

BEAVER LUTHERAN CHURCH



COMMENTARY

Vol. 35, No. 4

Sunday School — 9:00 a.m.

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST

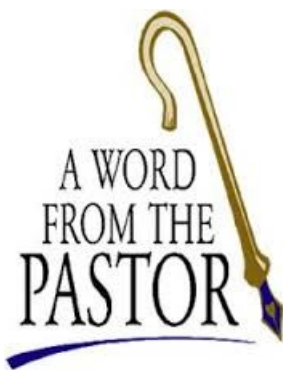
www.beaverlutheranchurch.org

18207 Route 522, Beavertown, PA 17813

September 2020

Holy Communion — 10:15 a.m.

Let the Little Children Come



It will surprise no one to learn that I have been thinking about children lately, babies in particular. As I write this, Isabel, Ezra, and I (patiently?) await the birth of our new little one. As you read this, we are adjusting to our new life as a family of four. I love being a parent; that's not to say that it's always easy or fun—sometimes it's work; but it's a work that gives me life. And most days, it's a joy. In these past three years of fatherhood, I have learned so much from Ezra. He has shown me how to be more in the moment, how to love passionately, how to live freely, how to be patient, how to be better in touch with my own emotions—in short, he has brought me to a deeper understanding of what it means to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

Ezra's not special in this (though he's deeply precious to me). *All children* can show us what it means to be citizens of the kingdom. In Matthew 18 we read: “[Jesus] called a child, whom he put among [the disciples], and said, ‘Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me’” (Matthew 18:2-5).

Children have a special connection to the kingdom. Their dependence upon their parents and their community models the sort of dependence we have (or should have) on God. When Ezra runs crying into my arms because he skinned his knee, I am reminded that this is how God desires me to run to Jesus when I am wounded. When Ezra gives me that big toothy grin and asks for a second piece of chocolate, I'm inclined to forget our “one-piece-a-day rule” because he makes me overflow with love. In a small way, this teaches me how God feels when God pours out God's grace upon me. Children have so much to teach us about our own relationship with God and our neighbors.

Often times we proclaim the value of children saying, “they are our future.” But to say this is to value children for who they *will be* rather than for who they *are now*. And as a result, we push children off to the side until they grow up into that future person. The church has often been guilty of this. Children are considered full members of the congregation only *after* they have been confirmed, which is to say, grown up. In many churches, children are not invited to participate in council meetings or committee meetings or annual meetings until they have been confirmed or graduated high school. In many churches, children are sent to their own worship service in another room, out of earshot of the “adult service.” So often in the church we keep children on the sidelines until we deem them “ready” to participate.

But that's not what Jesus says. Later, in Matthew's gospel, we hear, “Little children were being brought to

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[Jesus] in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs'" (Matthew 19:13-14). Jesus proclaims that children have value *now*. Children do not inherit the kingdom when they grow up; it is theirs *now*.



The 20th century martyr and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer says this: societies push children to the margins; communities bring children to the center. Societies tend to push children out of the way until they establish value as mature adults. Communities, however, invite children into everything, proclaiming their value in the here and now. Societies expect children to adapt to the needs of the society. Communities adapt to the needs of their children. Jesus calls us to be a *community* of faith, not a society.

We all have a responsibility toward children, whether you have children or not, whether they're your children or not. So what can we do to bring our children more to the center of our community here at Beaver Lutheran Church? What are some ways in which we have pushed them off to the sides? What can we do to acknowledge their deep value before God? How might we empower them to teach us more about the kingdom of heaven?

So often we believe that it is our role to teach children, and to some extent, of course, that is true. But we mustn't forget that it is also our role to *learn* from our children, as well. If we consider ourselves as students sitting at the feet of our children, rather than their teachers and masters, we may find ourselves becoming deeper, more faithful citizens of the kingdom of heaven.

As I turn my attention toward my sons, toward paternity leave, and the life of fatherhood, I will try my best to have a student's heart, that I may bring my children to the center of my community, that I may seek for all children to be held at the center, and that I may have the grace to let them teach me about the kingdom of heaven. Will you join me?

