

PROCLAIMING A TIMELESS CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD

SINCE 1794



THE SPIRE

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH † CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

2021 CONGREGATION OFFICERS

President:

Suzanne Umstott

Vice President:

Kathleen Ball

Secretary:

Debbie Szymanski

Treasurer:

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June 2021

Pastor's Ponderings

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Education

(Faith

Formation):

Debbie Streicher

Evangelism

Jane Roderick

Finance:

Suzanne Umstott

Ministry in Daily Life:

Nancy Ayers

Property:

Edward Ayers

Social Ministry (Fellowship):

Cindy Read

Stewardship:

Vacant

Worship and Music:

Kathleen Ball

Youth:

Gary Miller

A few Sundays ago we celebrated the great feast days of Pentecost and Holy Trinity. These are two of the last major festivals of the church before summer begins. The first feast day reminds us of the giving of the Holy Spirit. Nothing new really, even though we tend to treat this occasion as the debut of the new epiphany to the church in the Triune God.

Biblically speaking the Holy Spirit has always been around. Dr. Luther recognized that – you can see it in his writing as he speaks of the activity of the Holy Spirit.

The second feast day of the Holy Trinity reminds the Church of the words, "In the beginning" – with that phrase Saint John the Gospel writer lifts the Christian Child of God's understanding that God has always been Triune – from eternity God the Father begat the Word made Flesh – God the Son, Jesus and the God the Holy Spirit is the life existing between them. The Holy Spirit hovered over the waters of Creation. Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – from all eternity everlasting.

"Mortal can these bones live?" That's what God asked the prophet Ezekiel while showing him a vision of utter death – a valley filled with desiccated bones – bones out of which all hope of life has been sucked. "Oh Lord, God you know," replies Ezekiel. It's almost as if he's afraid...afraid to even hope in the possibility God seems to be holding out ... afraid for fear of disappointment. "Prophecy," God commands Ezekiel, "Tell them bones, I will enter you...My Holy Spirit, I will breathe within you and you shall live."

You know what happened...the Holy Spirit filled those bones with so much life, so much energy their graves could not contain their new life and where opened. And the people of God knew they would and could return to their home – living within promise of God's embrace. The Holy Spirit – one of three in one – from all eternity everlasting.

THE REVEREND
RYAN K. VIANDS
Pastor

DAVID RANKIN
Director of Music

DEBBIE SZYMANSKI
Parish Assistant

STEPHANIE WADE
Treasurer

RAMON ROCHE CARDONA
Sexton

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A young girl finds out she is pregnant....and unmarried. She travels to see the one member of her family who will – perhaps – understand...understand her fear...she may well be turned out on her own and deemed an outcaste. Upon entering her cousin's house, her cousin meets her at the door – herself pregnant – and she is filled with the Holy Spirit. The child within her leaps in recognition and Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, declares with a loud voice born of the Holy Spirit "Blessed are thou among women, and blessed is fruit of the womb." And, unable to contain the wonder and blessing of the life begun in her; Mary proclaims, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." It is her song.... she cannot hold it back. The Holy Spirit – God's active presence from all eternity everlasting (This feast day is always remembered on May 31st as the Feast of the Visitation).

The holy disciples/apostles had been reduced from 13 to 11...one murdered, one self-inflicted. Not a great start to a movement meant to change the world. Not a great reflection on the God supposedly behind it. What was there to do but hide in a house until things cooled off a bit and the heat was off of them. Then there was the wind – violent, shaking the shutters, blowing over the chairs in the house. Then there were the flames appearing in their midst and then resting over their heads...one above each. As they spoke something welled up inside them and the words filled them with wonder for they had never spoken this language. All those surrounding them heard – in their language – and were amazed.

Peter. Peter put it together. "Don't you see? This is God...here...now...bringing us together...His Spirit...the Holy Spirit...moving among us, opening the way for us to be as we were created...brothers and sisters living with and for another as we were taught by our Lord, Jesus. It is the Holy Spirit point us Jesus. All of us... everyone on the face of the earth has been invited...everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The Holy Spirit hover over and within heart from all eternity eternal.

