Good News

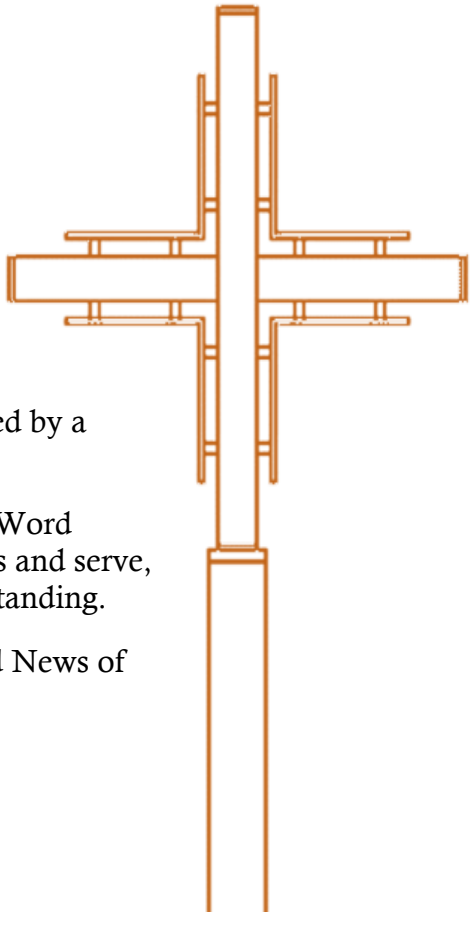
THE
NEWSLETTER OF
ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
474 YALICK ROAD, - PO BOX 802
DALLAS, PA 18612

September 2026

Phone: 570-675-3859
Fax: 570-675-5646
Email: stpaul@epix.net
Web Page:
www.stpaulsdallaspa.org

Rev Charles H. Grube, Pastor
Home Phone: 570-696-2688

In-person worship and communion
Saturday, 5:30 pm | Sunday, 9:30 am
Sunday School 10:45 am (Sept. thru May)
Please continue to visit our website at www.stpaulsdallaspa.org for worship resources to use as you are able, and to join our Live Stream Zoom meeting at 9:30 am on Sunday.



ST. PAUL'S MISSION STATEMENT

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is a family called together by God and united by a common faith.

Our mission is to share with all people God's Love and Grace through Word and Sacrament. Through the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to witness and serve, treating one another with Love, Compassion, Forgiveness, and Understanding.

By our commitments, actions, deeds, and resources, we share the Good News of Jesus Christ, reaching out to our Community, Nation, and World.

Adopted May 1993

ST. PAUL'S STAFF	
Pastor	Rev. Charles H. Grube
Office Staff	Gail Smallwood & Carol Fett
Dir. of Music/Organist	Margaret Quintanar
Youth Choir Dir.	Jean Grube
Minister of Technology	Marissa Miller
Sexton	James Madonna

Sunday School Superintendent	Tony Linnen
Financial Secretary	Ruth Ide

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
Frank Mariano*	Larry Pierce*	Don Kretchmer*
Gail Smallwood*	Bruce Thomas*	Julie Holbrook
Marissa Miller*	Gail Ide*	Keith Brosious
Amanda Brezovsky	Pat Peiffer*	Open Position

*Final Term

CONGREGATION OFFICERS

President	Rev. Charles H. Grube
Vice-President	Frank Mariano
Secretary	Gail Smallwood
Treasurer	Carol Fett

STANDING COMMITTEES

Christian Education	Marissa Miller, Julie Holbrook, Amanda Brezovsky and Keith Brosious
Communications	Marissa Miller/Gail Smallwood
Evangelism	Gail Ide
Fellowship	Julie Holbrook, Larry Pierce
Finance	Bruce Thomas, Pat Peiffer, Frank Mariano, Carol Fett
Head Start	Carol Fett
Health Ministry	Gail Ide
Landscaping	Position Open
Long Range Planning	Frank Mariano/ Don Kretchmer, Amanda Brezovsky and Keith Brosious
Property	Bruce Thomas, Pat Peiffer, Carol Fett and Frank Mariano
Salary Review	Frank Mariano
Social Ministry	Larry Pierce
Staff Support	Frank Mariano, Don Kretchmer
Worship & Music	Pat Peiffer

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next issue of the GOOD NEWS will be the October 2026 issue and the deadline for all submissions will be **Noon on *Sunday, September 13.***

PRAYER LIST - Please remember to ask permission from the person you are placing on the prayer list. Pray for the Congregations of St. Peter, Hughestown, Prince of Peace Episcopal Church, Dallas, Grace Episcopal, Kingston, and Trinity Episcopal, West Pittston.

