

# The Messenger

June 2020

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## From our Pastor

*O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ, the great healer, in whose name we pray for all things.

We will celebrate Pentecost on May 31 by again hearing the reading that tells us that on the first Pentecost, among all of the strange things that happened, one of the most unusual is that people began to speak in tongues. This wasn't just babble that came out of people's mouths, but words spoken in different languages so that all could understand.

Pentecost brought those people — from different nations and different histories and different cultures and different languages — together.

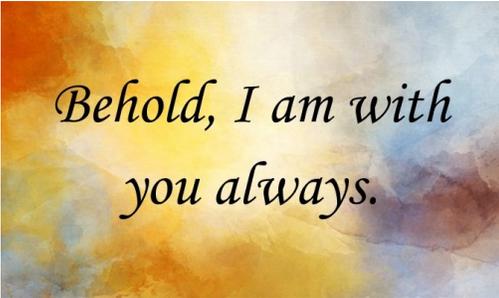
Perhaps we are in our own Pentecost moment, united with people we know and with people we don't know and really don't understand, who live in places we know and in places we never heard of around the globe.

As I write this, Mercer County is still in the "yellow" phase, which means we are not yet able to gather for public worship. Our congregation council, in mid-May, voted unanimously that even if we soon move to "green," we want to proceed with an abundance of caution in joining together for worship in person.

Since the purpose of our sheltering in our homes was "flattening the curve" to avoid overburdening the health-care system, and it appears that we have done that, we might be able to begin gathering again sooner, rather than later, if we can do so in a way that does not contribute to changing the direction of the "curve." Hopefully within the next couple of weeks, we will have a plan for how to re-open as safely as possible.

Until then, we will continue to worship online on Sunday mornings.

I am thankful to all of you for what you have done in these



*Behold, I am with  
you always.*

strange and scary days. Thank you for sheltering for the sake of your neighbors. Thank you for helping take food and medicine and masks and worship bulletins to others. Thank you for reaching out to each other in phone calls and emails and cards.

Thank you for continuing to be diligent about wearing masks and being in public places only in necessary ways. Thank you also for continuing to support the ministries of Holy Trinity with your faithful stewardship. In this time of physical distance, please continue to send your offerings to the church as you are able. Despite not having in-person worship, our offerings have remained steady. While we, like many small businesses and non-profits, did not receive funding in the first round of the Paycheck Protection Program that aims to help companies keep people employed, we did receive about \$35,000 in the second round of funding. This money will not have to be repaid if most of it is used to pay the salaries and benefits for our staff. Receiving this funding is a gift for which we give thanks.

We are also thankful for Olivia and Tyler Martin-Call sharing their gifts of being able to figure out technology. They are behind the effort that has made it possible for us to bring worship to you. We're tinkering with things now, like adding a new microphone, to try to solve some audio issues we have been experiencing. All of this technology is new to most of us. Even when we return to in-person worship, we believe we will also need to continue providing online worship for those who will not feel safe yet returning to the building. Olivia and Tyler will be taking a couple of Sundays off, and Johnmichael Weaver will be our technical wizard on those weeks.

Do not hesitate to reach out for support during this time, or to share with us ideas about how we can support one another. We will continue to update you on what we are doing and how we are being church together.

As we enter the season of Pentecost, we will hear on our summer Sundays stories of Jesus' ministry 2,000 years ago. Our ministry is the same today — feeding, healing, forgiving, lifting up those who the world casts aside.

May we hear these stories, and may they come alive for us again as the world groans from the weight of sin, sickness and death. May these stories bring us hope.

Pastor Brenda

## Prayer In The Midst Of The Spread of COVID-19 (from Lutheran World Federation)

O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive in the eradication of all diseases – including malaria, dengue, HIV & AIDS, and others – that create suffering and often result in death for many people. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbor. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: care-givers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families.

Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions. Protect and guard all those who must travel. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love.

**Amen!**

# Coronavirus Q&A

## **About worship**

We will continue to worship – together, but from our homes – on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. We expect to have a plan within the next few weeks to ease back into worshipping in our building. For now, find our worship on our website, [www.holytrinitygreenvillepa.com](http://www.holytrinitygreenvillepa.com), or on our Facebook page. We will also continue to post in both places additional resources for you to pray at home.

## **I miss everyone. When can I see my church friends?**

We've been having an online "Holy Trinity Happy Hour" on Thursday nights at 7 p.m. People get the chance to see each other and chat. All you need is a computer, phone or iPad (or other tablet). If you'd like to join the Happy Hour and don't know how, or need an invitation, please let Tammy know in the church office.

