

## **The Spiritual Life of the Christian and the Congregation**

Corinth! It was the most important city in Greece during the Apostle Paul's day. Much of the commerce of the world passed through this metropolis of over 250,000 people. Corinth was situated on a four-mile isthmus that connected southern Greece to the mainland. This narrow neck of land was strategically located between the Aegean Sea and the Adriatic Sea. It was like modern day Panama, in that it had two seaports that connected the world trade routes of East (Asia) and West (southern Europe). Ships would unload at one port and goods would be reloaded onto another ship at the other port. Often, smaller commercial ships were dragged or rolled across the four-mile isthmus on logs in order to avoid the dangerous 200-mile voyage around southern Greece on the Mediterranean Sea. As world commerce "rolled" through Corinth, the city became very wealthy.

Corinth was also a very religious city and was filled with shrines and temples. The most famous was the Temple of Aphrodite, which stood on top of an 1,800-foot promontory. Within it, 1,000 temple prostitutes "helped" people worship the "goddess of love." Corinth also boasted of being home to the Isthmian Games, which were second only to the Olympics. These biennial games were held in a specially built 18,000-seat stadium. Corinth was a center of commerce, culture, religion, and entertainment in the Roman Empire. It was one of the important crossroads of the world.

The Apostle Paul knew that Corinth was a strategic place to have a church in order to reach the world of his day. While on his second mission trip, he stopped in Corinth and stayed for eighteen months during which time he started the congregation. It would certainly be a difficult place but also a dynamic place; because "what happens in Corinth, does NOT stay in Corinth," rather it goes out on the trade routes of the world! However, to live as a genuine Christian in the context of the city of Corinth was a real challenge!

Additionally, in this self-centered city, to live together within a congregation as brothers and sister in the body of Christ was also going to take a serious commitment. Not only would they have the normal struggles that every follower of Jesus has in growing spiritually and faithfully following the Lord, but they would also have the tremendous pressures and temptations of a powerful culture that was pulling them in the opposite direction. Paul writes to them to address a number of issues and to help them grow in their spiritual life as individual Christians as well as a Congregation.

Continued on Page 3 . . .

## Ruthfred Lutheran Church

3401 South Park Road  
Bethel Park, PA 15102  
www.Ruthfred.org

**Pastor** Steven P. Carlson  
**Vicar** Brian Westerbur

**Office Manager** Paula Mikulan  
**Administrative Assistant** Pat Lutz  
**Youth Director** Brandon Fouks  
**Council President** Gary Ausefski

---

## Herald Staff

<b>Editorial Team</b>	Steven Rothermel Marybeth Dietz
<b>Staff Writers</b>	Mettelise Ziegler Tom Glasser
<b>Proofreading</b>	Ruth and Alan Hinkelman
<b>Mailing Labels</b>	Lauren Daugherty
<b>Printing</b>	Paula Mikulan
<b>Assembly Leader</b>	Joyce Bock

---

The submission deadline for the next Herald is **Saturday, February 15, 2020.**

The publication date is **Wednesday, February 26, 2020.**

## In This Issue

- 3 Pastor's Article, Continued**
- 4 Official Acts, Council Highlights**
- 5 Member Profile**  
Becky Gusky
- 6 Announcements**
- 7 Song of the Month**  
"Savior, Again To Thy  
Dear Name We Raise"

## Pastor's Article

... Continued from Cover Page

“The Spiritual Life of the Christian & the Congregation” is the title of our current preaching series as we will be preaching through the book of First Corinthians during the next several months. In this book, Paul repeatedly emphasizes the importance of Christians being united to Christ in every aspect of their lives so that they will grow spiritually and also be an authentic witness to the community.

This same truth is underscored in the importance of the congregation being united together as brothers and sisters in the body of Christ—the Church—for the very same reason of being a spiritually-growing congregation that also has a vibrant witness to a wider, watching community. They are called to be a light in the darkness of Corinth. They are called to live lives that transformed, and are transformational in their community. This will only take place to the degree that they are united in Christ and in love toward one another.

