

*Life Together at
Christ's United
Lutheran Church*



*Join us for Worship -
Saturday 5:00 p.m. &
Sunday 9:30 a.m.*





CHRIST'S UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

437 Airport Road, Ashland, PA 17921
www.christsunited.org
(570) 875-1591

**The July Newsletter is Sponsored in Honor of our Children & all
Children by Nelson & Angie Berger.**

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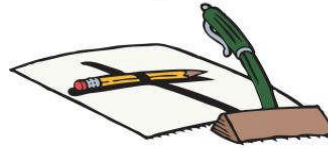
Sponsors Needed:

**If you would be interested in
sponsoring the Newsletter for
August or September, please call
the church office. 875-1591**



We the members of Christ's United Lutheran Church, Ashland, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to become more perfectly the Body of Christ in our world, do hereby commit ourselves to a mission...

Message From



Pastor Kim

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

When I was working as a hospital Chaplain in Georgia, I spent a large part of my time in the psych ward (what a shock!). I particularly remember one woman who the staff had called me in to see: she had been unceremoniously dropped off by her “family” because she had been crying for days. The staff had worked with her but could not get any information through her sobbing, and called me down to see if there was anything I could do. I went into the little locked room with her and sat down. The few questions I asked, she just cried the more, about how her family dumped her and now she was going to be committed. Overwhelmed, I started to cry too. I started to tell all the burdens I was feeling, all the ways I felt people were treating me wrongly.

Then, all of a sudden. I realized I didn't hear her crying any more. I looked up, and she was staring straight at me, eyes dry, and said, “You're in worse shape than me. What am I crying about? You're the one who should be committed.”

do hereby commit ourselves to a mission...

She was right: then and now. But what she missed is that I was committed, and still am. I am committed to serve my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit I will sit with those in need, *and* those in strength. For Jesus said in Matthew 25.40: ‘*Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.*’

— continued on page 4



Christ's United Lutheran Church is not a place: it is a family. It is a family who is committed to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, having recognized the gift of life we have been given, and the gift our lives are created to be. We come together on Saturdays and Sundays to be empowered to share this gift with others. That's why worship is only one of the things we do. Worship is God's ministry to us: service is God's ministry *through* us.

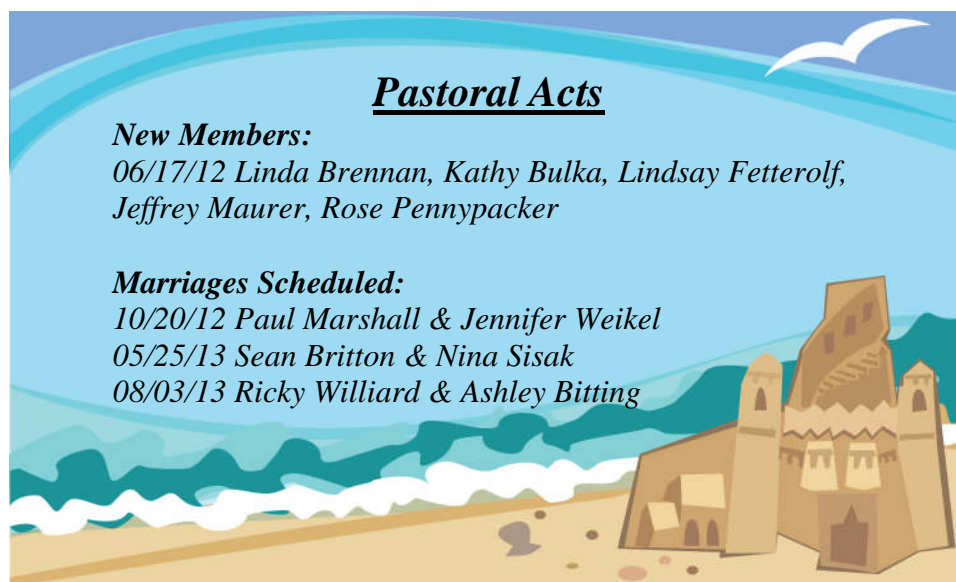
This Summer the opportunities reach far greater than the backyard pool.

Please look at the opportunities here to live out your gifts, to show the world that you are committed, you are committed to life.

The world is crying because of the needs that sin creates. Will you come, and sit? Are you committed?

Peace,

Pastor Kim



Pastoral Acts

New Members:

*06/17/12 Linda Brennan, Kathy Bulka, Lindsay Fetterolf,
Jeffrey Maurer, Rose Pennypacker*

Marriages Scheduled:

*10/20/12 Paul Marshall & Jennifer Weikel
05/25/13 Sean Britton & Nina Sisak
08/03/13 Ricky Williard & Ashley Bitting*



Church Council Highlights from June

- The pastor would like to schedule a “All Committee Meeting” for all committee’s of Christ’s United to come together for training, brainstorming, & scheduling.
- The Evangelism Committee met with a representative from LifeTouch to organize our new pictorial directory.
- The locks on the stall doors in the ladies restroom will be replaced.
- The average weekly worship attendance for 2012 to date is 128.
- The youth group received \$141.35 for the aluminum cans that were recycled.
- The council reviewed and approved the new job descriptions for church organist, indoor custodian, outdoor custodian, financial secretary, treasurer, office secretary, & choir director, that were submitted by the personnel committee.
- An ad for the choir director position has been posted on Craigslist.
- The Grieving committee would like to have new members join them to help families during their loss of a loved one.
- The 20th Anniversary celebration of our building will be held on October 6. Worship will be at 4:00 pm, following worship there will be a meal catered by Sandy Miller, and entertainment by Rick Lorady.

