

Castlewood Alliance Church



"Serving Christ & Our Community in Love"



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New Castle, PA 16101

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We welcome you to review the church profile for **Castlewood Alliance Church!**

Our church is part of the Western PA District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

We are located in a quiet valley on Harmony Baptist Road. The church was originally called Alliance Church of Moravia Stop at its inception in 1922. The name then changed to Castlewood, which was derived from the fact that we are half-way between New Castle and Ellwood City, two small cities with a rich history in western Pennsylvania.

We at Castlewood Alliance are committed to serving God and the members of our church family by showing Christ’s love to each other and to those around us. Our emphasis is on bringing the lost to salvation in Jesus, primarily ministering to children in our community through our AWANA program and other outreach ministries. Although our congregation has many young families and children, we are blessed to minister to all ages ranging from infants to senior citizens.

Your interest in our church is a true blessing and answer to prayer. We look forward to introducing you to our church and our community as you read our story in the following pages. We hope that perhaps you can see yourself as part of our growing church family and ministry.



Castlewood Alliance Church: A Look Back

Castlewood C&MA Church owes its existence to our founders who, over 100 years ago, had the vision of a church in what was then known as Moravia Stop.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Moravia Stop was established in 1923, having been incorporated on December 6, 1922, and recorded at the courthouse on January 22, 1923. Soon after, on January 15, 1923, the initial ground was donated by James G. Houk, and the original church was built and dedicated on October 28, 1923. (Prior to the building of the church, services had been held in Castlewood Grade School, which was on the site where our current parsonage sits.) Due to the elimination of the trolley line, the area was no longer known as Moravia Stop. The name of the area was changed to Castlewood, and consequently, our church name changed to Castlewood Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in November 1957.

The original church included a bell tower, which housed a bell donated by Mrs. James G. Houk. Some years later the tower was struck by lightning and both the tower, and the bell had to be removed. Chauncey and Ella Mae Forbush had the bell mounted outside the church building in memory of Ella Mae's mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ort, late members of the church. The bell was dedicated July 4, 1976. Our first steeple was placed in 1991 and replaced 20 years later in 2011 due to weather damage over the years.

As attendance increased, a lot was purchased from James G. Houk. The lot adjoining the rear of the original church property was bought in November 1957. An extra wing was added to the church between 1957-1958 and dedicated in November 1958. The basement of the former structure was replaced in the fall of 1972.

A third piece of property was purchased from the estate of Bessie Houk in September 1967. This addition to the church property was the two lots adjacent to the church parking lot on which the Old Hill School (later known as Castlewood Elementary) once stood. These were donated by Chauncey and Ella Mae Forbush in December 1971. The school was torn down in 1972 to make room for a new parsonage building. Former parsonages owned by the church were a two-story home behind the church, one on Hollow Road, and one at 707 Harmony Baptist Road. Our current parsonage is located beside the church at 658 Harmony Baptist Road. The parsonage was completed and dedicated in 1979. The 20-yr mortgage was paid off in only 7 ½ years.

Castlewood went through major renovations beginning in December 2014. The plans for reversing the direction of the sanctuary originated with Rev. Hiram Westover in the 1980's, but they did not become a reality until Rev. James R. O'Hara teamed up with Architect Carl Petrus and Contractor Mark Summers. The new layout of the sanctuary allowed for more seating for our growing congregation, and the old front entrance was eliminated and bricked on the outside, updating the look of the building. A new stage and baptistry were put in. The main entrance was moved to the back of the building, where a wider foyer, office, and cloak room were installed, as well as a handicap accessible restroom and a new nursery. Many other modifications were made to modernize the look and feel of the church facilities. The mortgage for the renovations was paid off in approximately eight years; significantly sooner than the maturity date of the loan. Since then, several additional upgrades and changes have been made to the building and the grounds as our church family has grown and its needs have evolved throughout the years. As God has led us, we have endeavored to follow. We are always amazed at His provision and faithfulness.