Through this letter, God will speak to them regarding the Gospel message, congregational unity, marriage, sexuality, Christian liberty, temptation, Holy Communion, the resurrection, the giving and using of spiritual gifts, and sharing their faith. This is the most practical of all of Paul's letters to churches! The Corinthian congregation had many strikes against them, but God wanted to work in them to strike a match that would blaze into a flame of spiritual fire and bring the lifesaving and changing Gospel to the world. God invites us into that same Calling to live holy lives, wholly unto Him, as a Christian congregation that is willing to reach the world!

God bless you as we grow together in our faith,  
as brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Pastor Carlson

## Official Acts

December 9, 2019 – January 19, 2020

### Funerals

\*Leonard Thomas Hanlon – December 14, 2019

\*Indicates Member

---

## Church Council Meeting Highlights

January 13, 2020

- Council president Gary Ausefski thanked all council members for their cooperation and hard work during his 2-year term.
  - Pastor Carlson noted that Vacation Bible School is scheduled for July 27-31, 2020. A new VBS director will be needed since Lauren Compel has retired from that position.
  - Trustee Roger Kurtz requested the December minutes be amended to show Council's agreement that the double doors by the nursery be kept closed to minimize cold air infiltrating into the nursery.
  - All spring semester scholarships to the Association Free Lutheran Bible School have been fully funded from the AFLBS Scholarship Fund, leaving a balance of \$1,000.
  - Council approved a motion to transfer \$5,000 from the Current Fund to the Benevolence Fund.
- 

## Call Committee Update

The Call Committee has been diligently interviewing candidates and is progressing forward with several promising candidates. The committee will be making a recommendation to the church council, which will then make a recommendation to the congregation, and there will be a congregational meeting to vote regarding extending a letter of Call to a particular pastoral candidate.

Please continue to pray for God's wisdom and clarity for the committee and for the potential candidates.

[Editor's Note: This information has been edited in the emailed version of the February Herald to reflect a more up-to-date description of the process.]

---

## Member Profile

By Mettelise Ziegler

### Becky Gusky

Becky Gusky joined Ruthfred last April with her two sons. Reilly is thirteen and Evan is nine. You will see Becky accompanied by her husband, Al, who is a Roman Catholic.

The Guskys have lived in Bethel Park for about five years. Becky takes the “T” downtown every weekday. She works as a Treasury Solutions Sales Associate for Citizens Bank. She does cash management for corporate customers, although trying to explain her job makes people dizzy. Al is the Director of Finance for a nonprofit organization called the Pittsburgh Technology Council.

Becky was baptized at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Brentwood, the borough in which she was raised. Her family joined Stewart Avenue Lutheran Church when she and her sister were children. Becky’s mother had been raised Presbyterian and her father, Catholic. Sadly, her maternal grandfather wanted nothing to do with her mother when she married a Catholic, so Becky never had the privilege of knowing her grandfather. Stewart Avenue Church was very dear to Becky. She remembers a great youth program with close friends and many worthwhile activities. When her boys were old enough, she hoped they would have the same kind of enriching experiences. However, there were hardly any children there, so a great youth program was not going to happen.

With Reilly approaching confirmation age, Becky began looking for a new Lutheran Church. She called several on the telephone, asked questions, and searched the internet. When she contacted Ruthfred, she was put in contact with Brandon Fouks, our youth director. She says he “sounded great.” Her dyed-in-the-wool Lutheran uncle from Connecticut even helped. He spoke with Pastor Osier. Reilly attended a meeting of the SWAP kids, which he truly enjoyed. After a conversation with Pastor Carlson, Becky had to agree with her uncle that Ruthfred would be a fine new church home.

The Guskys are busy between work and extra-curricular activities. Younger son Evan is enamored with playing violin, while Reilly plays on two ice hockey teams: his Independence Middle School team and the Mt. Lebanon Hornets, a travel team with a rigorous schedule. When Becky has time to herself, she enjoys walking and Zumba.