Status of Accounts

Balance in Checking Account.....	\$2,211.99
Investment Fund #55.....	\$25,000.00
Investment Fund #73.....	\$25,000.00
Memorial Account.....	\$28,273.88
Benevolence Gifts.....	\$8,787.50
(43% of our Benevolence goal of \$20,600.00)	





July Birthday's

2	Ryan Bendinsky		
3	Joan Clark		
	John E. Shilling		
4	John Denchak		
	David Schweinhart		
5	Christopher Dillman	15	Samantha Schneider
6	Chris Brennan	17	Bobbie Harner
	Sally Tice		Tami Wagner
	Ron Wallace	18	Ellie Chappell
7	Jeffrey Sharp		Ashley Varndell
	Rick Lorady	19	Jeffrey Hummel
	Patrick Monaghan		Kylie Sisko
8	John Kimmel	22	Mark Boyer
10	Nelson Berger, Jr.	24	Anna Harner
11	Wendy Farnsworth	26	Thomas Wolfgang
12	Dylan Barker		Carla Mae Carl
13	Todd Walacavage	27	Lydia Price
	Gavin Klock	31	Barbara Fetterolf

July Anniversaries

07/01/50	Forrest & Dorothy Shadle
07/08/76	James & Jo Conrath
07/09/09	William & Wendy Coward
07/10/93	Gary & Connie Weinreich
	Thomas & Michelle Hood
07/28/01	Rick & Gail Lorady
07/30/05	Susan & Shaun McNally
07/31/70	James & Carol Reiner





**Christ's United Lutheran
Church Bus Trip
To Sight & Sound**

Thursday, July 12

Deadline to Reserve Tickets: JUNE 30TH
Bus leaves Church parking lot at 11:00 a.m.

There are only 10 Tickets left!
Do Not miss this great
opportunity to see a fantastic
show!!

Cost

Adults \$83.00
Teen (13-18) \$64.00
Child (3-12) 48.00
Due by June 30th.

Lunch at Shady Maple 1:00 p.m.

Show at Sight & Sound 4:15 p.m.

Please make checks payable to: Christ's United Lutheran Church
WELCA. Sign-up on the bulletin board in the Narthex or call Connie
Welker 875-0844 or Jo-Ann Young 875-2586.



WHO

ARE

These People???



Each month we have a different picture from long ago. See if you can guess who some or all of the people in the picture are. The answers will be in next months "Life Together" Newsletter.

If you have any old pictures you would like to share from Christ's United's past, please bring them into the office for Erik to scan into the computer. Also, please include a list of those pictured.

Answers for the June edition "Who are these people??" - Left to Right: Front Row: Haley Gable, Rev. Myrna Kysar, Heidi Schweinhart. Second Row: Dan Shuey, Dennis Long, Jr., Mark Klinger, Grayson Sharp, Robert Green, Jamie Stank. Back Row: Duane Ernest, Leo Young II, Rev. Robert Kysar, Virgil Smith, & Greg Lindenmuth. Confirmation June 20, 1982.



What We Collect

Please continue to bring in your used inkjet & laser cartridges, cell phones, and digital cameras for recycling.



Please place all items in the bins located in the parlor.

We NO LONGER collect plastic bottle caps!



We also collect Aluminum Cans. The bins are located behind the church at the kitchen door. The youth group uses the money from the cans for youth activities.

Free!

Wendy Farnsworth

I have a Kodak EasyShare5100 all-in-one printer to give to someone in our congregation who could use it. There is nothing wrong with it, I just purchased a new printer to upgrade my system. Anyone interested, please call or email me if you would like to pick it up at my home. Thanks!

Phone: 570-875-1685
Email: wendoo@verizon.net



We Offer our Prayers to...
Those recently added to our Prayer List...

Emily Brennan, Azure Waldick, Marie & Harry Lengert, Nancy Wolfgang, Mark Eiswerth, Alyssa Burnham, Kayla Heim, Kelly & Bud Crosby, Dot Zeigenfuse, Dorothy Berge



Please Continue to Pray for...

Scott Hoffman, Adda Miller, Audrey & Fred Pillman, Bill Griffiths, Glenn Pennypacker, Terry Halye, Irene Morgan, Mary Oliveri, Melissa Byers, Joe Lentowski, Ashland Area Ministerium, Jim Hepler, Robert Rock, Barb Anczarski, Beryl Kubik, Natalie Tracy, Carol Guistwite, Mandy Fetterolf, Alexis Schmidt, Emma Fishburn, Brenda Wolfgang, Carl Lute, Catherine Tenedios, Howard & Catherine Beury, Sharon Kostura, Devon Fowler, Carol Brennan, Beverly Fetterolf, Herman Wagner, Skip Raabe, Eileen Lindenmuth, Lambert Haupt, Donald Kerestes, Robert Welker, EvaAnn Barkafski, David Major, Joseph Roshannon, Barbara Nelson, Blanche Rowe, Judy Gross, Joey Kelly, Linda Kahler, Brandon Harris, Heather Fetterolf, Rebecca Yorty, Grant Marlow, Linda Zerby, Carol (Cook) Brennan, Margaret Huhn, Nancy Shuey, Bob Lynn, Elaine Wallace, Joel Ruscavage, Sonya Oldland, Lance Wolfe, Fred Herb III, Melanie Alt, Steven Hall, Shirley Zaharick, Bob Foose, Jennifer Coch, Gerry Dillman, Jean Cress, Carrie Houser, Pete Waldick, Megan Geise

**In need of
prayer**

Please call the Church Office (875-1591)...

...if you or a relative are admitted to a hospital,

...if your phone number or address change, or

...if you have a prayer concern.

Thank you for helping us to serve you better. The church office hours are Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.



A Note of Thanks

Catherine Tenedios wishes to thank the members of the church for their prayers since her accident.

While Catherine is improving, she is still in need of continued prayers. Catherine shared with me that she feels God's healing power and is sure that our concern is helping.

The entire family is most grateful.

My sincere thanks to you my church family.

Gail Halys

WELCA Picnic

All women of Christ's United
are invited to join us on
Wednesday, August 1 @ 6:00
pm for our annual picnic.