## **When can we come back?**

We still don't know. At this writing, Mercer County is still in the "yellow" phase, and so large-group gatherings are not permitted. Even when we move to "green," we will need a solid plan to keep people as safe as possible, although we need to understand that large gatherings will not be universally safe. We are already planning for how to make Holy Trinity safe space for the time when we can resume in-person worship. That might mean changing how we distribute communion, where we sit, whether we wear masks in the building, how many people can be in the building at one time, how we clean surfaces that are frequently touched, whether we can sing or even speak prayers together, and many more details. We are making those plans with the assumption that we will need to continue to be diligent about social distancing and maintaining a safe building for many, many months to come as COVID will continue to be a threat.

## **Where's the pastor?**

Pastor Brenda will be at the church on occasion, but will be working from home to isolate much of the time so that she can remain healthy for pastoral calls to hospitals or nursing homes or your homes if needed. If you need her, you can call, text or email. Her number is 814-881-8959 and her email is [bmartin983@aol.com](mailto:bmartin983@aol.com). If you need a pastoral visit for any reason, please call.

## **What about my offering?**

During this time of crisis, we are asking that the members of the congregation continue your faithful stewardship, as the work of Holy Trinity is changing, but not ceasing and we need your support. Although we won't be passing the plate, we are exploring opportunities for online giving on our website, and there is also the US Mail.

## **Where can I get information?**

We are setting aside a portion of our website, [www.holytrinitygreenvillepa.com](http://www.holytrinitygreenvillepa.com), to bring you information. We have added Sunday School lessons — short videos and downloaded coloring and activity pages — for the Easter season. We will put resources there to give you devotional materials to use at home. We'll also provide links to information from the ELCA. Keep watching that space.

**Will the church office be open?**

Yes, we continue to be open from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We will remain open as long as possible. Please call Tammy if you have any needs or questions. Will the church building be open? Yes. But we are trying to severely limit access to the building, to keep those safe who are at work. We ask you to follow the following protocols so that we can track where people are in the building, and clean areas as appropriate.

**The Building Is Open For Prayer:**

We want Holy Trinity to be a sanctuary for people who need sacred space where they can feel safe. We have decided to allow people into the building to pray as long as it's safe to continue this practice, but have established protocols to do this. The building is open from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. If you would like to come into the church to pray, even if you have a key or fob, we ask that you call Tammy to tell her you'll be arriving. Ring the buzzer at the back and she will open the door. (Or you can use your key or fob, if you have one, to get in.) There will be a sign-in sheet at the back. Please sign in with date and time. There will be sanitizing wipes there as well. Please take one. (We know that you will want to go down the hall to say hello to Tammy. Out of an abundance of caution, we ask you to not do that.) Please enter the chancel area via the back hallway. Lights will already be on in the chancel. Sit in one of the choir pews or kneel at the altar. Take as much time as you need. Wipe down whatever surfaces you touch. We know that this might sound extreme, but we have many people in our congregation who are in high-risk categories, including those who are immunosuppressed. We want them to feel safe, as well, if they wish to come to the sanctuary for prayer.

**If You Need To Drop Something Off:**

If you have something to drop off at the church, please call Tammy and let her know your plans. She will buzz you in and have you drop something off at the back door, or she will meet you to accept it.

**The Building Is Open For College Students:**

We know that college students are continuing classes from home. Some do not have fast enough internet service because it is not available in all areas of Mercer County. We have invited students to come to the church and use our WIFI for their classes, or for taking tests. We are managing where they are in the building, so that we can keep those areas cleaned. We have a couple of students who have taken us up on this offer. If you need access, please ask Tammy.

**The Building Will Be Open For Our Community Groups:**

We have invited our AA groups to continue to use the building at this time, although they know this could change if we are directed in the future to close the building to all uses. The groups have not met since our governor issued the stay-at-home order that forbid gatherings of more than 10 people. However, once the order is lifted, we will welcome back the groups because we want to give them this opportunity to continue, because we know the challenges people with addictions face, especially in high-stress times. The groups have agreed to follow protocols that we have established that limit them to certain rooms, and they have agreed to help clean those rooms after their use.

**How can I help?**

Tammy is maintaining a list of volunteers to make phone calls, make grocery store and pharmacy runs, sew masks. If you would like to volunteer, please let her know. If you see a need for something not on this list, please let Pastor or Tammy know.