Pray for those suffering illness: *Members:* Tom Ash, Chris Bellezza, Annie and Marty Bisher, Pam Cyphers, Mary Lou Daley Button, Fran Dierolf, Margaret Edwards, Cheryl Everhart, Grace Fisher, Marge Fritzinger, Lois Gdovin, Colin Grube, Daniel Henderson, Robert Kline, Martha Kush, June Lorah, Raelene Napierkowski, Leah Pambianco, Wally Richardson, Val Rothrock, Greta Ruckno, Dave Scheff, Carol Swanson, John Thomas, Anita Weiss, Alyson Wood, Shirley Zimmerman.

Please note: Those people listed as Family and Friends will be listed here for a four-week period. Please contact the church office at 570-675-3859 or stpaul@epix.net if you desire a name to remain on the list beyond that time.

Family & Friends: Jack Babuscak, Alanna Berger, Cliff and Ron Bunt, Marjorie Catania, Paul Davis, Janet DeCosta, Debbie Demuro, Nancy Harm, Debbie Hilbert, Marty Hille, Jenn Hubbard, Christine Ide, Doug Ide, Frank Ide, John Jaikes, Candace Jones, Michael Kaminski, Patricia Kay, Joe Kerestes, Debbie Kertesz, Ken Kertesz, Bradley Kessler, Alice Laskowski, John, Karen and Charlie Lulun, Jim Madonna, Carol Marker, Sharon Miers, Becky Morgan, Patty N., Tim Nulton, Ryleigh Phillips, Paul Pryor, Abraham Quintanar, Febe Quintanar, Andy Reistetter, Doris Rosencrans, Bonnie Ryman, Bob Schooley, Sandra Serhan, Nancy Shymanski, Richard Skurski, Sonny Smith, Sandy Sprau, Benjamin Szostak, Abigail Thomas, Larry Titus, Corrine Varneke, Tabitha Walters, Jean Weeks, Karen Wise, Peg Wyda, Mary Z., Ashley, Bethann, Keith, Megan, the M family, Johnny, Betsy, Dawn, Jonathan, Mandy, Joni, Beth (no last names given).

† † †

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

—Mother Teresa

CHURCH COUNCIL

Update on the congregational council meeting on Tuesday, August 4: Property Committee: Brian Doran met with a geotechnical engineer to examine the subsidence in the driveway and recommended a remediation plan. He will meet with an excavator soon and will work on getting estimates for the repair. Several minor violations noted by DEP regarding the well/pump are being addressed. A faulty burglar alarm sensor in the Narthex that caused a number of false alarms has been replaced.

Pastor Grube's Retirement: Pastor's best friend, Rev. Stanley Reep, has agreed to serve as guest preacher at Pastor's final worship service. A caterer for the retirement reception has been chosen.

Call Process: Council vice-president Frank Mariano reviewed aspects of the process as established by the synod with council members, and a committee will be established soon after Pastor's departure.

† † †

WEEKLY WHITE OFFERING ENVELOPES		
	2026	**2025**
January	$ 7,760.63	$ 10,574.77
February	$ 12,154.68	$ 12,263.93
March	$ 13,630.60	$ 12,766.88
April	$ 9,780.39	$ 9,824.75
May	$ 12,530.57	$ 12,036.88
June	$ 10,732.51	$ 10,323.40
July	$ 9,494.81	$ 13,116.93
August	$	$
September	$	$
October	$	$
November		
TOTAL	**$ 76,084.19**	**$ 80,907.54**

Budget Update: St. Paul's finances as of **July 31, 2026**

	Jan.-July 2026 Year to Date	Jan. – July 2025* Year to Date
Total Income*	$ 103,759.42	$ 107,750.42
Transfer/Savings	$ 63,846.64	$ 71,638.00
Total Expenses	$ 175,519.30	$ 175,519.30

*General Fund – does not include Special Appeals or Designated Funds

General Fund Monthly Income vs. Expenses

MONTH	**INCOME**	**EXPENSES**
January	$ 14,391.01	$ 30,745.97
February	$ 14,203.61	$ 24,588.29
March	$ 15,507.78	$ 26,955.25
April	$ 14,278.14	$ 19,794.57
May	$ 21,565.99	$ 27,964.63
June	$ 11,566.37	$ 23,702.69
July	$ 12,246.52	$ 22,966.82
August	$	$
September	$	$
October	$	$
November	$	$
December	$	$
TOTAL	**$ 103,759.42**	**$ 175,519.30**

YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

SPECIAL DATES

- Labor Day, *September 7*
- Roast Beef Dinner, *September 19*
- First Day of Fall, *September 22*
- Blessing of Animals Service, *September 26*
- Rummage Sale Week, *September 28-Oct. 3*

PASSAGES…

In Memoriam †

May the light and promise of
the Resurrection
shine in the lives
of the family and friends of

Robert L. Tambur

Rest eternal grant him, Lord,
and let light perpetual
shine upon him.