Please bring a covered dish
to share & a \$3.00 gift for
our activity games.





Social Ministry

Ashland Area Food Pantry

We will be collecting the following item for July:

Boxed Potatoes

Please place your donations in the shopping cart. Thank You!



The month that your committee serves please help out in the kitchen before and after the service. Thank you.

Committee Schedule

July—Evangelism/Outreach
August—Youth Group
September—Property
October—Stewardship
November—Endowment Fund
December—Choir
January 2013—Church Council





The social ministry committee will be hosting a clothing give-away on:

Saturday June 30
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

If you would be willing to donate any clothing to the give-away these are the items we are in need of:

Infant/Toddler
Youth Girls & Boys
Young Women
Men's

The give-away will be advertised at the Ashland Area Food Pantry in June, if you know of anyone in need of clothing please let them know.

Please place all your donations in the Social Hall.
Thank you!!



Special Offering

Sunday, July 29

We will be collecting a special offering for our Good Samaritan Fund. This fund is used to help members of Christ's United & our neighbors in need when they could use help in purchasing food, paying utility bills and other circumstances that occur.



Please be Generous!

Congratulations To:
Congratulations To:

Pastor Kim who was elected to the Board of Directors of Schuylkill Women in Crisis. This is a great way to carry our witness further into our community.





Are you aware that there are services available in your area of Schuylkill County in the form of transportation to medical, social service appointments and grocery shopping for people aged 60 and above? **AND** did you know that these services are offered *free of charge* through Diakon's Volunteer Home Care program? There's got to be a catch, right? Well the catch is this, we need...

People to know about our services.
Volunteers to help with the driving.

If you are age 60 and above, can get in and out of a car independently, and are having difficulty with transportation to much needed services, please call our office. We may be able to help.

If you are someone who has an hour or so to spare and would like to help a senior in your community, please call our office. We would love to speak with you. (Mileage reimbursement is available.)

Diakon Volunteer Home Care is an interfaith outreach ministry responding to the needs of the community by offering help to individuals aged 60 and above through the support of caring volunteers.

Call us. We can be reached at 1-866-297-9609, Monday through Friday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm.

Working together we can impact the lives of older adults in your community.



Sunday, July 8
We will be
collecting a
special offering
for Volunteer
Home Care.





Schuylkill Women in Crisis

P.O. Box 96, Pottsville, PA 17901

swicagency@comcast.net

www.s-wic.org

June 6, 2012

Rev. Dr. Kim Lengert
Christ United Lutheran Church
437 Airport Road
Ashland, Pennsylvania 17921



Dear Rev. Dr. Lengert and congregation:

Schuylkill Women in Crisis (SWiC) thanks you for your generous gift of many pairs of underwear from your "Undie Sunday" initiative to help victims of domestic violence and their children residing in SWiC's emergency shelter. The basic necessities of life are often left behind when victims seek safety and a chance to find healing and wholeness. Community support and the knowledge that others do care empowers victims to transform themselves into survivors and helps to restore hurting families. Please extend our gratitude to all involved.

Thank you for your ongoing support for our work and for area victims of domestic violence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sarah T. Casey'.

Sarah T. Casey
Executive Director

Thank you to everyone who donated undergarments for our "Undie Sunday". We want to thank Lois Sterling who took a very large bag to SWiC and also to the guest speaker "Minnie Pearl" (aka Gail Lorady), who talked to us about the need for "britches"!



Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry Team

Family Faith Challenge!



Family faith challenge guidelines for the year

- Worship God together once a week
- Gather together around a table six times a week
- Have an empty chair at the table to represent God's presence
- Make sure each person has his/her time to talk without interruptions
- Read from an age-appropriate Bible for your children



July: Baptism

We challenge you to notice how God's love is shared with us through our baptism.

Week one: Go to a pool as a family. Yell, "God loves you!" as you splash!



Week two: Look at photos from your baptism and tell your baptism story.

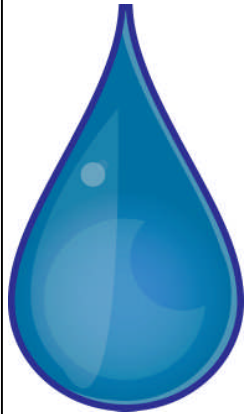
Week three: Trace a cross on each family member's forehead. Say, "God loves you and so do I!"

Week four: Paint with water. Gather old paintbrushes and dip them into buckets of water. Paint your sidewalk with shapes that remind you of God's love (cross, heart, circle, triangle, rainbow).

Week five: Place a bowl filled with water on your table. Invite family members to think of their own baptism. Ask each family member what it means to be a member of God's family. Listen to each other's story.



+ Christian Symbols +



Water -- Water flows through the Scriptures: the flood, the Red Sea crossing, water springing from a rock to nourish Israelites in the wilderness, the healing of Naaman's leprosy when he washed in the Jordan River, John's baptism of Jesus and, chiefly, our baptism into Christ. The water of baptism symbolizes cleansing from sin, the quenching of our spiritual thirst and God raising us from death (drowning in sin) to life everlasting. Just as we can't live without physical water, neither can we truly live without the living water that Jesus gives (see John 4:13-14).

Bible Studies

Opportunities to grow in God's Word will continue throughout the Summer!

Kay will continue to lead the Sunday Adult Study, meeting in the conference room.

Midweek Bible Studies will tackle the book of Ruth after finishing Matthew, and Snapshot Studies will be looking at the salvation we have in Jesus Christ, for our first gathering.

Please join us for these growing in faith events!



The Loss of a Child



The pain of losing your child is one that words cannot describe. Urged on by questions of “why?”, feelings of guilt, anger, and the pain become manageable, but rarely heal. Christ’s United is sponsoring a time for parents who have lost a child to come together, and under the guidance of a facilitator, support each other on a path to healing. Our facilitator is Pastor Dennis Ritter, the Executive Director of Lutheran Congregational Services. Pastor Ritter has led several groups for parents over the years, and brings comfort as he helps parents through the grieving process.