One year... one year ago.... We went from worshiping in-person as we have done for decades to worship through the internet and the building itself being locked and closed ...keeping our six feet distance, roping pews off and wearing mask ... often eyes only...can't see the whole face. At times it felt like looking for life in a valley of bones...or maybe thinking we are the bones.

One year... one year ago.... trying to thread and sew together a plan reflecting truth and preserving, nurturing life. At times it felt like courting banishment and becoming outcast – being broken.

One year...one year ago...waiting for that mighty wind to bring us together...to blow aside that which separates and enter into us with not so much a new life but a renewal of the life we've given...a life vibrant, trembling, uncontrollable to sing and resonate with love of Christ unfettered, unchecked, fruitful and for all... for all...for each every one...no matter the language, the look, or the point of view.

"I will send the Advocate to you – the Holy Spirit – and, having come, you will be shown how wrong the world is – not Creation, but the world as devised and coerced by those who don't trust me. You will know the truth and be guided into all truth...the Holy Spirit – your Advocate – shall tie us together that we may abide in one another in our Father."

That is the promise of Christ...it is the consistent pull of the Holy Spirit in our lives even now...it's not new – the living Spirit hovering over the waters of Creation is in our hearts....Christ's active presence...God's active embrace giving us exactly what we need as we have once again reenter our nave and sanctuary to worship and hear his word and receive His sacraments...as faith and hearts pay heed, we will be filled to overflowing, resonating, hear the songs of our salvation and of God's love poured out upon us and through us to the world. The Feast of Pentecost and the Holy Trinity are always happening to listening ears and trusting hearts and faithful souls. Thanks be to our God! Pax, Fr. Ryan +

Church Council Update

On May 11, 2021 the council had it's second in-person meeting of the season. We had discussion about our Mother's day service where beautiful flowers were given out following the service to all women in honor of Mother's Day. Many thanks to the members who implemented that thoughtful idea.

Kathleen Ball/Worship and Music Committee is continuing to evaluate CDC guidelines as it relates to COVID restrictions. Cindy Read, Social Ministry/Fellowship is finalizing plans for our annual church picnic scheduled for June 27th. Nancy Ayers/Ministry in Daily Life reported on the homebound calls for the month of April and May where she and Pastor Ryan were able to make several in-person visits. Ed Ayers/Property continues to work on the maintenance and repairs of the building including the front steps of the church. Debbie Streicher and the Faith Formation team continue working on the plans for Vacation Bible School.

Many thanks to the committee members and church staff.

The council will not meet again until August 10th but will still be in communication via email.

I hope everyone has a wonderful and safe summer.

Blessings
Sue Umstott, Council President

To our graduates -----



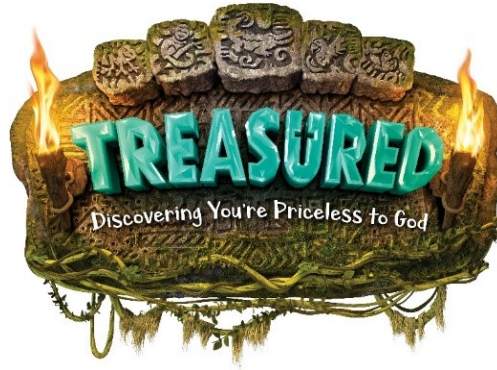
Daniel Highland
Allegany High School

Annie Simpson
West Virginia University

Sean Wade
University of Maryland

Congratulations to each of you
and God speed!

Vacation Bible School 2021



Registration Deadline? June 7

Ages? Age 4 through 5th grade

Dates? June 14 – June 25

Place? Online in a private Facebook Group

When? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday both weeks

Time? 5 pm (Lesson Presentation) and 8 pm (Bedtime Bible Story)

Do you know a child between age 4 through those finishing the 5th grade who would like to follow our map to finding treasure alongside our friends, Pogo, Ruby, Wilder, Grace, and Raymond for two weeks in June?