If you are changing your phone number, or if you are dropping your landline in favor of using your cell phone number, please let the church office know. We will update our records and thereby provide a more accurate annual church directory.

Please remember when mailing items to the church use PO Box 802 for the address - do not use 474 Yalick Rd.

REMINDER: The church will be closed for Labor Day on Monday, September 7.

† † †

Faith and works are like the light and heat of a candle; they cannot be separated.

—Joseph Beaumont

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Last week, after weeks of teetering along furniture and standing up to take a few tentative steps before plopping back down on his rear, one-year-old grandson, Henry, took off. Almost immediately into a virtual run. And I feel like I'm right there with him, with time zooming past, as some of you have told me it would, after the initial teetering and tentative steps that mark my plans for retirement.

Yet, my list is long and deep of the steps, duties, and projects to accomplish both for St. Paul's and for the synod before that time comes. I am excited about what lies ahead, in these final months of our ministry and activity, and beyond that in our respective transitions to new activities and ministry. I have said it often over the years: this is a special congregation, and your sense of community, mission, and faithfulness is as good an indication as any that you will thrive. And I look forward to thriving in my own new context. Strap on your running shoes! The Spirit has plans! And wish me luck keeping up with Henry.

Gratefully,
Pastor Grube

† † †

The Bible This Week weekly Bible study will return for one brief and final term on Tuesday, September 8, 10:30-11:30 am. We read and reflect on the readings for the coming week's worship as we share how the readings affect us and spur connections, quotations, revelations, and questions. You are invited to be part of the conversation. The readings are listed in the worship bulletin each week if you'd like to read ahead, but that is not necessary. We will meet weekly on Tuesday mornings until October 13 and we hope to see you there.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES RESUME

We mark the beginning of another program year on September 13 with our annual celebration of Rally Day for Sunday School, the Installation of our Sunday School staff during worship, and our service to the community and specifically to our Head Start families and children in our "God's Work. Our Hands." project. We will return to our usual fall schedule of Sunday School following worship as we gather for Rally Day activities and learn about our theme and plans for the coming Sunday School year. Thank you for your support of our Head Start children in your contributions for sneakers. It will be a big day!

† † †

6261 UPDATE

Our monthly 6261 Bundle congregational gatherings have begun with the first of our gatherings happening Thursday, August 20, at Prince of Peace Episcopal church. We gathered with members of Prince of Peace Episcopal, Dallas, Grace Episcopal, Kingston, and Trinity Episcopal, West Pittston to discern whether we might join together in shared ministry for the sake of our community witness and our congregations' ministry. This is a very intentional and calculated process of relationship-building and learning about one another and our respective congregation's history and ministries. It is great that so many of our members came to the first gathering to learn about 6261 and engage in the process together first-hand. Our next gathering will be Tuesday, September 15, 6:30 pm at Grace Episcopal Church, 30 Butler St, Kingston. The theme is "Scripture," encouraging people to think about what Scripture passages are important to them and share an important Scripture passage to them, why they connect with it, and how it impacts their faith life. We hope to see you there.

HARVEST HOME SERVICE

We will take advantage of the annual Dallas Harvest Festival on September 20 to celebrate our own annual Harvest Home with prayers of thanksgiving for God's abundance and provision for us, and for those who grow, produce, and provide that abundance in our community. The usual display of the harvest theme will be enhanced by your contributions of non-perishable food for those of our own community who struggle with food insecurity and need. We are blessed to be a blessing to others.

SUMMER HARVEST: Have some extra zucchini, tomatoes, peppers, or other bounty from your garden to share? Please feel free to place it on the table in the foyer for members to enjoy!

† † †

A Prayer for Joy and Laughter

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
Give me the wit to see a joke
To get some humor out of life,
And pass it on to other folk.

—Anonymous

RETIREMENT UPDATE – As noted before, Pastor's final service with us will be Sunday, October 25 (the Saturday service on October 24 will be cancelled).

1. There will be a reception for Jean on Sunday, October 18, sponsored by the Christian Education Committee. Jean has been the Director of the Youth Choir and a member of the Christian Education Committee since September, 1997.
2. Rev. Stanley Reep, Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in York, Pa., and Pastor Grube's best friend since seminary days, will be the guest preacher.
3. There will be a catered reception in the Social Hall following the service. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for you to indicate if you will be attending. Feel free to contact the church office (stpaul@epix.net or 570.675.3959) if you would like us to sign up for you. We need to give the caterer a "head count" by October 4.
4. The service will be available on Zoom.

