

The Pastor's Page

July & August 2018
"Reimagining the Future"



Grace and peace to you!

As I look back on my seven years as your pastor, we've experienced a great deal of sorrow, disappointment, and loss. But whenever I've felt discouraged, God has always done something amazing soon after. In the time since our last newsletter:

- An undeniable spirit of joy has come into the atmosphere during Sunday worship services.
- Our newly-renovated parlor has been packed to capacity with participants in our GriefShare ministry.
- As our prayer list grows, you respond by praying for and with those persons, sending beautiful cards and notes, and even preparing meals.
- Our four congregations came together for the second time in less than a year for a beautiful time of worship and fellowship.
- The clothing closet continues to expand its reach, and you are present to give your support.
- Our Relay for Life team brought an enthusiastic and persistent presence to what was an underwhelming event overall.
- Our Vacation Bible School once again broke new records for attendance and congregational participation.

All of these things happened in spite of the fact that our local population is aging, and emerging generations are not embracing Christianity as have previous generations. You would think that the best days of our congregation are behind us. But considering what God has been up to lately, that is simply not true.

How did we do it? The answer is simple: it was God's will. The Holy Spirit called you into these ministries and provided you the gifts and the vision to see them through. God's invitation, then, is for us to imagine the future of our church in new ways. And as we ponder the ways God is calling us to serve, proclaim, and baptize, let us consider a few things:

- Our youth are extremely effective at inviting others to come and participate in what we're doing as a church. They invite—and their friends come—because of the love and joy they experience as God comes alive to them in music, friendships, and worship.
- Worship is more than just something to do. It is an event. It is a celebration. How can we use the gifts of music, prayer, and fellowship to make our worship feel less like an obligation and more like a festival?
- Who among our family, friends, and neighbors is in need of some encouragement, friendship, and prayer? Who is lacking daily bread?
- In what ways does your belonging and participation in the church bring you the most joy? What are you passionate about? What is the good you are most eager to do? How has Jesus changed your life?

God's will is for everyone to belong in God's family. God's will is for our congregation to do its part to bear witness to the coming of God's reign upon the earth. And God's will is to transform sorrow, shame, and fear into hope, healing, and inspiration. This is why now is a great time to be a part of the family of faith at First Lutheran Church in Leechburg.

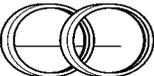
See you on Sunday,

+ Pastor Jim

WE WISH HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:



- 2-John Eshelman
- 5-Jackie McKelvey
- 7-Shawn Kuhn
- 9-Emily Kramer
- 10-Ashley Dunmire
- 13-Betty Kepple
- 13-Janice King
- 13-Karen Zimmerman
- 15-Katelyn Hall
- 15 – Graciella Kiro
- 17-Tabytha Hogan
- 17-Maria Kramer
- 21-Margaret McKallip
- 24-Allison Carter
- 24-Patrick Carter
- 25-Mark Greenawalt
- 28 – Betty Baker
- 28 – Shannon Kiro
- 29-Robert K. Munko

Celebrating 
An Anniversary This Month

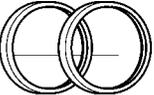
- 3– Matt & Lauren Marziale
- 15 – Tim & Karen McGuire
- 16-Pastor Erik & Pastor Amy Allen
- 24-Robert & Lois Fulton

Baptismal Anniversaries

- 7/1 – Sara Rupert
- 7/3 – Kimberly Kalmar Magoon
- 7/7 – Kendra Machak
- 7/7 – Jessica Machak
- 7/7 – Shawna Varrato
- 7/12 – Tessa Vakulik
- 7/12 – Jenna Zanotti
- 7/12 – Austin Baker
- 7/18 – Shawn Kuhn
- 7/20 – Aurelia Baker
- 7/20 – James Woodside
- 7/22 – Linda Sinka
- 7/22 – Amanda Graham
- 8/1- Judy Sluka
- 8/8 – Aaron Carter
- 8/12 – Garrett Shaner
- 8/13 – Betty Kepple
- 8/14 – Jacob Hebrank
- 8/15 – Jackie Munko
- 8/15 – Graciella Kiro
- 8/17 – Robert Munko
- 8/19 – Kathleen Craig
- 8/24 – Tracy Zimmerman
- 8/27 – John Eshelman



- 3- Erica Prendes
- 5-Pat Greenawalt
- 5 - Elizabeth Arter
- 7-Sarah Kramer
- 10-Victoria Hogan
- 10-Jeremy Smail
- 11-Margaret Krecota
- 12-William Kepple
- 13-Aaron Sinka
- 15 – Olivia Smythe
- 15 – Alicia Hellpap-Kiro
- 20 – Evelyn Prendes
- 21 – Emory Bonadio
- 22-Mark Girardi
- 26-Justin Bowser
- 29-Ronda Blystone
- 29-Joshua Hey