Pastor Jim



Welcome Benjamin Andrew Vitale!



We are pleased to announce the arrival of Benjamin Andrew Vitale on Tuesday, August 11. Ben was born at 2:34 p.m., weighing 9 pounds, 4 ounces. We wish God's richest blessings to Pastor Jim, Isabel, Ezra and Ben as they adjust to their new family of four.



Paternity Leave



Pastor Jim began his paternity leave on Tuesday, August 11. He will be out of the office for six weeks, returning sometime the week of September 21. He will only be gone from the pulpit through September 6 however, and will be returning to preach September 13 and 20.

While he is away, if there is a pastoral emergency that arises, please contact **Pastor Stina Schaeffer at 845-636-9487 or stinaschaeffer@gmail.com.**

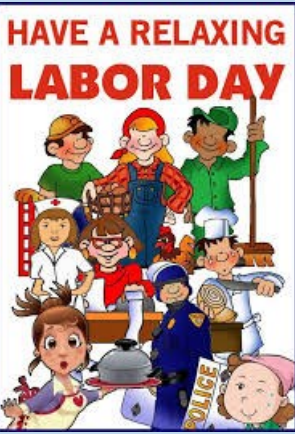
Zoom Get-togethers



While Pastor Jim continues his paternity leave, our weekly Wednesday night check-ins on Zoom will also be on leave until Pastor Jim's return.

We will however, have Bible & Brew with a guest host. This will be held Wednesday, September 2 at 7 p.m.

The Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/836080286>. You may also join by calling 1-646-558-8656 and enter the code 836 080 286 when prompted.



HAVE A RELAXING LABOR DAY

Office Closed

The office will be closed Monday, September 7 in observance of Labor Day. We wish you all a safe and happy holiday!

Important Information about Altar Flowers

As you may have heard, Country Flowers has opted to no longer furnish altar flowers to local churches. The Worship and Music Committee has contacted various florists in the area for quotes, receiving several who were willing to deliver to Beavertown.



Following input from the congregation, the committee decided to use Graci's in Selinsgrove as our altar flower provider. As they are willing to provide flowers *only when requested*, the committee thought it was the best solution.

Graci's will charge \$50 a week to deliver two altar vases to the church (this was the lowest quote). If you do not wish to have flowers from Graci's, *you may bring in your own flower arrangement in your own vase or basket.* You are responsible for placing your arrangement and removing it from the church.

A new 2020 Flower Chart is located on the bulletin board with the names of those who had already signed up. On it, there is a place to check off if you wish to provide your own flowers, or if you wish the church to provide flowers.

The schedule for the remainder of the year is:

- September: 6th—Patti Herbster; 13th—Carole Morgan; 20th — Open; 27th—Open. (Sept. 20 and 27 flowers will be coming from Graci's and will cost \$50)
- October: 4th—Bev Frye; 11th—Lynn Kuhns; 18th—Open; 25th—Bobbi Leister
- November: 1st—The Beavers; 8th—The Kaufmans; 15th—Lisa Wagner; 22nd—Sue Nerhood; 29—Leon Bickhart
- December: 6th—Albert Bickhart; 13th—Steph Plummer; 20th—Bobbi Leister; 24th and 27th—The Matterns.

If you have not already done so, please indicate if you will be bringing your own flowers or be ordering through the church.

Looking for Lectors



We would like to thank Renee, Bev, Bobbi and Chloe for volunteering to lector since we have returned to worship in the church.

We are currently seeking volunteers willing to read the Old Testament, Psalm and Prayers of Intercession each Sunday from the altar. You must wear your mask while reading. A copy of what you will read is sent to you a few days beforehand so you may familiarize yourself with it.

Online Giving is Available

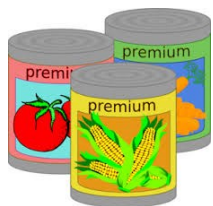


Thank you to all those who have continued giving while staying safely at home. A reminder that you can donate online or mail

your contributions in to the office. We know this is a challenging time for many, and we are grateful for whatever you are able to give!