† † †

PINOCHLE GROUP NEWS

A pinochle card group meets at St. Paul's on the first Tuesday of each month, and we would like to invite anyone who likes to play cards to join us! We start at 11:00 a.m. with a bag lunch and then play pinochle from 11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Please feel free to join us. For more information leave a message for Annie Bisher at the church at 570-675-3859 and she will get back to you.

On Thursday, September 17, and on the third Thursday of each month, the Grief Support Group will meet at St. Paul's at 6:30 pm. These meetings are free and open to the public.

† † †

RIC UPDATE

In following Jesus by welcoming and helping the marginalized in society to our congregation, Church Council approved a proposal to take the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) path. Thank you all for participating in the RIC survey distributed some months ago. There is a core group (Frank Mariano, Trish Brosious, Melissa Janoski and Gail Ide) that has been interviewing our congregation members.

Members of the core group will be available following the Saturday and Sunday worship services in October and November to answer any questions you may have about RIC. Then, at our annual meeting in January, 2027 we will vote on officially becoming a RIC congregation.

† † †

The June issue was the last totally printed and mailed copy; the summer issue (July-August) was the start of our new procedure. This September issue is the second newsletter using our new distribution system.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 570.675.3859 or via email: stpaul@epix.net.

And please note: our current monthly newsletters are always posted to our website! You can find the Good News easily by visiting our website at www.stpaulsdallaspa.org and clicking on the newsletter link at the top of the page.

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

If you or someone you know is caring for a family member with Alzheimer's disease, and if you are in need of support or advice, you may be interested in attending one of the Back Mountain Alzheimer's Support Group meetings. This group holds its meetings on the first Thursday of every month at 10:00 am here at St. Paul's. The meetings are free and open to the public. For more information call the church office at 570.675-3859.

LABYRINTH WALK & HEALING SERVICE

Our next quarterly healing service with Prince of Peace church will be Wednesday, September 16, 7:00 pm at St. Paul's. The Labyrinth will be available in the narthex before and after the service for those who would like to complement our prayers and laying on of hands and anointing for healing with a walk on the spiritual path. Please feel free to invite a friend or neighbor you think would benefit from the church's ministry of healing and spiritual reflection.

"GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS"

The annual observance of "God's Work. Our Hands" is scheduled for Sunday, September 13. As in the past few years, the Social Ministry Committee is asking for your donations of sneakers for boys and girls who will be filling our Head Start classrooms in the fall – youth sizes 9-12. The Sneaker Display table is in the Narthex; please remember to attach your gift receipt to the shoes. The parents of the Head Start children are always so grateful for our donations and all members of St. Paul's are thanked for supporting our Social Ministry projects.

St. Paul's Brotherhood will hold its first roast beef dinner of the fall on Saturday, September 19, from 4:00-6:30 pm. This sit-down dinner will feature the most tender and flavorful roast beef and gravy (if you attended our May roast beef dinner you know how delicious it was!), mashed potatoes, two vegetables, a dinner roll, pepper hash, beverages and dessert. Tickets are $16 for adults, $5 for children and will be available at the door the night of the dinner. Take-outs will begin at 3:30 pm. The next dinner is scheduled for Saturday, November 7.

Sign-up sheets have been posted in the Narthex, so please consider signing up to help in one of the many ways volunteers are needed. Many thanks!

† † †

Summer camp has ended at BCC for another season. Their newsletter announces that it was a season full of moments we won't forget: Songs around the bonfire, morning games, late night cabin conversations and new friendships. Every camper and counselor who walked through our gates this summer brought something uniquely their own — and it was learning about each other and being together that made the weeks meaningful. None of this happens without the generosity of our volunteers and donors, and we thank them for making camp possible for so many kids. Your investment shows up in every laugh, every breakthrough, and every child who goes home a little more confident and connected than when they first arrived. Soon our cabins will welcome retreat guests, and BCC will continue to make more memories for church groups, friends, and families. We are so looking forward to seeing our campers next year - let the countdown to Winter Retreat and Summer 2027 begin! Thank you for your support of Bear Creek Camp.

Now that fall is nearly here, it's time to start thinking about the Dorcas October Rummage Sale!

The Dorcas Society will sponsor the two-day rummage/bake sale, to be held Friday, October 2, 8:00 am-2:00 pm and 5:00-7:00 pm; and Saturday, October 3, 8:00 am -noon (Bag Day all day).

Donations of good clean, usable clothes, household items, dishes, pots and pans, holiday decorations, jewelry, books, games, puzzles, etc., are happily accepted.