There is no cost to participate, and the group is open to all parent’s who have lost a child regardless of church participation, so please tell anyone you know who may benefit from this sharing. As this group focuses on the needs of the parents, our meeting night of Sundays at 7:00 pm may change to better suit the parents’ schedules.

Please call the church office at 570-875-1591 or speak with Pastor Kim to confirm our meeting time.



The following Memorials were given to Christ's United since the issue of the last Newsletter:

*\$15.00 in Memory of Kevin Holmes for the Mortgage by:
Ron & Donna Wallace*

*\$70.00 in Memory of Kevin Holmes by:
Mark & Carol Klinger
Ralph S. & Grace Johnson*

*\$15.00 in Memory of Betty Cray for
the Mortgage by:
Ron & Donna Wallace*

*\$25.00 in Memory of Betty Cray by:
Dean & Barb Fetterolf*

*\$50.00 in Memory of Leon Schlorff by:
C. Louis Ley*



Pastor's Vacation

Hopefully, Pastor Kim will be taking some vacation time this Summer. If you have any pastoral needs or concerns, please know you can call the church office if she doesn't answer her cell phone.

A pastor will always be "on duty" for our needs. Erik will have the contact information available.

Also, let us support those who volunteer their time and talents by leading our worship services when Pastor is away by being there to share!






Serving Our Community of Faith in July:

Date	Lector	Communion Assistants	Ushers	Acolyte	Acolyte	Greeter in Narthex	Greeter at Door
July 1	Beth Andrews	Jim Gruber Irene Morgan Dennis Wolfe	Ian Bendinsky Melanie Bendinsky Jack Houser Becky Spencer	Rebecca Houser	Samantha Brennan	Gail Halye	Erik Tice
July 8	Melanie Bendinsky			Ryan Walter	Jordan Walter	Nancy Lindenmuth	Kay Berner
July 15	Kay Berner			Ashley O'Connor		Janet Quirk	Marge Bolich
July 22	Gail Halye			Nathan Smith		Pearl Lute	Jack Houser
July 29	Jack Houser			Anthony Kodack	Katie Kodack	Beth Andrews	Ian Bendinsky



JULY 2012



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
1 5th Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 Communion Service 10:45 Adult Sunday school 4:30 Ladies Night Out	2 7:00 <i>Church Council</i>	3 Thomas, Apostle 	4 Independence Day Office Closed 	5 6:30 <i>Evangelical Outreach Meeting</i>
8 6th Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 Worship Service VHC Offering 10:45 Adult Sunday school	9 	10	11	12 11:00 Bus Trip Sight & Sound
15 7th Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 Worship Service 10:45 Adult Sunday school	16 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 <i>Stewardship Meeting</i>	17	18	19 7:00 <i>Personal Meeting</i>
22 8th Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 Worship Service 10:45 Adult Sunday school 6:00-8:00 Bible School Kick-off	23 9:30 Newsletter Assembly 6:00-8:00 Bible School 6:00 <i>Mutual Ministry Meeting</i>	24  6:00-8:00 Bible School	25 St. James the Elder, Apostle 6:00-8:00 Bible School	26 12:00-2:00 Pantry 6:00-8:00 Bible School
29 9th Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 Worship Service Good Samaritan Fund Offering 10:45 Adult Sunday school 	30	31		



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Youth Group



Christ's United Lutheran Church

Contact Us: youth@christsunited.org

Christ's United Lutheran Church **Vacation Bible School**

Sunday July 22—Thursday July 26
6:00—8:00 p.m.

Closing Program Friday, July 27 6:00 p.m.

Please fill out and return registration form
found on page 27.



	<p><u>Upcoming Events</u></p> <p>June 28 12:00-2:00 Help distribute food at the Food Pantry</p>	
	<p>July 22-27 6:00-8:00 Vacation Bible School</p>	
	<p>August 4 5:00 SWiM Christian Rock Band performance during Worship and Concert after</p>	

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

Play this game with a group of friends to remind you to follow Jesus.

What you need:

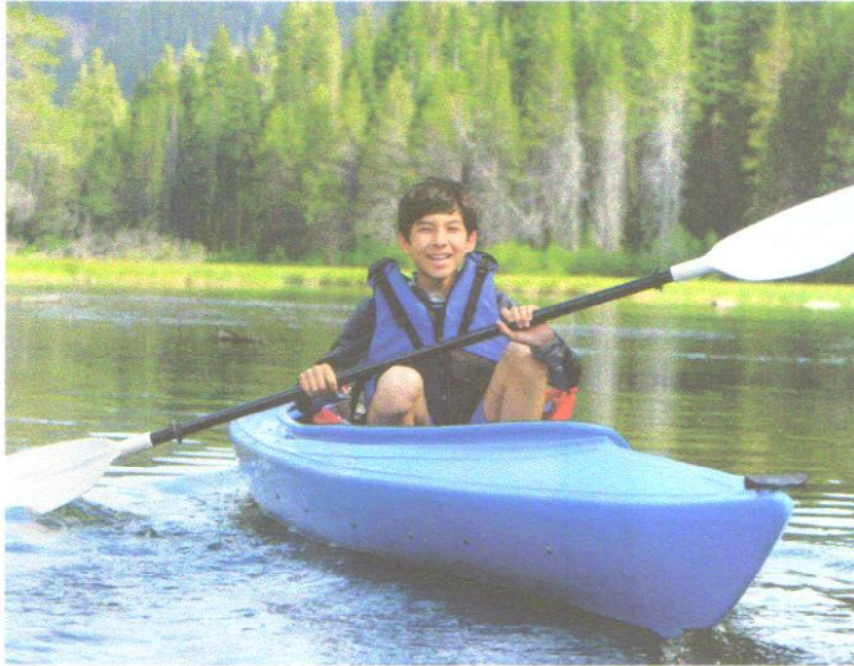
- Large space for running
- 3 jump ropes or 9 traffic cones

What you do:

1. Using jump ropes or traffic cones, form lines at both ends of the playing area. Also make a dividing line in the middle. Designate one side as "The Way" and the other as "The Truth." The center line is "The Life."
2. Choose one person to stand in the middle of the center line. He or she is the caller, yelling, "The way!" or "The truth!" or "The life!" The rest of the players also start on the middle line.
3. When a location is called, players run as fast as possible to the designated area. The last person to arrive switches places with the caller.
4. When "The Life" is called, players run to the center line and raise both hands. No one gets out.