Another way to help the church is to make purchases through Amazon.smile. Amazon.smile is exactly the same as Amazon.com with the exception that you may pick a nonprofit of your choice and Amazon will give a small portion of the sale to the organization.

Porch Pantry Continues



The Pantry is once again offering help to those needing food the fourth Saturday of each month from 8 to 10 a.m. For now, pre-packed bags of food will be distributed to patrons from our porch. The Clothing Closet will remain closed at this time.

Sunday School Returns

Sunday School will return September 13. Expect a few changes when you return. The first change you will notice is the time. Sunday School will begin at 9:30 a.m. and last until 10:00 a.m.



The Adult Class will meet in the sanctuary. If possible, please sit where you normally sit during church.

The Confirmation Classes will meet in their normal rooms.

The Children's Class will meet either in the Fellowship Hall or in the Pavilion.

Please be aware, as with our guidelines for Sunday morning worship, facial coverings are required unless it is medically impossible for you to wear one.

We hope you can join us for a new year of spiritual growth!

Youth Gathering Postponed

After much prayer and consideration, the Youth Gathering team has decided to postpone next summer's ELCA Youth Gathering to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



The 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering will be held July 24-28, 2022, in Minneapolis. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Jim.

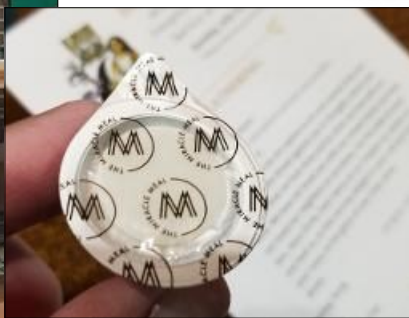
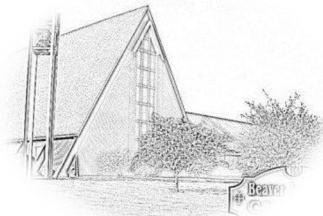
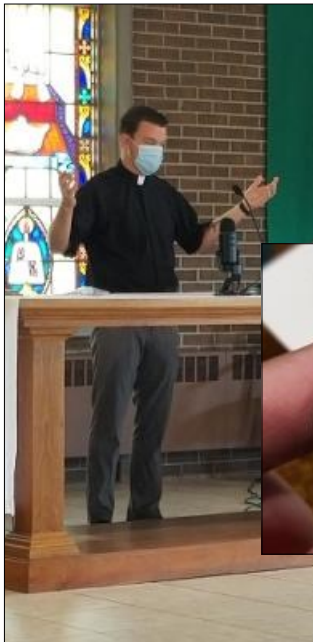


July 12, 2020 ... the Day We Returned Our Church Home

With much excitement, the doors opened at Beaver Lutheran Church on Sunday, July 12 to welcome our Family of God back to gather together once again. Much has changed since we last met in the building in March. We now no longer sit within six feet of each other. We wear facial coverings. We no longer sing but listen to our Church Musician, Michelle Bixler play the piano (what a blessing it is to have Michelle and her talent with us each Sunday). There are no hymnals or bibles in the pews. Our bulletins come in a bag along with a pre-packaged communion kit. We do this all to keep our brothers and sisters in Christ safe from COVID-19.



We are still offering our service live via Zoom each Sunday morning at 10:15. (The Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/836080286>. You may also join by calling 1-646-558-8656 and enter the code 836 080 286 when prompted.) This has been continued for those not ready to return to worshipping in the building and for those away from the area who have been joining us on Zoom since March.



Baby Girl Makes Five!

Congratulations to Mike and Courtney Sassaman on the birth of their fifth daughter, Hope Noelle. Hope arrived August 4 weighing 7.3 pounds. She was welcomed home by four big sisters, Autumn, Kaylee, Mackenzie and Morgan. Proud grandma is Linda Sassaman.



With Sympathy



We would like to express our deepest sympathies to the following families for their recent loss.