The church building will be open on the following days/times for donation drop-off:

Monday, Sept. 28	9:30 am – 4:00 pm
Tuesday, Sept. 29	9:30 am – 7:00 pm
Wednesday, Sept. 30	9:30 am – 4:00 pm
Thursday, Oct. 1	9:30 am – 12:00 pm.

(Donations not accepted after 12:00 pm so Dorcas members will have time to price items).

Anyone (men and women) can assist during the week with setting up tables, unloading, displaying and/or pricing items to be sold.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING televisions, computers/printers, exercise equipment, large appliances, encyclopedias, cribs, strollers, artificial Christmas trees, VHS tapes, electrical cords, and old telephones.

All bakers of St. Paul's are asked to donate homemade baked goods for the Bake Sale; items should be brought to the church by 1:00 pm on Thursday, Oct. 1 so they may be packaged and priced.

NEPA SYNOD
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

There was a service of Farewell and Godspeed and celebration of his service for Bishop Christopher deForest on Saturday afternoon, August 29, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Auburn. It was during Bishop deForest's term that the synod committed to the 6261 shared ministry model and rejuvenated the Licensed Lay Ministry program, both of which our own congregation has committed to through our partnership with Prince of Peace and perhaps Grace and Trinity Episcopal churches, and through Keith and Trish Brosious' enrollment in the LLM program. This puts St. Paul's on solid footing for worship and ministry leadership going forward.

Bishop Jennifer Dee's term as bishop begins September 1 and a service of Installation is planned for Saturday, October 31, with ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry present to install Bishop Dee. The planning team is still awaiting confirmation on the location, which will be announced later.

† † †

REST FOR THE SOUL

Studies show many Americans don't get enough sleep, and the effects can take a toll on both body and mind. Whether it's a packed schedule or restless nights, a lack of rest makes it harder to think clearly, stay focused and care for our overall well-being. Over time, that constant fatigue begins to wear us down.

Our spiritual lives follow a similar rhythm. When we rush from one task to the next without pausing to spend time with God, we can feel just as drained. We need consistent, quiet moments with Him to stay grounded, encouraged and strong in our faith.

Even Jesus made space for this kind of rest. Luke 5:16 tells us that He often withdrew to quiet places to pray. If He needed that time with the Father, how much more do we? When we step away from the noise and when we listen for God's voice, we find the renewal our souls have been longing for.

CANIDATES APPROVED

Both Trish and Keith Brosious were approved by the Bishop and Program Director last month for the synodically authorized Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM) program, and they wasted no time jumping into the process. Currently, they are meeting with Pastor Grube for two sessions a week as they engage in a seminary-level, ten session Introduction to the New Testament, one of the four classes they will need to complete as part of the training program.

You can help them in any of three ways. First, congratulate and encourage them in their calling and work as they encounter the classes, retreats, and ministry duties that serve to prepare them for the role. Second, remember them in your prayers as they take on this leadership role at St. Paul's. And third, make a regular or a one-time contribution to the congregation's Theological Education fund. St. Paul's has committed to providing the financial support for the expenses related to the Brosious' learning and service, and this is the fund that supports them and all who might enter preparation for ministry. Thank you, Trish and Keith, for your service to the church, especially in this new and particular Licensed Lay Minister role.

† † †

The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful and virtuous.

—Frederick Douglass

It's criminal to take anything in life for granted.

—Anna Quindlen

PRAYER OF REMEMBRANCE FOR PATRIOTS DAY

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter through every storm, and our eternal home: We come before You remembering the lives lost on September 11, 2001. Though many years have passed, the sorrow of that day still lingers in the hearts of families, friends and a grieving nation. Lord, comfort those who continue to carry loss. Grant peace to the brokenhearted, strength to the weary and light to those walking through seasons of grief. Let Your presence bring hope where memories still ache. Teach us to care for one another with compassion and courage. Help us to be a people who offer kindness to the hurting, encouragement to the discouraged and justice to those who suffer. Stir our hearts to live with mercy, humility and love for our neighbors. Forgive us when our words are greater than our actions. May we strive each day to reflect the values of faith, unity and grace that honor You and strengthen our communities. Thank You, Lord, for Your constant care and unfailing mercy. Even in tragedy, You remain our refuge and our hope. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

† † †

YOU'RX NXXDXD!

Evxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll— xxcxpt for onx kxy. I havx many timxs wishxd it workxd pxrfxctly. It's trux that thx othxr kxys work grxat, but just onx kxy not working makxs a hugx diffxrxncx.