A Record of Our Pastors

Castlewood's first pastor was Rev. Stuart Wagner. Under his leadership, services were held in the Castlewood Elementary School until property was obtained and the original structure was built 1923. Other pastors who have served over our church's long history are the following:

Rev. Clyde A. Davis	1923-1928
Rev. T.J. Keegan	1928-1931
Rev. R.E. Ellenberger	1931-1935
Rev. Jennings R. Turner	1936-1942
Rev. Lawrence R. Van Horn	1942-1948
Rev. Vernon M. Orner	1948-1959
Rev. Abner C. Kuntz	1959-1969
Rev. Clyde May	1969-1974
Rev. Donald McGarvey	1974-1981
Rev. Hiram Westover	1981-1985
Rev. Wilbur Junker	1985-1986
Rev. James Evilsizor	1986-1995
Rev. James R. O'Hara	1995-June 2026



We have been richly blessed by God's faithfulness and goodness to us by calling these godly men to shepherd our congregation here at Castlewood over the years.

To God be the glory for the things He has done!



Demographics

Lawrence County Demographic Data:

Population: 85,024

Age Distribution:

- 0-17 years 20.0%
- 18-24 years 7.9%
- 25-34 years 11.2%
- 35-44 years 11.2%
- 45-54 years 12.1%
- 55-64 years 14.1%
- 65-74 years 13.5%
- 75+ years 9.9%

Religious Affiliation:

- Evangelical Christian 56.3%
- Catholic 34.0%
- Non-denominational 6.7%
- Presbyterian 3.7%
- United Methodist 2.5%
- Lutheran 1.3%

Racial Demographics:

- White 89.5%
- Mixed/Blk 3.8%
- Other 6.8%
- Hispanic 2.2%

Community Snapshot:

(Shenango Twp/Lawrence County)

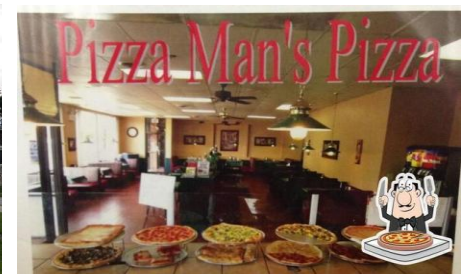
- Per capita income: \$40,849 (median household income: \$77,522)
Note: The township's per capita income is roughly 20% higher than the overall average for Lawrence County (\$35,150) and median hh inc is 25% higher than amt in Lawrence Co (\$61,931)
- Average persons per household: 2.29
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 23.4%
- Persons in poverty: 11.9%
- Population per square mile:
Lawrence County: 240.8
Shenango Twp: 289 (Pop. 7,062 people/24.4 sq miles)
- Median Age 44.9 yrs (Law Co); 52.5 (Shenango Twp)
- Homeownership rate: 75.8%
- Median property values: \$147,200
- Median rent: \$995 - \$1,000
- Employed population: 37,600 (Law. Co.)
- Most common job groups: Healthcare, Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Retail, Trade, Office & Administrative Support
- Active Fire Department, Ambulance Services, Public Library, Public Transportation, Local Hospital, Doctors & Dental Offices, Shopping and Banking

The Place We Call Home until Heaven

Castlewood is the halfway point between the two cities of New Castle and Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. Originally known as “Moravia Stop”, it was a trolley line stop in the early 1900’s. When the trolley line ceased to exist, the area was renamed “Castlewood”.