To Isabel Vitale and family on the passing of her grandfather, Cecil Sanders in July.

To Erman Lepley Jr. and Jan Glasscock Jones and families on the passing of her father, James Glasscock on July 17.

To Lloyd and Shirley (Lepley) Rheam Jr. of Sunbury, on the passing of their son, Steven Rheam of Watson town who died August 16. Steven was a nephew of Erman Lepley. Shirley is a native daughter of St. Peters.

To Dee and Alex Hockenberry on the passing of Dee's father and Alex's grandfather, Carmen Aumiller of Beavertown. Carm passed away on August 25.



Application Deadline Nearing

Applications for All Saints Funding are currently available at the church or on our website: www.beaverlutheranchurch.org. The original deadline has been extended to **September 1**.

Blanket Sunday

Blanket Sunday is fast approaching – October 4! All donations go to Lutheran World Relief who works closely with its overseas partners to determine items to donate.



If you would care to make a Mission Quilt an instruction sheet is located on the bulletin board in the hallway outside the church office.

LWR is no longer accepting fleece blankets.



This Party Girl is One!

Aria Ann Shaffer will be celebrating her very first birthday on September 18! She is the daughter of Emilee (Wagner) and Barrett Shaffer of Middleburg. Proud grandparents are Dave and Lisa Wagner and Ronald and Denise Shaffer.

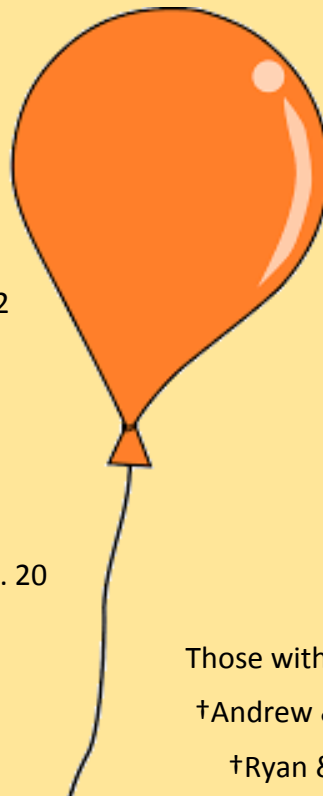
A birthday party is being planned for September 19 at her Pappy and Grammy Wagner's home.



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Those celebrating birthdays during the month of September are:

- Jason Klose, Sept. 1
- Adrienne Hetrick, Sept. 3
- Matthew Keefer, Sept. 5
- Wayne McCardle, Sept. 6
- Jack Kaufman, Sept. 9
- Dale Haines, Sept. 10
- Beverly Frye, James Kuhns, Sept. 12
- Gregory Norman, Sept. 13
- Linda Fisher, Sept. 15
- Jill Hawkins, Sept. 16
- Aria Ann Shaffer, Sept. 18
- Colin Erb, Penelope Plummer, Sept. 20
- Ariel Boyer, Sept. 21
- Jodi Norman, Sept. 22
- Linda Cole, Kathy Haines, Sept. 24
- Jeremy Wray, Sept. 26
- Derek Bishop, Sept. 29




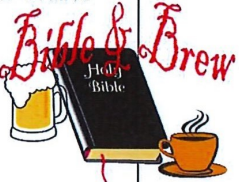





Those with September Anniversaries are:

- † Andrew & Stephanie Plummer, Sept. 7
- † Ryan & Christine Bruner, Sept. 27



September 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 All Saints Fund Requests Due 	2 7:00 Bible & Brew online 	3	4	5
6 Amy Shuck, ALWL will be with us. Welcome To Our Church 	7	8	9	10	11	12
Pentecost 14 13 Sunday School returns!  Pastor Jim returns to pulpit Pentecost 15	14	15	16 •5:30 Worship & Music •6:30 Council 	17	18	19
20 Pastor Jim preaching Pentecost 16	21	22 Pastor Jim returns from paternity leave 	23	24	25	26 8-10:00 Porch Pantry 
27 Pentecost 17	28	29	30			

Parish Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 a.m.-Noon