Ready for Fun and Adventure in the Great Outdoors?
Then you're ready for SonRise National Park VBS!



Please join us for fun and excitement!

Christ's United Lutheran Church

(place)

July 22 - 27 6:00 - 8:00 pm

(date/time)

SonRise National Park—Point Your Kids to Jesus!



SonRise National Park Registration Form

Name _____

Birth date _____

Street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone (_____) _____

Cell phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Parent(s) name(s) _____

Parent(s) work phone(s) _____

In case of emergency, contact _____

Allergies or other medical conditions _____

School grade just completed _____

Name of home church, if any _____

I hereby GRANT DO NOT GRANT (please circle one)

permission for _____ (name of church)

to use pictures of my child _____ (name of child)

on their website for informational or promotional purposes.

_____ (parent signature)

© 2012 Gospel Light. Permission granted to photocopy. SonRise National Park Director's Planning Guide

**Please return this form to the church office by
July 15 to register.**





Join us on Saturday, August 4 for a contemporary worship service with the Christian Rock Band—SWiM
There will be special music during the worship service and a concert afterwards. Everyone is encouraged to attend!



Youth News:

The youth group performed a skit "The Walls of Jericho" at the Sunday School closing program, which was very well received. Then the youth played "Confirmation Challenge" against an adult panel and won.



The youth also had a sleep over at the Church on June 1st, where they made pizza, watched educational and just for fun videos, played games and, slept very little. A special thanks to Tracy Berner for her help with the sleepover.





KNOW THE WAY

Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" (John 14:5, NIV).

Directions: To read Jesus' reply, shade in the letters that contain an asterisk (*) and write them in order on the blanks below.

u n s w e r e i a m h w a
y a n t l r u t c h l f i v f e
n o o n a e c s o x m e s
f a z t h e r r o u c d g h
p u m r x e s t j v g o h n

Jes ____ ans ____ d, " ____ the ____
____ d the ____ and the ____.
____ to the
____ except th ____."

____ 14:6, NIV

Answer: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6, NIV



What can you do on Thrivent.com?

Do more. Make payments, update your preferences, change document delivery and more using MyThrivent (see reverse for more information).

Learn more. Get interactive tools, information about products and services, plus calculators and financial quizzes.

The screenshot shows the Thrivent.com homepage with several callout boxes:

- Top Left:** A callout box pointing to the MyThrivent navigation menu.
- Top Right:** A callout box pointing to the login and search area.
- Middle Left:** A callout box pointing to the 'New. Quick. Easy.' banner for Thrivent Choice Dollars.
- Middle Right:** A callout box pointing to the 'Find a Representative' section.
- Bottom Left:** A callout box pointing to the 'Thrivent News' section.
- Bottom Right:** A callout box pointing to the 'Locate a Chapter' and 'Find a Workshop' sections.

Know more. Access the latest Thrivent Financial news, up-to-date market information and daily fund values.

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Top six things you can do in MyThrivent:

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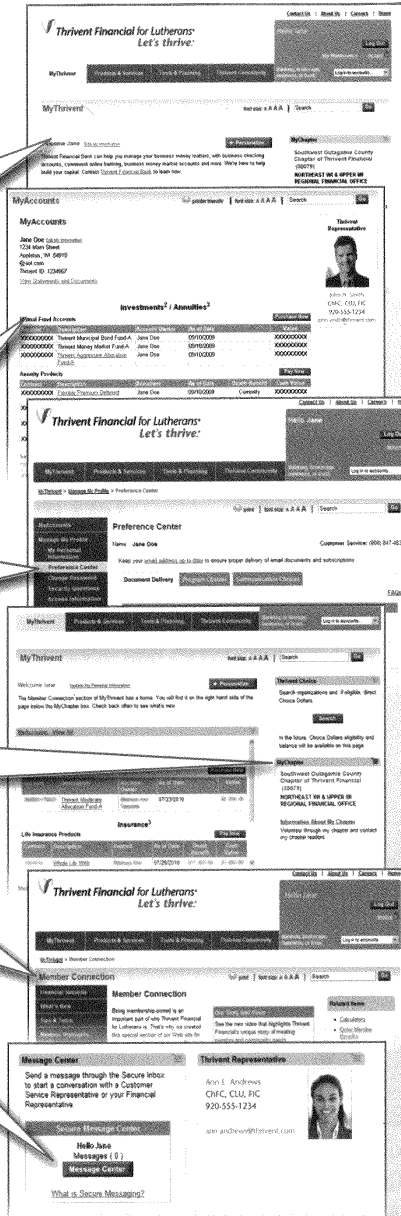
2 Interact with your online account—For mutual funds, make a purchase in your existing accounts, add systematic exchanges and redemptions, and view a portfolio account summary. You can also pay insurance premiums, make contributions into your fixed and variable annuity contracts, and change beneficiary information for your life insurance and annuity contracts.

3 Update your preferences—Receive information electronically by making selections in the Preference Center. Sign up for eDelivery, *Thrivent* magazine and more.

4 MyChapter—View chapter information or visit your chapter website. Volunteer leaders can access chapter leader resources and administration menus. Participate in Thrivent Choice by voting and directing Choice DollarsSM if eligible.