Somxtimxs our church sxxms likx my typxwritxr — not all thx kxy pxoplx work. You may say to yoursxlf, "Wxll, I'm just onx pxrson. I don't makx or brxak thx church." But it doxs makx a big diffxrxncx bxcausx a church, to bx xffxctivx, nxxds thx activx participation of xvxry pxrson.

So, thx nxxt timx you think your xfforts arxn't nxcxssary, rxmxmbxr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, "I'm a kxy pxrson in thx congrxgation, and I'm nxxdxd vxry much."

SPCA COLLECTION – Once again, St. Paul's will be celebrating all our non-human friends and family members and asking God to bless each and every one of them, and in fact, all of God's creatures. In celebration of this event and to assist our local animal rescue shelter, we are again collecting items on their wish list. **The Blessing of the Animals service will be held on Saturday, September 26 at 11:00 am and the donations will be delivered to the SPCA following the service:**

Canned Cat Food (Pate) Dry Kitten Chow
Canned Dog Food
Cat Litter (Clay, Non-Clumping)
Cat Toys & Scratchers
Kong Toys for Dogs
Small Cat Beds Cat & Dog Treats
Paper Towels Toilet Paper
Dish Soap Laundry Detergent
Bleach, Clorox Wipes
Latex / Non-Latex Gloves (all sizes)
6" Paper Plates
Drawstring Tall Kitchen Trash Bags
Gift Cards for Petco or Pet Supplies Plus
Rubbing Alcohol / Peroxide
Towels & Washcloths

If you have other items that you would like to donate, but do not see on the above list, contact Ray Mancke at 570.430.8639. There is a table in the Narthex on which you may place your donated items. The SPCA of Luzerne County is an IRS-recognized, private Section 501©3 nonprofit organization. It exists solely on the kindness of the community and does not receive any funds from the government or from any national animal welfare organization.

Thank you for your support!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1st	Weston Kovach
1st	David Rogers
1st	Stephanie Younger
2nd	George Rolland
2nd	Greta Ruckno
3rd	Amy Thomas
3rd	James Wyatt
4th	Miguel Younger
6th	Morgan Holbrook
6th	Paula Williams
7th	Lee Fett
7th	Arden Kessler
7th	William Linnen
9th	Adrienne Eyet
9th	Braedan Hollingshead
9th	Austin Smith
10th	Christopher Roman (son)
13th	Chris Roman (father)
15th	Hailey Brice
15th	Melissa Janoski
16th	Wyatt Schaper
17th	Viola Orgitano
21st	Sheri Stepniak
22nd	Jackson Kowalek
22nd	Scott Schukraft
24th	Jeanette Denmon
25th	Joan Williams
26th	Parker Eyet
26th	Lois Hardisky
27th	Heath Stochla
29th	Stephen Button
29th	Dustin Siperko
29th	Vivian Wyatt
30th	Heidi Schukraft

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

4th	Hannah & Jacob Cooper
7th	Ann & Andrew Sabol
8th	Nancy & Robert Kline
9th	Gail & Douglas Ide
10th	Diane & Patrick Flaherty
16th	Lisa & Kurt Fetterman
23rd	Lauren & Anthony Kaiser
24th	Kelly & Vincent Bellezza
24th	Sheri & Benjamin Stepniak
28th	Amanda & Mitchell Cohen

WORSHIP LEADERS MONTHLY CALENDAR—SEPTEMBER

If unable to serve on the Sunday for which you signed up, please call either the coordinator or the church office at 570.675.3859.

Sept. 6:
Assisting Minister: Volunteer needed
Greeters: Cathy Ridout
Acolyte: Volunteer needed
Lector: Melissa Janoski
Altar (Cleanup): Martha Kush

Sept. 13:
Assisting Minister: Frank Mariano
Greeters: Karen Mertz
Acolyte: Volunteer needed
Lector: Bill Peiffer
Altar (Cleanup): Martha Kush