# Congregational Meeting Set For June 28

Our congregation council has scheduled the annual June congregational meeting for Sunday, June 28 at 11 a.m. We are planning at this time to meet using Zoom, which we have been using to gather for various council and committee meetings, and which we have also used to gather almost each Thursday evening for a Holy Trinity Happy Hour that has allowed us all to see and talk to each other while we shelter in our homes.

This is not ideal, but we didn't want to push back our meeting to a "safe" time without knowing when that would be.

This is the meeting at which annual reports are received from the pastor and staff, and from the various committees. It's also the meeting at which we elect new members of council and our representatives to synod assembly for 2021.

We are working on getting information from other congregations who have successfully used this format for voting at congregational meetings.



## Holy Trinity Picnic

Our annual church picnic, scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 20, is now scheduled to be held at one of the shelters at Pymatuning State Park. We will give more details closer to the time.

We had planned to hold this year's picnic at Riverside Park, but Greenville Borough informed us in mid-May that the borough has cancelled all reservations at the park for the rest of the year.

## Lutherlyn Summer Camping Canceled

Lutherlyn announced in mid-May that its entire summer camping season has been canceled. This is a disappointment for campers, staff and the whole church, which views Lutheran camping as important in helping form faith in young people. Please pray for Lutherlyn at this time. You can also donate to Lutherlyn by sending a donation to the church, which we will forward, or by donating directly to Lutherlyn on its website, [www.lutherlyn.com](http://www.lutherlyn.com).



## Good Shepherd Community Meal

On Monday, June 22, Holy Trinity will be hosting the Monday night community dinner at Good Shepherd. If you are able to assist in cooking, serving, delivery of dinners, or clean-up duties please call **Linda Armstrong** at **724-589-5178**

## Visitors From Afar

We are able to see on our website when we have visitors from other countries. There have been people from many different countries on our website, and we know some of them are joining in our Sunday worship.

One of those is the Rev. Charlotte Weber, who is on the bishop's staff at our companion synod in Germany. Pastor Weber, who is the staff member who relates to companion synods, was at Holy Trinity in October to participate in the installation of our new bishop. She tunes in regularly to our worship. She said she usually doesn't watch live, because it's afternoon in Germany, and Sunday afternoons are family time with her spouse (also a pastor) and their young son. But she usually watches later. It's nice to hear from her from time to time, and she says the struggles in Germany are the same struggles we have here – after sheltering at home, some businesses are opening again, but the danger of a resurgence is being felt in Germany.

One of the other visitors we've had watching our worship on Facebook is from Slovakia. You might have noticed someone leaving comments in a different language. She is from Slovakia, and shared in a message to us a video of her Lutheran pastor in Slovakia doing what we do – offering worship in a nearly empty church so that the parishioners there can worship on Sunday mornings. She found us because she has a local connection. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Hermitage has a long connection with the Slovak tradition and continues to have many members who are descended from immigrants from Slovakia. She has a cousin who is a member at Holy Trinity Hermitage.

## Videos For Kids: Sunday School Goes On!

Thanks to Sparkhouse, the churchwide organization that provides us with Sunday School materials, we now have Sunday School materials through mid-June for our website.

There will be a short video each week (12-15 minutes), as well as downloadable coloring pages and downloadable activity pages.

We already have been using downloadable kids worship bulletins for both readers and pre-readers.

Take use of these materials. (And the videos are kind of fun!)

All of the materials already used will live on our website for some time. You can find the videos and lessons for each week at [www.holytrinitygreenvillepa.com](http://www.holytrinitygreenvillepa.com).

## Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Using a \$250 grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Holy Trinity Thrivent members and Good Shepherd volunteers purchased, delivered, and helped stock shelves with breakfast cereal for Good Shepherd clients.

# Sunday School Teachers Needed!

Just a reminder to the folks of Holy Trinity: We are still looking for volunteers to teach our Sunday School children! Hopefully you have already seen the article, printed in several issues of the Messenger this year, discussing the need for more teachers and explaining the benefits of having a rotation of volunteers to share in the responsibilities. The Parish Education Committee is still planning to implement a schedule in time for the 2020/2021 Church School year. But we need your help! The more volunteers, the easier the teaching schedule will be for everyone to manage.