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Well, we missed our turn and now we need to catch up – so plan for an extra fun night of food, laughter, and fun, fun, fun.

By popular demand we will be heading to OIP in Shamokin for dinner, but wait – just like late night television – there’s more!

Bring your favorite joke or story that makes you laugh to share with everyone.

Sunday, July 1st

We’ll gather at the church at 4.30, and carpool from there.

For more information and to sign-up, check the bulletin board.



On Sunday, June 17 we were blessed to have The Rev. Lars Staaby join us for worship. Rev. Staaby served St. Peter’s in Lavelle & the parish in Ashland from 1958-1959 & St. Peter’s & St. John’s (Kimmel’s) from 1961-1966.



New-and-Improved WEBSITE



www.christsunited.org

Our NEW website is now online.

If you have a computer, please go on and see all the items and information you can access.

Our church calendar, newsletter, & upcoming events are listed. There is contact information for church employees and council members.

You can also register for Bible School & you can schedule your photo for the new pictorial directory!



If you belong to facebook, Please make sure you “like” Christ’s United! We need at least 30 people to “like” us so that we get more benefits.





THE PARISH PAPER

Ideas and Insights for Active Congregations

Coeditors: Herb Miller, Lyle E. Schaller, Cynthia Woolever – www.theparishpaper.com

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Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
2354 Grove Rd, Allentown, PA 18109-3044

A Service of the Synod's Leadership Development Ministry Team

June 2012 - Volume 20, Number 6

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Mission Possible: More Men in the Pews

Women make up the majority of churchgoers. While about half of the U.S. population is female (51 percent), a larger percentage of worshipers (61 percent) are female.¹ Why is this?

Seven Misconceptions about Men and the Church

One man—in the pulpit—is often the most highly visible person on Sunday. Perhaps that diverts our attention away from who sits in the pews—lots of women. Inaccurate assumptions keep church leaders from taking any steps toward attracting and welcoming the missing male demographic.

1. There are more women in church because women live longer than men. This is partly the case because women in the U.S. live longer than men by an average of five years. It is true that the percentage difference climbs highest for worshipers 65 years of age or older (63% are women). The percentage drops to its lowest for worshipers 15 to 24 years of age (57% are women). However, in every age group, females still outnumber males in the pews.

2. Just as many men attend but women go much more often. Neither part of this statement is true. Women are only *slightly* more likely to attend worship on a weekly basis than men (62% of frequent attendees are women).

In addition, women outnumber men even among those who attend worship services less often (59% of less frequent attendees are women).

The church gender gap shows up in other areas of church life, too. Men are less likely to participate in small groups (such as Sunday school, prayer or Bible study, and social activities), community service, or evangelism outreach efforts. Men take on fewer lay leadership roles than women as well.

Research shows that one in five married worshipers regularly attend alone. Most of these worshipers are women. This male absence pattern led one observer to quip: "Mom may be wearing an impressive diamond ring on her left hand, but the man who gave it to her is nowhere to be seen."²

3. More young men attend conservative Protestant churches. The *highest* percentage of men attending worship

services occurs among worshipers ages 15 to 24 in Catholic parishes (56% are women; 44% are men). In addition, the *lowest* percentage of men in the pew also occurs in Catholic parishes—among attendees age 65 and older (64% are women; 36% are men).

Yet the gender imbalance remains remarkably consistent across age groups and faith traditions—ranging from 56% to 64% women in the pews. For Catholics and mainline Protestants, the percentage of women in the pews tends to rise slightly as worshipers age.

4. Two out of three churches are small and women prefer attending small churches. Women always outnumber men, regardless of church size. However, larger Protestant churches—those with more than 500 worshipers—attract the highest percentages of men (43%, which is higher than the 39% average across congregations of all sizes).

5. But these national statistics don't take into account regional differences. Don't Southern women go to church more often than anyone else does? The percentages of male and female worshipers do not vary much by region of the country either. In fact, the *highest*



"I KNOW THE CHURCH IS TRYING TO CREATE A HEALTHY, MASCULINE ENVIRONMENT FOR US... BUT, CHILI-FLAVORED SCONES?"



percentages of male worshipers, based on region, are in the South (an average of 43% male attendees in this region compared to 39% nationally).

6. Okay, but aren't there some churches with more men than women? Nationally, eight out of ten churches are "gender-gapped"—where the percentage of women in the pews exceeds the male percentage by more than 10 percentage points. Two out of three (66%) conservative Protestant churches are gender-gapped. The numbers of gender-gapped congregations are highest for mainline churches (86%) and Catholic parishes (93%).

Only 2% of all congregations attract more men than women. If a church or parish achieves a 50/50 ratio, this gender balance places them in the top 98% of all congregations in their ability to connect with men.

7. But this gender imbalance is something new, right? Isn't there an ever-widening gap between the number of male and female churchgoers? As far back as we have records, this is not new. Gender ratios hover around 60% women to 40% men for church participants. For at least the past 700 years observers have noted the lack of men in church.³

What Can Be Done?

David Murrow (*Why Men Hate Going to Church*, Thomas Nelson, 2011) offers some thought-provoking reasons for why many men avoid church. He asserts that often churches devalue male strengths and ignore their needs. His other insights include these observations:

The modern church culture is built to reach women, children, and seniors. Murrow believes that the development of children's ministry bolstered women's commitment to the church. A parallel ministry draw for men does not exist. Interestingly, as more women and fewer men attend, churches cater even more to women's needs and desires. Then, even fewer men attend. Yet he does not recommend starting a men's ministry program—but re-thinking existing ministries to make them more male-friendly. In effect, he calls for small changes rather than an extreme church makeover.

Murrow advises leaders to consider men's needs when planning any event or activity. Create opportunities for men to gather without women present. Recruit men for projects that make use of their gifts and skills. Finally, he recommends steering clear of any hint of feminine spiritual superiority.

