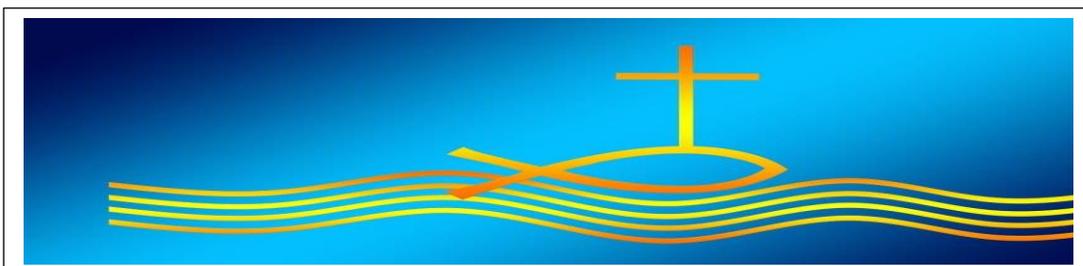
Starting June 28 we started worshipping back in the sanctuary. Out of concern for each other, we will continue to observe the following precautions:

- Wearing masks in the building
- Social distancing
- Not singing

We will worship this way for a month and then reevaluate. Thank you for your understanding and flexibility as we worship God while caring for each other.

Trinity – 8:00 am  
St. Peter – 9:30 am  
Emanuel – 10:45 am

Pastor Christine will be visiting her family in Texas June 22 – July 10. If there is a pastoral emergency please contact Pastor Chad Hebrink at 570-204-1262 (cell) or 570-752-3196 (church office).





## July Babies

07/01 Jane Troy  
07/03 Helen Longenberger  
Linda Matyas  
07/06 Don Book  
Betty Beishline  
07/07 David Diehl  
07/08 Lisa Modlesky  
Sheryl Kepping  
07/10 Janet Cool  
07/11 Drew Gearhart  
07/14 Janet Kepping  
07/23 Jill Bankes  
Lee Rupert  
Sharon Hartzell  
07/26 Madelyn Huff  
07/31 James Yurick

## Emanuel Worship Service Schedule for July

10:45am all month

**Coffee Klatch** will resume at later date.

*Pastor contact info:*

*The Rev. Christine Kirchner*

*Contact info: [pastorkirchner@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkirchner@gmail.com)*

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



## July Anniversaries

07/03 Marie & Allen Hons  
07/17 Bruce & Judy Brown  
07/18 Charlotte & Bob Thomas  
07/23 Mark & Sharon Hartzell

Emanuel's volunteer for Heat/AC  
& Communion for July is  
Lois & Nancy  
Ushers are Peg & Brenda