As explained previously, all class leaders are provided with access to teaching materials. In addition, the church will reimburse volunteers for the necessary clearances. Please contact Kris Abraham at 330.448.6135 if you can help. You can also talk to Pastor Brenda if you prefer.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to be a leader for the kids of Holy Trinity!

Kris Abraham, Parish Education Chair

## Holy Trinity Scholarships Applications are Due June 1

The deadline for all applications is **June 1st**. The deadline includes submission of your transcripts and financial assistance you may be already receiving. The Scholarship Committee will meet and make recommendations for action at the June Council meeting.



## Giving Update as of April 30, 2020

Budgeted Year-to-Date	\$ 75,216
Received Year-to-Date	\$ 80,015
Giving Surplus Year-to-Date	\$ 4,799

## Reformed: Always Reforming

In the next several months, we will have a committee in place that will begin the process of leading us into our future. Their first task will be to design the process we will use in asking members of the congregation for their thoughts about what is important to us in our life together at Holy Trinity and what their dreams are for our future.

This committee will be chaired by Don Achenbach. You will be hearing much more about this effort, “Reformed: Always Reforming,” throughout this year.

# Good Shepherd Request

During the length of the coronavirus the Good Shepherd is asking that no food donations be made to the Food Pantry.

**If you would like to help monetary donations and gift cards are always appreciated and can most definitely be used.**

Thank you for your continued support.



## Second Mile Giving for June - Karagwe Diocese Girl's School Scholarships

Each month, we offer the opportunity for our members to reach out into the greater community to those who are seeking to minister to people with specific needs, through our Second Mile Giving – our financial gifts beyond our regular offerings.

The Karagwe Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania is the companion synod to our Northwestern PA Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The ELCA received word from the Karagwe Diocese that the school fees at the Bweranyange Girl's Secondary School have been increased to \$800.00 per student, per year. Our Synod congregations have committed to 10 scholarships per year. The money is sent via bank-to-bank wire transfer in January.

The school motto "**it takes a woman to raise a nation**" guides the school.

In total there are 316 girls taught by 15 teachers in the general subjects of Biology, Chemistry, Civics, the English language, Geography, History, Kiswahilli, Mathematics, and Physics. Twelve staff members belong to the non-teaching staff and care about the administration and catering of the boarding school.

Since the start of the school in 2007, the number of students have increased every year. The good results of the students at national exams are the best advertisement for the school.

Second Mile envelopes can be found in the pew racks, or you may mail your contribution to the church office in an envelope clearly marked, "Second Mile Giving." All Second Mile contributions received during the month of June will be given to the designated cause.



## June Birthdays

- 1 Cindy Farrell
- 2 Brekken Hedderick
- 3 Max Hildebrand  
Barbara Swartz
- 8 Philip Schell
- 10 Henry Heil
- 12 Denise Hall
- 13 Patricia Roth
- 16 Gaye Gargasz  
Kathy Thompson
- 20 Georgia Perkins
- 22 Michael Eppley
- 24 Dane Abraham
- 25 Sue Achenbach  
Marie Lineman  
Jason Oros  
Griffin Richardson
- 26 Danielle Gainor
- 27 Christian Hootman
- 29 David Long



## June Anniversaries

The following members of our congregation are celebrating anniversaries this month. Congratulate them when you see them.

Warren and Patricia Roth	63 years	June 4, 1957
Curt and Kathy Thompson	39 years	June 6, 1981
John and Mary Moore	53 years	June 7, 1967
Allen and Connie Davis	42 years	June 10, 1978
Jim and Nancy Bittel	59 years	June 16, 1961
David and Billie Hollenbaugh	54 years	June 18, 1966
Doug and Debbie Faber	27 years	June 19, 1993
Matthew and Carrie Moinet	9 years	June 19, 2010
Mike and Heather Balas	13 years	June 24, 2007
Conrad and Carol Koehler	59 years	June 24, 1961
Tyler and Olivia Martin-Call	4 years	June 25, 2016

## Trinity Travelers

If you visit another church, drop off a bulletin from that church, with your name on it, so that you can be a *Trinity Traveler*.

**Jim and Lucy Shaffer**  
Alliance Methodist  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Pastor Bill Killough



## Thank You

On behalf of the Carpenter family, I would like to thank our church family for the cards, messages, thoughts, prayers and acts of condolences received following the passing of my father Don Carpenter.

At times of sorrow hearts naturally turn to family and we are so blessed to have Holy Trinity as our church family.

Thank you for the tremendous outpouring of support.

God Bless  
Sue Achenbach and family