New Castle was laid out in 1798 at the confluence of the Shenango River and Neshannock Creek, growing from a 50-acre frontier town into the “tin plate capital of the world” and is famously known today as the “fireworks capital of America.” The city is the home of the original Warner Bros. movie theater and Cascade Park, a historic 19th century public park and former trolley-era amusement park. New Castle also has deep roots in the railroad and steel industries. Similarly, Ellwood City was built on the Connoquenessing Creek across Lawrence and Beaver Counties, only 30 miles northwest of Pittsburgh, and is known as the “birthplace of the seamless tube industry”. Founded in 1892, It was named for Isaac Ellwood, a pioneer and major investor in barbed wire manufacturing. Over the years, the decline of heavy manufacturing in the steel industry affected both cities, but today there are public parks, sites and landmarks which show the nostalgic remnants of their rich historical past.

Residents of Castlewood can take advantage of the shopping and professional offices offered by New Castle and Ellwood City. Businesses include doctor and dental offices, salons, grocery stores, fitness centers, law offices, real estate agencies, department stores, steel manufacturers, etc. Both cities have a wide variety of multi-cultural dining options such as American, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Asian, and Italian cuisine.



Local School Districts

There are several schools in the New Castle and Ellwood City area. They include New Castle Area Schools, Shenango Area Schools, Ellwood City School District, Union Area Schools, Neshannock Area Schools, New Castle Christian Academy, Lawrence County Career & Technical Institute, and New Castle School of Trades. There are also several privately run preschools, day care centers, and kindergarten programs in the area.

Castlewood Alliance Church and the parsonage are in the Shenango Area School District. Shenango provides education for kindergarten through twelfth grade students. The Elementary School houses approximately 485 to 509 students in grades K-6 and is adjacent to the Junior/Senior High School building, separated by the football field, baseball field and newly updated playground. The Junior/Senior High School holds approximately 434 to 449 students in grades 7-12. The student – teacher ratio is 12:1 or 13:1. Both the elementary and junior/senior high offer students a wide range of academic clubs and sports organizations to choose from, as well as opportunities in the liberal arts.

There is a large sports and recreation complex next to Shenango which is available for public use and is equipped with an indoor track and gymnasium, as well as basketball and volleyball courts. Shenango Community Park has picnic shelters, a public playground, and a nature trail that is connected to the school grounds by a paved walking path.

There are two shopping centers next to the school with restaurants, health and business offices, fitness centers, an indoor pickleball court and an indoor dog park.

Shenango junior senior high school is a short walk down the road from Sylvan Heights Golf Course and only a few minutes from historic Cascade Park.



Points of Interest near Castlewood:

Cascade Park – (5.3 miles) community park with walking trails, playgrounds, picnic pavilions, a scenic waterfall view, and adjacent dog park area

Ewing Park – (5.3 miles) community park with swimming, nature trails, playground, picnic pavilions, outdoor amphitheater, skate park, basketball court, pickleball court and tennis court

Living Treasures – (7.3 miles) outdoor walk-through zoo

Moraine State Park/Lake Arthur – (15.5 miles) fishing, boating, beach area and swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, hiking, bike trail, disc golf, playgrounds picnic and campgrounds

Colleges & Universities:

Geneva College – Beaver Falls PA (14.9 miles)

Westminster College – New Wilmington PA (17.8 miles)

Slippery Rock University – Slippery Rock PA (19.4 miles)

Grove City College – Grove City PA (29.2 miles)

Pittsburgh PA

About 51 miles southeast of Castlewood.

Pittsburgh Hospitals: UPMC Presbyterian, UPMC Magee-Women's Hospital, UPMC Mercy, UPMC Children's Hospital, AHN Forbes Hospital – Main, UPMC Shadyside, Allegheny General Hospital, UPMC Passavant, AHN Wexford Hospital, and more

University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, South College Pittsburgh, Chatham University, Carlow University, Penn State University

Kennywood Amusement Park, Heinz Field, PPG Paints Arena, Carnegie Museum, Science Center, National Aviary, Pittsburgh Zoo, Phipps Conservatory, Strip District shopping and restaurants, Duquesne Incline and Monongahela Incline

Boardman-Poland OH

18.1 miles west of Castlewood. Shopping, restaurants, Southern Park Mall, Theaters

