

St. Paul Quarterly Letter

From the Pastor:

While I was on internship in Virginia and West Virginia, I had a conversation with my supervisor, Pastor Terry, about balancing the strenuous demands of a congregation's life. With his years of wisdom, Pastor Terry told me he thinks of a congregation's life like that of a ranch. The first thing he said was that there is always something that can be done; however, there are seasons when there is a rush of activity that come with a change in focus and amount of work. Likewise, there are times when life slows down a bit. Of course, there are those times when emergencies happen and those must be attended to, even if it means becoming busy when you weren't expecting more work.

Over the last several weeks, this lesson has been bubbling up in my mind as I faced a sort of inversion of the Hugh Grant movie *Four Weddings and a Funeral* as our congregation had three funerals and a wedding. Early summer has, at least historically, been a time for our congregation to catch a breather. Unfortunately, that didn't really happen. But now, with the Good Lord willing, we are hopefully reaching a time when things should be calmer.

This is not to say that things won't be happening; they most certainly will be! Rather, the pace should slow down a bit, which is a good thing. We humans are creatures and need rest. Now, I know our culture pushes us to constantly be doing things as if we were machines, but recent research has shown that for robots and artificial intelligence to have maximum productivity they *also* need to have times of rest!

The demand for constant "productivity," "output," and "action," is just a secular form of "works righteousness." It is worth remembering that our Lord's message of grace is not only for our spiritual lives, but for the entirety of ourselves. Yes, we will still pursue the activities God is calling us to do. But, as we do so, we shouldn't forget the most important message God has for us: Jesus Christ, our God Incarnate, loves us and yearns for us to be whole.

As such, do not forget to breathe. Do not forget to relax. Yours in Christ,

Pastor Paul+

Congratulations to
Lloyd and Marilyn Niemann
on their 70th Wedding Anniversary

Council News:

Here is an update on some of the exciting things that are happening in our congregation council.

Energy Efficiency Project – In our spring newsletter, it was reported that we had submitted a financing application to the West Penn Power Sustainability Energy Fund (WPPSEF) but that our proposal was not selected for funding in 2024. Fortunately, the WPPSEF program administrator continued working with us and we ended up submitting a revised proposal in June. I am happy to report that this proposal is being funded by WPPSEF! At the time of this writing, the grant agreement is still being finalized, but the primary factor in securing the funding was including custom-made replacement windows from a Western Pennsylvania company named Ventana. Ventana is one of the world's leading providers of specialty windows whose products typically exceed U.S. standards. We proposed to replace 13 existing windows in Rohrbaugh Hall, the church office, lobby, and parlor with the new Ventana windows. I believe most congregation members have experienced how hot Rohrbaugh Hall gets in the summer and how cold it gets in the winter. These highly reflective and triple-paned windows will dramatically improve the energy efficiency of our church building. In addition, our proposal included replacement of the hot water heater that is still the original hot water heater from the late 1980s! Again, the grant agreement is not yet finalized, but it looks very likely that a new hot water heater will also be included in our grant!

Parking Lot Sealcoating – Our Property Committee has been estimating \$10,000 to clean, sealcoat, and repaint the church parking lot. They recently received a quote for approximately \$7000 to perform this work. Council suggests that we move forward with this work, but approval from the congregation is required. A special congregational meeting is planned for Sunday, July 21, immediately following the worship service to discuss and vote on this project. Please plan to attend!

Unfortunately, St. Paul lost three wonderful women since our last newsletter. Diane Kemmerer and Eileen Butchkoski passed in a 24-hour period in May, and we lost Sally Kolesar in June. All were longtime and active members of our congregation. They will all be missed. Please keep their friends and families in your prayers.

Jeff Muthler Council

President

Mark Your Calendars for *God's Work, Our Hands*

On Sunday, September 8, we will celebrate *God's Work, Our Hands*—a day designated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to serve and love our neighbor. The Worship & Music team is planning a community service project for that afternoon to clean head stones in the lower cemetery in Pine Grove Mills that have become darkened by age and algae. Morgen Hummel is the coordinator for the project, and a sign-up sheet will be available later this summer. The Worship & Music team also is considering an additional activity for those who cannot physically take part in the cemetery project. Stay tuned for more information in the weeks to come!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Blessing of Backpacks and Briefcases will be on August 18. With the start of school and Labor Day quickly approaching, we will be praying for those who work in the classroom and in jobs. Bring your backpack and/or briefcase so that it and you may be blessed.
- Labor Day Weekend community service. Let us join the Pine Grove Presbyterians at 9:30 on September 1 for our community service! This will be the last community service the Rev. Carl Campbell will be leading before he retires!
- Hops and Hymns will resume on September 15 at 3:30PM in Pine Grove Hall.
- Blessing of Pets and Animals will take place on October 6! If your animal is friendly with other humans and animals, they are welcome to attend! Now, if you cannot bring your beloved animal for whatever reason, a picture on your phone will suffice.

The Muthler family wishes to express their sincere thanks and gratitude to everyone that helped with the memorial service and meal in remembrance of Diane Kemmerer. The church and her church family were very important to her. We are thankful for everyone's prayers and support.

Thanks - Jeff & Linda

PINE GROVE MILLS

FARMERS MARKET

OPEN THURSDAYS, 3-7 PM

THIS YEAR WE HAVE A GREAT

VARIETY OF VEGETABLES,

FRUITS, BAKED GOODS, MEATS,

FISH, PREPARED MEALS, BEER,

COFFEE, AND MORE!

Thank You!

Recently our congregation experienced the deaths of three members. Our thanks go out to everyone who helped by preparing food, donating food or other items, setting up, cleaning up food or the funeral meals. It is our tradition to provide this service to grieving families.

We also thank the members of St. Paul who participated in the funeral services as ushers, readers, assisting ministers, and musicians.

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Homebound:

Liz Perez	Marilyn Niemann	Paul Anderson Shirley	Lois Corl Leslie
Leroy Dreibelbis	Lois Fomar	Gilligan	Doremus

Other Members:

Janice Olsen	Rich Olsen	Pastor Paul	Paul Anderson
Rhonda Boonie			

The Families and Friends of the Departed:

Jay Rudy	Bobby Oliver	Diane Kemmerer	Eileen Butchkoski Sally
Kolesar			

Others

Pastor Kelley	Merle Eyer	Nathan Williams	Marin Alexis Tomkiel Fred
Muthler	Barry Anderson	Cara & Holden	Ruth Tier
Sam Bernstine	Marleen Chamberlin	Barry Anderson	
Sylvia Way	Pam Brocious	Millie Harper	Ann Clymer
Joshua Potter	Dave & Marlene Kling	Richard Gerding	
Dennis Dean	Mr. Pete Hogdon	Kaysen Cameron Ed Ko	Don Veit
	Chuck Harpster		



We celebrate the marriage of
Lauren and Zach Tingle
on June 22, 2024