Men find worship services boring. Research reveals that men who attend worship services experience more frustration and boredom than women attendees. Fewer men say they feel God's presence, or find inspiration or joy. Murrow lists possibilities for making worship more interesting for men: use humor, laughter, appealing music, and masculine imagery; keep it short; do some-

thing unexpected; make it challenging; use language that denotes strength; start and end on time.

He feels that most changes should occur in the background. "Churches that create a healthy masculine environment do not become heavily male."⁴ Murrows asserts that as churches make men feel more welcome, they attract women as well.

Churchgoers tend to be verbal, studious, and sensitive. Murrow argues that the average woman tends to develop the skills that match church culture. Obviously many men excel in these ways too. But most church activities require mastery of these abilities for participation (for example, Bible study, praying aloud, talking in small groups). Anyone—male or female—required to devote themselves to things they're not good at, will find a way to escape.

Drapes, doilies, and other feminine decor deter men. Imagine the gendered decor of a hair salon frequented by women vs. the very masculine barbershop. Where does your church decor fall along that continuum? Murrow suggests that leaders create an imaginary male character who tours your church. This male figure doesn't have to be a John Wayne type who exhibits rugged masculinity. An unchurched male relative, neighbor, or coworker will work. Examine everything the church does. Would this male be interested, intrigued, feel welcome and comfortable?

The Bottom Line

Is it possible for more churches to connect better with men? *Yes*—and some churches are already doing so. Just as warnings of "mind the gap" alert British passengers to exercise caution as they step from the platform into the train car, churches need to heed the warning to mind the gender gap.

1. Statistics cited from Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *A Field Guide to U.S. Congregations: Who's going Where and Why*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010). And Cynthia Woolever, et al., "The Gender Ratio in the Pews: Consequences for Congregational Vitality," *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 27, no. 1 (April 2006): 25-38.
2. David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 14.
3. Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776-2005* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 36-38.
4. Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, 174. Discussion questions are free at www.churchformen.com/guides.

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New Pictorial Directory



**FOR ALL MEMBERS OF
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Go online to schedule your
photo, www.christsunited.org
Or Call the church office at 875-1591





Member **DIRECTORY**

Picture Dates:

Thursday & Friday, August 2 & 3 from 2:30-8:50;

Saturday, August 4 from 10:00-5:00;

Thursday & Friday, September 6 & 7
from 2:30-8:50;

Saturday, September 8 from 10:00-5:00.

Special times will be available to have your photo
taken with your pet.



Make sure to ask all your
friends, family & neighbors
if they would like to have
their picture taken. They
may also schedule a family
portrait time slot, they just
won't be in our directory.



◆ SYNOD NEWS ◆

The Spirit of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

July 2012

Take the Plunge! Geneva and Taizé in Spring 2013



Next spring, a group of young adults will take part in a new initiative to deepen their spirituality and global awareness

through a visit to the ecumenical centers in Geneva, Switzerland, and Taizé, France.

It's called **the Plunge**, and it will happen **May 29-June 9, 2013**. For four days, young adults from Canada and the United States will visit the Lutheran World Federation and World Council of Churches in Geneva to learn how we are connected across the globe through the church. Then they will travel to the Taizé community in southern France for a retreat week. There they will experience firsthand the unique style of worship and music that arises from that community as it welcomes youth from across the globe.



The Plunge experience is sponsored by two synods from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC):

- Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod (ELCIC)
- Northeastern Iowa Synod (ELCA)

Does this interest you? Do you know young adults (ages 18-29) in your congregation who might be interested in participating in this exciting initiative in 2013? Are **you** a young adult who would like to participate?

There are two ways you can take part in this new venture. First, sign up to participate (if you are a young adult) or encourage young adults in your congregation to apply for the 2013 group by contacting Pr.



Mark Anderson at andersonm@neiasynod.org for more information and an application form.



Plunge

Second, talk with the synod's Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry Team about ways our synod might encourage young adults to participate in this venture in 2014 or later. This should be more than just a one-time experience for a few young adults. The goal of this endeavor is to create a sustainable network that offers this opportunity annually.



Questions? Contact Pr. Mark Anderson at andersonm@neiasynod.org or Pr. Lanny Westphal at lanny.westphal@elca.org.

Kelly Wallace, Former LYF President, to Speak at Youth Gathering



The former president of the synod's Lutheran Youth Fellowship, **Kelly Wallace**, is one of two featured speakers making a presentation on **Friday night** at the ELCA Youth Gathering!

You can read about Kelly on the Gathering website (www.elca.org/gathering) Click *What to Expect*, then *In the Dome*, then *Speakers*.



2012 ELCA Youth Gathering

Be sure to watch for Kelly on Friday, July 20!





**2012 ELCA Youth Gathering
July 18-22, 2012**

From July 18 to July 22, over 36,000 youth and adults will descend on New Orleans for the **2012 ELCA Youth**

Gathering. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod will be represented by 687 people from 52 synod congregations. The theme for the gathering, *citizens with the saints*, is drawn from the second lesson for Sunday, July 22 (Ephesians 2:14-20).

Join the Gathering every night (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday) from 8-9:30 p.m. EDT and Sunday, July 22, from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. EDT streaming online at www.elca.org/gathering.

On Sunday, July 22, at 10:30 a.m. EDT, the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering Closing Worship will take place in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome. Your congregation is invited to join this worship from your own location. ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson will be preaching. The Dome Creative Team will provide a detailed order of service ahead of time so that your congregation may view the entire service or just selected portions.



Back to
BASICS



Register *now* for the August *Back to Basics* event that will be held **August 25** at **Christ's United, Ashland**. The cost is only \$10.

Two popular workshops are part of this event: *Lutheran Basics* (led by AiM Marlane Druckenmiller) and *How the Bible Came to Be: From Papyrus to iPad* (led by Pr. Greg Frey).