Castlewood Alliance Church Overview

Church Attendance

- Sunday morning worship services, average between 160-170
- Sunday school - average between 50-70

Services

- Sunday school at 9:30am
 - Offered for all ages
- Sunday morning worship service 10:30am (livestream available weekly online)
- Wednesday night prayer meeting at 6:00pm (includes a brief devotional led by the pastor or one of the elders, followed by corporate prayer time)

Ministries

- In addition to our Sunday School classes and Sunday morning worship service, there are several other ministries going on in the church. These include:
 - Children's Church and Toddler Church - offered during Sunday worship services for ages Pre-K to 2nd grade
 - AWANA on Sunday evenings from September through May
 - Vacation Bible School in the summer (usually in June or July for 4-5 days)
 - Women's weekly bible study on Tuesday mornings
 - Wednesday night prayer meeting 6pm -7pm
 - Small groups in the summer months (usually meet once a week June-Aug)
 - Men's and Women's ministries
 - Different events offered throughout the year, typically once a quarter. Examples: men's bible study, golf outings, women's painting classes, cake decorating class, coffee shop bible study on Saturday mornings, movie nights, holiday parties, etc.
 - Music - our Praise & Worship Team leads worship every other Sunday. The worship team incorporates modern hymns, choruses, and songs for a contemporary worship feel. The other Sundays we have a song leader who leads traditional hymns, and also gives a call to worship and a benediction. God has also blessed our congregation with several talented musicians and soloists who occasionally share special music.
 - Nursery available during Sunday morning worship services for 0-3 yrs old.
- Castlewood continues to see new families attend the church on a regular basis. Some who stay, and some who visit a few times a year. We have a nice range of ages, from those who are seniors or retirement age, to a lot of young families with children, currently in our church.



Summary of Building and Property

- The church was renovated in 2015, not only to provide more seating, but also to flip the sanctuary around so people were not walking into the front door of the sanctuary if they arrived late. A baptismal tank was also added at that time.
- The church foyer/narthex was expanded recently by removing a dividing wall. A large flatscreen tv for viewing the livestream was installed. The new expanded area now has four swivel rockers, creating a quiet space for nursing mothers to use during services.
- The church has a ranch style 1-story brick parsonage right next door with 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, and an attached 2 car garage. It has a small private finished basement and recently re-carpeted back porch overlooking a nice piece of property (2+ acres)
- Property has been well maintained both on the church side and the parsonage side.
- Some other updates that have been made over the last 5 years or so include: Sunday school rooms painted; new flooring in the nursery; parking lot sealed/resurfaced; parsonage rooms were painted and new flooring put down in the kitchen/bathroom.



Vision for the Future

“See, I am doing a new thing. . . do you not perceive it?” Isaiah 43:19

We believe God has good things in store for Castlewood Alliance! Our vision for the future begins with Him, and His plans for His church. We seek His guidance and pray for His will at Castlewood. It is our heart’s desire to glorify Him in everything we do. We want to continue preaching and teaching the Word of God, because we believe it is the ultimate authority and that it is absolute truth. Through spreading the gospel by the sharing of the Word, we want to see the church continue to grow both spiritually and in number, and welcome more new families into our body of believers.

Our youth ministries are at the heart of Castlewood. We desire to see children come to Jesus at the earliest age they are able to understand their need of Him as their Savior. We love our children and teens, and want to see the youth grow more engaged through our AWANA program and Christ-centered activities, equipping them to stand for Christ in today’s world. We also want to see the parents of the children get plugged in, giving us a better connection with them, so that we can minister to each one and begin to disciple them. A possibility might be to offer discipleship classes for the parents while their children are at AWANA meetings, or having counseling available for those who would be interested in talking with someone.