We welcome the Gusky Family and pray that they will thrive at Ruthfred Lutheran Church!

## Announcements

### Easter Baskets

Looking for a Volunteer—Your Help is Needed. This year may be the last year for our Easter baskets to shut-ins unless someone steps forward to assist this year and learns what needs to be done and then heads it up next year. We have women who are willing to help, but we need someone to be in charge. Baskets are assembled on the Saturday of Palm Sunday weekend. If interested, please talk to Bev Rowan for more details. Thank you!

-Submitted by Bev Rowan

### XYZ

Please take note that Edd Hale will be our guest speaker at our February luncheon. Edd is a retired middle school history teacher for Keystone Oaks School District. During his 35 years he taught mostly US history, covering the period from discovery to the pre-Civil War era. Recently, he has been volunteering as a crew member on the US Brig Niagara, the Flagship of Pennsylvania based in Erie, doing daily sails and extended voyages. His interests also include traveling, metal detecting, bicycling, and computers. He has also taught classes on the War of 1812, the Great Castle Shannon Bank Robbery, and the Brig Niagara. The Great Castle Shannon Bank Robbery is the talk that Edd will bring to us on February 28 at noon. Many say that he is an extremely interesting speaker. Come and hear about one of Pittsburgh's most notorious crimes.

-Submitted by Pat Lutz

## Bible in a Year Reading Schedule February 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> Leviticus 1-4
<b>2</b> Leviticus 5-7	<b>3</b> Leviticus 8-10	<b>4</b> Leviticus 11-13	<b>5</b> Leviticus 14-15	<b>6</b> Leviticus 16-17	<b>7</b> Leviticus 18-21	<b>8</b> Leviticus 22-23
<b>9</b> Leviticus 24-25	<b>10</b> Leviticus 26-27	<b>11</b> Numbers 1-2	<b>12</b> Numbers 3-4	<b>13</b> Numbers 5-6	<b>14</b> Numbers 7	<b>15</b> Numbers 8-10
<b>16</b> Numbers 11-13	<b>17</b> Numbers 14-15	<b>18</b> Numbers 16-17	<b>19</b> Numbers 18-20	<b>20</b> Numbers 21-22	<b>21</b> Numbers 23-25	<b>22</b> Numbers 26-27
<b>23</b> Numbers 28-30	<b>24</b> Numbers 31-32	<b>25</b> Numbers 33-34	<b>26</b> Numbers 35-36	<b>27</b> Deuteronomy 1-2	<b>28</b> Deuteronomy 3-4	<b>29</b> Deuteronomy 5-7

## Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

# Savior, Again To Thy Dear Name We Raise

Lyrics: John Ellerton

Music: Edward John Hopkins

Savior, again to thy dear Name we raise  
 With one accord our parting hymn of praise;  
 Once more we bless thee ere our worship cease,  
 Then, lowly bending, wait thy word of peace.



When I finally decided upon this hymn for my article this month, one of the first questions that came to mind was how familiar Herald readers would be with it. I like this hymn, but as a life-long Lutheran of now 67 years I would venture to say I've only sung it a handful of times. It appears in our SBH as the first hymn in the "Close of Service" section. If my suspicions about infrequent use are correct, perhaps it is because some of the lyrics suggest the closing of an evening service, and in our tradition evening services are relatively rare. The evening allusions I refer to are the following:

With thee began, with thee shall end the day . . .  
 Grant us thy peace, Lord, through the coming night.

The lyrics of this hymn were composed by John Ellerton, a 19th-century Anglican vicar, hymnodist, and hymnologist. John Julian, as quoted on Hymnary.org, declares that of the fifty or so original hymns that Ellerton wrote, "Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise" is the "most beautiful and tender." The beautifully matched, gently flowing melody was composed by Edward John Hopkins, a contemporary English organist and composer. Part of the charm of this hymn are the images it conjures up of a close family of believers concluding an evening of worship together and getting ready to make their way home for a restful night. As I continued to study the hymn, however, I gradually realized that there is another key theme that runs throughout: prayers for peace. The first stanza ends with the worshipers awaiting the pastor's pronouncement of the Lord's peace. The remaining stanzas all begin with the plea "Grant us thy peace."