For more information and a registration form you can **download and print**, or to register online, click the link on the synod website, www.godslove.org.



Family Faith Challenge

Take part in the monthly family faith challenges developed by the synod's Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry Team!

The theme for **July** is **Baptism**: *We challenge you to notice how God's love is shared with us through our baptism.*

For a list of the family faith challenges for each week in July (and the rest of the year), click the link on the synod home page at www.godslove.org.



For Your Calendar!



Jesus Calls Us ...to Action

Join other Lutherans from across the synod on **October 20, 2012**, for a day-long event that will focus on justice issues. The event will take place at Bern Lutheran Church, Leesport. More information will be posted as it is available.



Lutheran Day at the Capitol 2013

Join Lutherans from across the state for Lutheran Day at the Capitol.

The **2013 Lutheran Day at the Capitol** will take place on **May 7, 2013**, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, Pa. Watch for more information.



**Learning Ministries Day 2014
January 25, 2014**



Presenter: Tim Ternes, Director of *The Saint John's Bible* at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library in Collegeville, Minnesota. Union Lutheran Church, Schnecksville.

Synod News is published monthly by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA; 2354 Grove Road, Allentown PA 18109; 610-266-5101; info@nepssynod.org; www.godslove.org





ATTENTION MARRIED COUPLES: Fall is the perfect time to fall in love with your spouse all over again! That is what couples overwhelmingly report is the result of attending a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend. The fall

Weekends are: September 14-16 at the beautiful Olmsted Mansion and Retreat Center which is located in the Allegheny National Forest, 20 minutes southeast of Warren PA; and October 19-21 in the Poconos at the Mountain Laurel Inn in White Haven -- 2 hours north of Philadelphia. Weekends run from Friday at 8 PM to Sunday at 5 PM and are designed to enrich ALL MARRIAGES. There is a \$45 per couple registration fee, plus toward the end of the weekend you will be given an opportunity to make a confidential contribution of whatever amount you wish toward continuation of the program. Two nights lodging, 5 meals for each of you, and all supplies are included. Weekends are filling rapidly, so to register simply go to the website: www.GodLovesMarriage.org and sign up using your credit card; or for questions, or if you would like a brochure with registration form mailed to you, contact Pennsylvania Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or email: fjschamber@comcast.net.



First Responders: Police, Fire, and Emergency Services

A special Service of Blessing will be held in September to honor all who serve on the Day of St. Michael and all Angels. St. Michael is the patron saint for first responders, Michael being the archangel who leads the armies of Heaven. Please tell all those first responders you know to look forward and plan for this special celebration of their service!



"Lutheran Basics"

Lutheran Basics will focus on creation, the Trinity, grace, & much more.

"How the Bible Came to Be: From Papyrus to iPad"

Pastor Greg Frey will lead this workshop.

The workshops are ideal for Sunday school teachers, VBS staff, congregation committee members, high school youth, congregational council members and more.

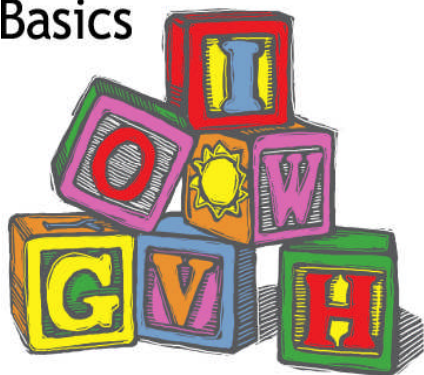
Saturday, August 25

Christ's United Lutheran Church, Ashland.

Time: First workshop ("How the Bible Came to Be: From Papyrus to iPad") will be offered from 10-12. Lunch will be served at 12 PM. "Lutheran Basics" will be offered from

**Back to
Basics**

12:30 PM to 2:30 PM. Come for the whole day - or just for the workshop you would like to attend!



Cost: \$10 per person

For more information, please take a flyer located on the bulletin board.



Christ's United Committees

Auditing Committee

Christian Education
education@christsunited.org

Endowment Fund

Evangelism/Outreach
evangelism@christsunited.org

Finance

Grieving Committee

Lutheran Church Men (LCM)

Mutual Ministry

Nominating

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personnel@christsunited.org

Property
property@christsunited.org

Social Ministry

Stewardship

WELCA

Worship & Music

Christ's United Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

We the members of Christ's United Lutheran Church, Ashland, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to become more perfectly the Body of Christ in our world, do hereby commit ourselves to a mission which includes a creative re-examination of our worship life; a quality educational program for all ages; intentional witnessing; a serving spirit; and an integrated support system which will undergird our program and the maintenance of our facilities as it encourages improved stewardship.



From a worship bulletin in Palmyra, Pennsylvania:

...of the Day

Lord, we sing with joyful voices.

Children's Sermon

These voices have some confessing to do!



CHURCH COUNCIL 2012

Visit us on the Web at:

www.christsunited.org

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Jim Gruber	875-2805	Feb. 2013
David Hall	875-6342	Sept. 2012
Gail Halye (Sec.)	497-5337	Feb. 2015
Nancy Lindenmuth	875-3138	Feb. 2014
Deb Price	875-4272	Feb. 2015
youth@christsunited.org		
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(610) 823-1960

Email: pastorkim@christsunited.org

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David Schweinhart 682-9553

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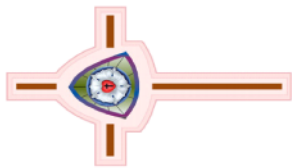
Erik Tice 875-2681

Email: office@christsunited.org

Office hours Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Office Phone (570) 875-1591



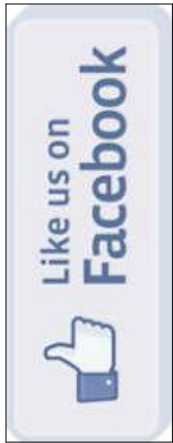


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