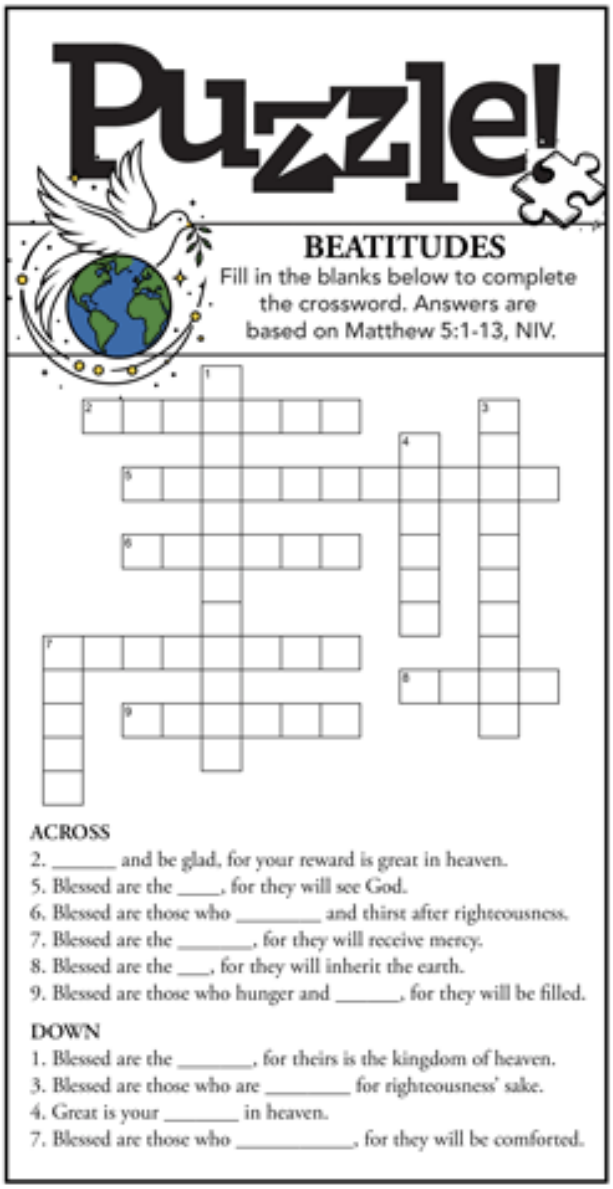
Sept. 19:
Assisting Minister: Volunteer needed
Greeters: Larry Pierce
Acolyte: Volunteer needed
Lector: Melissa Janoski
Altar (Cleanup): Martha Kush

Sept. 27:
Assisting Minister: Gail Smallwood
Greeter: Aileen Whalen
Acolyte: Volunteer needed
Lector: Gail Smallwood
Altar (Cleanup): Gail Smallwood

Communion Bread:
Sept. 6: Carol Fett
Sept. 13: Dianna Smith
Sept. 20: In memory of Jan Martinchak
Sept. 27: In memory of Jan Martinchak

Saturday Altar Setup
Sept. 6: Cookie Fetterman
Sept. 13: Cookie Fetterman
Sept. 20: Cookie Fetterman
Sept. 27: Cookie Fetterman

COORDINATORS:
Assisting Ministers: Frank Mariano, 570.401.9611
Greeters: Pat Peiffer, 570.675.1210
Acolytes: Don Kretchmer, 570.855.2552
Lectors: Rachelle Pryor, 571.218.7188
Altar and Communion Bread: Martha Kush, 570.331.9979



Answer key: 2 Across: Rejoice. 5 Across: pure/heart. 6 Across: hunger. 7 Across: merciful. 8 Across: meek. 9 Across: thirst. 1 Down: poor/spirit. 3 Down: persecuted. 4 Down: reward. 7 Down: mourn

Bible Quiz

After his resurrection, Jesus asked one of his disciples the same question three times: "Do you love me?" The disciple felt hurt, wondering why Jesus kept asking. Who was this disciple?

A. James
B. John
C. Philip
D. (Simon) Peter

Answer: D (John 21:17)

VOLUME 34 | ISSUE 9 SEPTEMBER 2026

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Connections That Go Beyond Camp

Submitted by Stacey Burke, NEPA Synod Director of Communications and Bear Creek Camp Board Member

For generations, Bear Creek Camp has been a place where young people experience faith through community, creation, worship, play, and relationships. As a ministry supported by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod through Mission Support, the connection between Bear Creek Camp and the synod extends far beyond financial gifts.

Each summer, pastors and deacons from across the Northeastern & Southeastern Pennsylvania Synods are among those who become part of the camp community by serving as volunteer chaplains. This summer, the Rev. Liz Koerner from St. John Lutheran Church in Stroudsburg, PA and Bishop-Elect the Rev. Jennifer Dee each spent a week at Bear Creek Camp, offering support to campers and staff while experiencing the ministry of camp firsthand.

For Pastor Koerner, who has served as a Bear Creek chaplain three times, camp has long held a special place in her heart. "Through my years as a chaperone for Confirmation Camp at Calumet in New Hampshire, to working at a United Methodist camp during my summers in college, I have seen how an immersive experience in God's creation with loving counselors and inclusive environments can change the mind and heart of a child," she shared.

The role of a chaplain can look different each week. Chaplains may lead Bible studies, accompany campers on activities, provide pastoral care, support counselors, or simply offer another trusted presence within the camp community.