There are only a few days left to register your children, grandchildren, friends, and neighbors. Registration forms are available on our website or printed copies in the office:

<https://www.stpaulcumberland.org/>.

The planning team of volunteers from 9 different congregations will be packing all the resource bags for children the first week in June. Packets can be picked up by families from 4 -5pm on Friday June, 11 or from 10 -11am on Saturday, June 12.

Please contact Debbie Streicher for more information at dstreicher52@gmail.com .

LOFT Living Our Faith Together

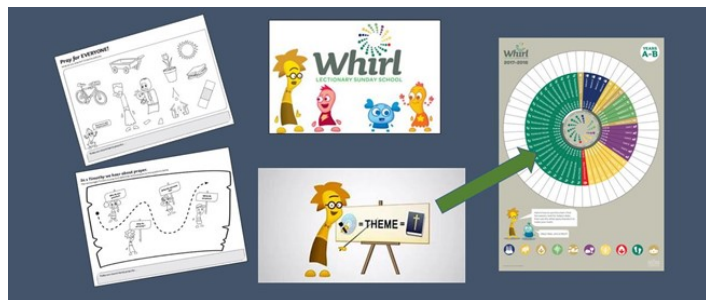


As the school year comes to a close, so does our LOFT Bible study that has been meeting online Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm. Our final time together was on May 26. LOFT will resume in the fall again with high hopes for meeting in-person following Worship and Fellowship on Sunday mornings.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, September 19 as our next time together.

See you then!

Children and Worship



You may notice our young children opening Bibles, coloring, and keeping busy during worship. We welcome our children to worship and look forward over the coming months to finding ways they can be involved in listening, participating, and learning the same scripture readings being read by the lectors and by Pastor Ryan.

Over the summer, each child will be invited to pick up a Whirl Bible on their way to a pew along with crayons and activity sheets. Resources and what Debbie Streicher and Rosita share each week during the Taking Faith Home message will be based on the lectionary readings.

The Luther League Puppet Ministry Team



The puppet ministry team will be actively involved in Vacation Bible School in June. In July, our team will be invited to join in a three-day, online national Fellowship of Puppeteers conference. If you are interested in joining the team, this is the right time.

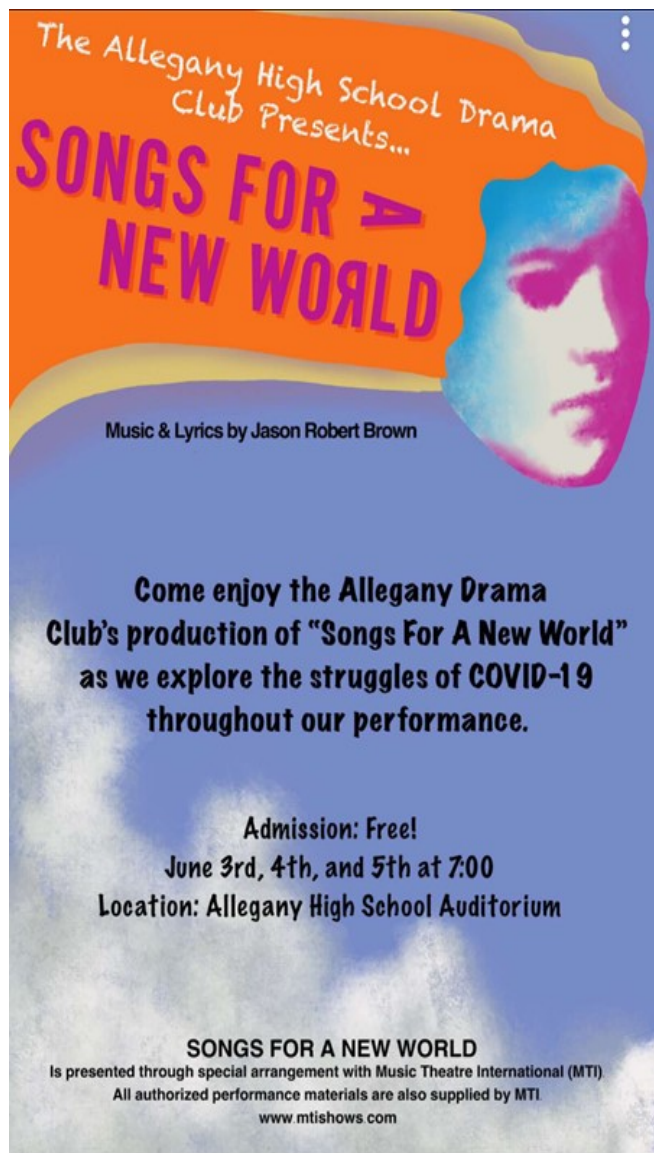
All ages are invited to join us!