As our numbers grow, we would like to expand and build onto the church. If the Lord wills, in the future we have plans to build a gymnasium/all-purpose facility that could allow more space and opportunities for ministry, especially considering the growing number of youth that we have in the church. The building could be used for AWANA games, Vacation Bible School, athletic and fitness programs, community outreach programs, youth events, concerts, holiday gatherings, and so many other possibilities. Our hope is to allow more room in the future for other areas that we are quickly outgrowing as well, such as the nursery and the current fellowship hall.

We believe in the power of prayer. “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16) We want our human desires to align with God’s will, relying on His active power rather than on our human strength. For this reason, we would like to see Wednesday prayer meetings revived (or restructured) and our prayer chain revamped, to allow for more of our church family to be actively involved in prayer.

We would like to offer more discipleship opportunities outside of the church. One way we may do this would be to encourage mentoring through our men’s and women’s ministries. (Titus 2) We want to live life together in and out of the church building, leading by example in our day to day activities.

We want to connect with those in the community through service projects and ministries. Through more connection, we hope to see more diversity in those who join our congregation, opening our doors to new believers from different ethnicities and backgrounds, and providing an increasingly vibrant reflection of the true body of Christ.

We want to make a positive impact on the community around us, sharing the love of Christ, and spreading the four fold gospel message of Jesus as our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King!

Foundational Values – “Who We Are”

We are a small part of Christ’s bride who seek to know Him more, love Him more, and make Him known. We seek to make much of Christ, His word and His gospel in all we do. We believe this is the only means to save and transform souls.

We seek to love one another fervently and to out-do one another in showing honor. We desire unity in the Spirit under the authority of Scripture. We desire to submit to one another in love as we submit to Christ.

We believe the Holy Spirit uses the ordinary means of grace to nourish, strengthen and reveal all the benefits won by Christ to the saints. Therefore, our gatherings revolve around the ministry of the Word; faithful reading, preaching, prayer, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s supper. We gather to worship Christ and serve Him in obedience.

We are committed to the great commission to make disciples of Christ and see all walking in a manner worthy of the calling to which we were called. We want to equip the saints for the work of ministry and build up the body of Christ into maturity and into the fullness of Christ.

We are committed to drawing out the spiritual gifts in every saint and creating an environment where they can use their gifts for the edification and encouragement of the whole body. We will love, serve, evangelize and bless our community and those we encounter.

We believe that this is all accomplished by the faithful proclamation of the Word, as the Spirit is pleased to move in and through us. Above all, let everything we do be done for the glory of God alone!

Our Mission Statement:

To Glorify God (Romans 15:6)

- a. By worshiping Him (John 4:23-24)
- b. By bearing fruit (John 15:8)
 - 1. Fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - 2. Winning of souls (1 Corinthians 6:20)

To Edify the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16)

- a. By teaching biblical doctrines & educating the church (Ephesians 4:11-12, Matthew 28:19)
- b. By developing the graces of the Christian lifestyle (2 Peter 1:5-6; 3:18)
- c. By loving, encouraging & cooperating with one another in the service of Christ

To Evangelize the World (Matthew 28:19)

- a. By prayer (Matthew 9:38; 1 John 5:16; James 5:20)
- b. By active personal witnessing (Acts 1:8)
 - 1. Christlike lifestyle before the lost (Romans 15:1-6)
 - 2. Sharing the Word of God (Luke 2:20)
- c. By supporting missions
 - 1. Giving financially (Philippians 4:15-18)
 - 2. Sending personnel (Romans 10:15)

Castlewood Alliance Leadership

Some have been given the ministry gift of administration with unique abilities to lead others, as one who “leads, with diligence”. (Romans 12:8)

We believe Christian leadership should be exercised by those who are “full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3), who also reflect the qualities required for deacon or elder leadership. Those who have the spiritual gift of leadership will plan for the future and will do so as servant leaders.