Bear Creek Camp Executive Director Collin Grooms sees that flexibility as one of the strengths of the program. "Every chaplain brings themselves to the role, which, like our summer staff and campers, is different for everyone," Collin said. "Each person adds to the overall tapestry of our camp community for the week by sharing their unique gifts, interests, and passions."

For Bishop-Elect Dee, serving as a chaplain offered the opportunity to return to a ministry that has been part of her own faith journey. She grew up attending camp and later served on summer staff at Camp Calumet in New England. "A chaplain spends a week at camp getting to know campers and staff and being a support to them both," she

explained. “They are an additional trusted adult to listen, laugh, learn, and connect.”

Sometimes those connections happen in unexpected places. Bishop-Elect Dee recalled leading a Bible study from hammocks with a group of younger campers. As they ended their time together in prayer, voices began popping up from different hammocks as campers shared the things for which they were thankful.

Pastor Koerner experienced a similar moment during Family Camp while talking with a parent and their sons about trusting God, trusting themselves, and leaning on community during difficult times.

Camp ministry also has an impact on the clergy who serve. Pastor Koerner described a sense of God’s presence at camp. “The Spirit is always moving, and God is always at work in ways we can’t always know right away,” she said. “But at camp it feels all encompassing and that at any moment joy and love and growth in faith can happen.”

The relationship between Bear Creek Camp and the synod reaches beyond the camp property as well. During session five this summer, three Bear Creek Camp staff members traveled to Reading to serve alongside ministries including Café Esperanza, Refresh Berks, and Adventure Day Camp at Zion Spies Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Collin spent time at Café Esperanza, where he connected with the Rev. Rashon “Woody” Santiago and learned more about how another ministry supported by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod navigates that relationship. Bear Creek staff also brought camp into the community in a tangible way, taking archery equipment to Adventure Day Camp so its campers and staff could experience an activity normally associated with a week at Bear Creek.

These connections demonstrate how Mission Support can bring ministries together, allowing them to share resources, learn from one another, and discover new opportunities to serve. The chaplain program creates another bridge between Bear Creek Camp and congregations throughout the region. “Having chaplains from different churches across our two synods is impactful because they can provide a direct perspective of our shared ministry back to their community and congregation,” Collin shared.

For families, seeing a familiar pastor or deacon at camp can provide an additional sense of connection and trust. The chaplain program also helps connect congregations more closely with the ministry they support. “It’s an opportunity for first-hand connection with ministry realities and a chance to connect to where congregational donations are supporting ongoing ministry through gifts that support facilities projects and year-round operational needs,” Collin said.

Through Mission Support, volunteer chaplains, shared resources, and relationships across ministries, Bear Creek Camp and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod continue to strengthen one another. What happens during a week at camp does not stay at camp. It travels home through campers, clergy, staff, families, and congregations, creating connections that continue long after summer ends.

Help Make Ministry Possible

Mission Support strengthens congregations, supports leaders, and helps new ministries take root across our synod and the wider church. Thank you for being part of this shared ministry. Learn more about Mission Support and how your congregation can support at **godslove.org/missionsupport**.

September 2026

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 11:00 am Pinochle Card Group 7:00 pm Council	2 7:00 pm Pack Meeting	3 10:00 am Alzheimer's Support Group meeting	4	5 5:30 pm Worship
6 9:30 am Worship	7 Labor Day – Church Closed	8 10:30 am Bible This Week 1:00pm Dorcas .	9	10 8:32 am Retired Ramblers Breakfast	11	12 5:30pm Worship
13 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School Rally Day – Teacher Installation	14	15 10:30 am Bible This Week 6:30 pm 6261 Bundle Meeting at Grace Episcopal Church	16 10:30 am Social Ministry Meeting 3-7pm Labyrinth Walk 7pm Healing Service	17 6:30 pm Grief Support Group	18	19 3:30-6:30pm Take Outs For Roast Beef Dinner Dinner served 4-6:30pm 5:30 pm Worship
20 9:30am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School Newsletter Deadline 5:00pm Scouts	21	22 10:30 am Bible This Week	23	24	25	26 11:00 am Blessing of the Animals 5:30pm Worship
27 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School	28 9:30 am – 4:00 pm Rummage Sale Drop Off 7:00pm Brotherhood Meeting	29 9:30 am Worship & Music Committee Mtg. 9:30am – 7:00pm Rummage Sale Drop Off 10:30 am Bible This Week	30 9:30am – 4:00pm Rummage Sale Drop Off	Oct. 1 9:30am – Noon Rummage Sale Drop Off	Oct. 2 8:00am – 2:00pm And 5:00pm – 7:00pm Rummage Sale	Oct. 3 8:00am – Noon Rummage Sale – Bag Day 5:30pm Worship