Peace—certainly a word and a concept that has been tossed around and pursued throughout the history of our sin-infected race. In general usage, it typically means freedom from war, strife, suffering, and worry. "Shalom," the Hebrew word for peace, carries the connotations of wholeness, completeness, soundness, health, safety, and prosperity. (JewsforJesus.org) These are certainly ideals to be desired and sought out. To the extent that we can enjoy these aspects of peace, however, we should be grateful to God for them as a sort of bonus because this is not the kind of peace that our Lord promised to us. Consider these words of Jesus to His disciples right before His passion: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid . . . I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (Gospel of John)

May God grant to all of us His kind of deep, abiding peace—peace that transcends tribulation; the kind of peace that "surpasses all understanding." (Philippians 4:7)

**Then, when thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,  
 Call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace. Amen.**



# February 2020



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b>
<b>2 BOY SCOUT SUNDAY</b> Holy Communion 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Holy Communion 11:00  Holy Communion 6:00	<b>3</b> JTW Leaders Meeting 9:15 Craft & Sew 9:30 Elders' Meeting 7:00	 <b>4 HAPPY 91<sup>st</sup> BIRTHDAY NOVA JONES</b>  Worship Team 7:00	 <b>5 HAPPY 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY WILBERT VOGEL</b> 9:15 JTW 5:45 Children's Choir 6:30 Bell Choir 6:45 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:45 JTW/KidsClub 7:30 Senior Choir	 <b>6 HAPPY 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY BOB REITH</b>  Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>7</b>  Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00	 <b>10 HAPPY 94<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY BOB CHRISTMAN</b>  JTW Leaders Meeting 9:15 Craft & Sew 9:30 Elders' Prayer Time 7:00 Council 7:30	<b>11</b>  Worship Team 7:00	<b>12</b> 9:15 JTW 12:00 Esther 5:45 Children's Choir 6:30 Bell Choir 6:45 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:45 JTW/KidsClub 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>13</b>  Knit Wits 10:00  Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>14</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's  	<b>15</b> HERALD ARTICLE DEADLINE  Mary Circle Bible Study 9:30
<b>16</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 Evening of Prayer & Praise 6:00	<b>17</b> JTW Leaders Meeting 9:15  	<b>18</b>  Worship Team 7:00 Men's Night 7:00	<b>19</b> 9:15 JTW 5:45 Children's Choir 6:30 Bell Choir 6:45 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:45 JTW/KidsClub 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>20</b>  Ruth 2:00  Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>21</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 GIFT Bible Study 6:30	<b>24</b> JTW Leaders Meeting 9:15	<b>25</b>  Worship Team 7:00	<b>26</b> HERALD MAILING ASH WEDNESDAY 6:30 Communion Breakfast 9:15 JTW 2:00 Communion Lenten Service 5:45 Children's Choir 6:00-7:00 Soup & Sandwich Supper 6:15 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:30 Bell Choir * Senior Choir 7:30 Communion Lenten Service	<b>27</b>  Knit Wits 10:00  Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>28</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's  XYZ noon	<b>29</b>

\*Senior Choir will meet at 7:00 and then after the 7:30 service



# February 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Sunday School 9:45am SWAP 6-7:30pm <u>@ Church</u>	3	4 TNT 7-9pm @ Church	5	6	7	8
9 Sunday School 9:45am SWAP 6-7:30pm <u>@ Church</u>	10	11 TNT 7-9pm @ Church	12	13	14 Movie Night 7-9 @ Church	15
16 Sunday School 9:45am SWAP 6-7:30pm <u>@ Church</u>	17	18 TNT 7-9pm @ Church	19	20	21	22
23 Sunday School 9:45am SWAP 6-7:30pm <u>@ Church</u>	24	25 TNT 7-9pm @ Church	26	27	28 30 Hour	29 Famine

## Ruthfred Youth Ministry Calendar