At Castlewood, Jesus Christ is our Great Shepherd, and the pastor is the caregiver and protector of the flock. He is the “under shepherd” of the Great Shepherd Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 5:1-4) It is his charge and responsibility through the calling of the Holy Spirit upon him, to teach, edify and equip God’s children. We respect the pastor’s headship over all the workings and ministries of the church. His leadership is supported by the elders and the governing board, along with all the individual ministry officers of the church.

We have an elder board consisting of four elders. They support the pastor and our church through the following: meeting for prayer with the pastor before Sunday morning services, leading mid-week prayer meetings, bible studies and Sunday School classes, visiting or calling members of our congregation when in the hospital or shut in at home, serving communion alongside the pastor during worship services, anointing and praying for those in need of healing, helping with baptismal services, serving on the church governing board, handling the distribution of benevolence funds in confidentiality, attending elder board meetings and retreats with the pastor, interviewing new members, filling the pulpit as needed when the pastor is on vacation or unable to preach, and being available for anyone who may need counseling.

Our Church Governing Board (which is an elder majority board) consists of the pastor, the four church elders, the board secretary, the church treasurer, and two board members at large. The pastor holds the position of Head Chairman, and a Vice Chairman is chosen from among the four elders. The board members meet at least once per month to make decisions regarding the ministries, events, building projects, maintenance of the church and parsonage, budget, and spending. Everyone serving on the board must be a member of the church.

We also have a missionary/assistant treasurer, Christian Education Director, three trustees, and six deaconesses.

The ministry positions of the church are:

Pianists (2); Organists (2); Head Greeter/Usher; Seaters/Greeters (21); Sound Techs (2); Prayer Coordinator; VBS Director; Men’s Director; Women’s Director; Social Media Specialist; Church Auditors (3)

The positions for church officers are filled by the Nominating Committee which is led by the pastor and consists of two members elected by the Governing Board and two members elected by the congregation each year.

Castlewood Alliance Sunday School

The Christian Education Director oversees our Sunday School ministries, outreach events, and fellowship opportunities. They also facilitate the curriculum and resources for our classes.

Nursery Coordinator for Sunday Morning Worship (0-3yrs)

Junior Church Coordinator for Sunday Morning Worship (4yrs – 2nd grade)

Toddler-Primary (newborn-3yrs)

Children's Sunday School (4yrs – 1st grade)

Middler's Class (2nd grade – 4th grade)

Junior High Class (5th grade – 8th grade)

Adult Sunday School Classes (9th grade – Adult)

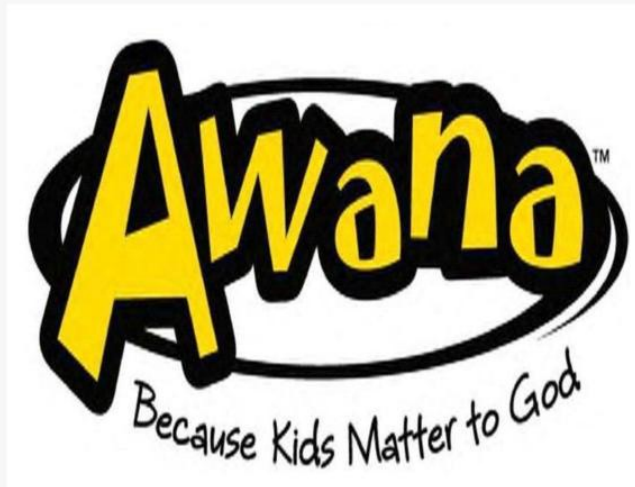
Daily Living Class

Gatekeepers' Class

Koinonia Class

We have a Sunday School Secretary/Treasurer and Assistant Secretary/Treasurer who keep the Sunday School attendance and financial records.

The past two years, we have incorporated AWANA clubs under the leadership of two elected AWANA Commanders into our Sunday School ministries. AWANA clubs meet on Sunday nights during the regular school year from September through May.



The leadership positions of the Sunday School are filled by the Sunday School Nominating Committee which consists of the pastor, two members elected by the Governing Board, and two members elected by the congregation each year.