To learn more about our puppet ministry, please contact Debbie Streicher at dstreicher52@gmail.com.



The Worship and Music Committee met on May 27 to review the results of the surveys distributed on Sunday, May 23. Based on those surveys, beginning Sunday, June 6, please continue to wear a face mask when entering the building. When seated, if desired, the mask can be removed. We will continue to refrain from conversation in the building, continue to wear a face mask when not seated and refrain from singing. We will also monitor COVID-19 cases in Allegany County and as numbers change, may make adjustments. Until then, please follow these guidelines.

Thank you.



Daniel Highland is in this play!
Seating for the general public
starts at 6:45; Daniel
recommends arriving earlier as
there is no reserved seating.



Save the date:

Lakewood Beach Pavilion
Sunday, June 27th
following worship at St. Paul's.
Look for more details in the
Sunday announcements.

Directions:

351 S. Lakewood Drive
Ridgeley, WV 26753

Travel distance from church: 16 minutes,
7.8 miles

Start out going south on N. Smallwood St.
toward Washington St.

Then 0.12 miles

Take the 2nd left onto Greene St.

Then 0.18 miles

Turn right onto Bridge St./MD-942 and cross
the bridge into WV

Then 0.14 miles

Stay straight to go onto Bridge St./WV-28 Alt.

Then 0.09 miles

Take the 2nd left onto Mulligan St/WV-28 and
follow WV-28 Alt through Ridgeley

Then 2.79 miles

Turn right onto Frankfort Hwy/WV-28

Then 2.06 miles

Turn left onto Scenic Lane/County Hwy-28/7
and follow to the roundabout

Then 1.32 miles

Enter the roundabout and take the first right
onto N. Lakewood Dr.

Then 0.67 miles

Turn right onto S. Lakewood Dr.

Then 0.41 miles

The pavilion and beach entrance is located on
the left 0.1 miles past Mariner Court



Tuesday
10:00-12:00

Friday
1:00 PM

Sunday
10:00 AM

Monday

Thursday

4:00-5:00

Friday
4:00-5:00

Saturday
10:00-11:00
10:00

Sunday
10:00 AM

Monday

Wednesday

Friday

Sunday
10:00 AM

Monday

Wednesday

Thursday
4:00-5:00

Friday

Sunday
10:00 AM

June 1
Morning Prayer via Zoom

June 4
VBS packet assembly

June 6
Worship

June 7
VBS Registration deadline

June 10
Beginnings Last Day
Drive-thru

Bountiful Blessings

June 11
VBS packet pick-up

June 12
VBS packet pick-up
Potomac Concert Band
music sort-library

June 13
Worship

June 14
VBS Session One Online

June 16
VBS Session Two Online

June 18
VBS Session Three Online

June 20
Worship

June 21
VBS Session Four Online

June 23
VBS Session Five Online

June 24
Drive-thru

Bountiful Blessings

June 25
VBS Finale Drive-Thru

June 27
Worship
Church Picnic



June Birthdays and Anniversaries

2 – Pastor Ryan

6 – Pastor Ryan's
ordination anniversary, 2009

14 – Jay & Kay Cochrane,
married in 2018

17 – Joyce Eror

18 - Glenn Kline

20 – Nancy & Ed Ayers,
married in 2020

28 – Travis Medcalf