Celebrating 
An Anniversary This Month

- 1-Gary & Elsie Kalmar
- 1 – Ken & Allyson Benneman
- 9 – Jarrett & Kayla Carter
- 24-John & Jaime Hogan

Worship Assistants

Acolytes

- | | | | |
|------|----------------|------|-------------------|
| 7/1 | Tabytha Hogan | 8/5 | Spencer Libengood |
| 7/8 | Jonah Zalenski | 8/12 | Tabytha Hogan |
| 7/15 | Katie Muth | 8/19 | Jonah Zalenski |
| 7/22 | Olivia Smythe | 8/26 | Katie Muth |
| 7/29 | Victoria Hogan | | |

Assisting Ministers

- | | | | |
|------|--------------|------|--------------|
| 7/1 | Clint Graham | 8/5 | John Smail |
| 7/8 | John Smail | 8/12 | Clint Graham |
| 7/15 | Kenny Muth | 8/19 | Andi McCool |
| 7/22 | Jason Delp | 8/26 | Kenny Muth |
| 7/29 | Andi McCool | | |

Altar Guild

- | | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 7/1 | Carolyn Shaffer & Kathy Munko |
| 7/8 | Cheryl Nelson & Eileen Eshelman |
| 7/15 | Chris Fuller & Lois Bowser |
| 7/22 | Sandy Smythe & Debbie Smail |
| 7/29 | Janis Hill & Diane Kuhn |
| 8/5 | Cheryl Nelson & Debbie Smail |
| 8/12 | Chris Fuller & Eileen Eshelman |
| 8/19 | Carolyn Shaffer & Lois Bowser |
| 8/26 | Diane Kuhn & Kathy Munko |

Head Usher

- Paul King - July
- Tom Smythe - August

WE WISH HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

**Oil
July**

Given in memory of Virginia Greenawalt
by Amanda & Clint Graham

August

Given in memory of G. Paul Simon
By Virginia Simon

Newsletter Deadline August 19



Wanted - E-mail addresses

Do you have an e-mail address you would like to share with the office? This would be used to send reminders and possibly items mailed by first class mail. You can send it to felc@windstream.net

Blood Pressure check

The **third Sunday** of every month, we will be checking Blood Pressure in the **Nursery**. If you are interested in a monthly record of your blood pressure, please join us immediately after church service. Those taking B/Ps are Sandy Smythe, Andrea McCool, and Amada Graham.



Clothing Closet

We will be open **every month** on the third Saturday. The next sale dates are **July 21 & August 18**. If you would like to volunteer on one of the sale dates, please contact Janice King.

Check out Pastor Jim's BLOG page, <http://jamesarter3.blogspot.com> where you can read his sermons and Bible studies!

Prayer Ministry

We have a special place set up in the area behind the organ console. The 3 windows are set up for different prayer needs. There is a place for **public prayers** (situations and people that anyone can know about and pray for), there is a box for more **private prayers** and another box for prayers that **just Pastor Jim** would see and pray for. If anyone would like to be personally prayed with; we will be available on Sunday mornings.

Office Angels

Thank you to all who come in to assemble the newsletter. More volunteers are welcome



Like us on **Facebook** and stay connected with all that's happening in our church!

www.facebook.com/servinggodgracefully



Bible Study

The Bible studies meet Wednesdays **July 25, August 8 & 22** from 9AM – 10 AM and Thurs. **July 26, August 9 & 23** from 7 PM - 8 PM



Come join us for Breakfast at King's Family Restaurant in Leechburg on **July 14 & August 11!** We will meet in the private dining room at 9 AM on the **second Saturday of every month**. This is a time for fellowship, a short devotion and prayer. Everyone is invited to attend!



Office Hours

The secretary is in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
724-845-7518

Pastor James Arter

Tuesday – 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Wednesday and Thursday – 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Or by appointment

Contact Information

Pastor James Arter, 930 Wildlife Lodge Road,
Apt. 302, Lower Burrell, PA 15068
Phone 724-212-7240
pr.jim@comcast.net



Summer Worship

9:30 AM
Through Labor Day weekend
September 2

Leechburg Lutherans

Our Relay team, Leechburg Lutherans, was well represented at the recent Apollo Relay for Life. We may have only had 6 registered members but we had 31 people walkers, representatives from ALL four Lutheran churches! We were also the only team that had walkers on the track for most of the day on Saturday! **Our team raised \$1,909.00.** The Apollo Relay with only 12 teams raised \$95,910.96.



Ink Cartridges



Thank you to all who have brought in ink cartridges. Please continue to bring them in. This helps save considerably on our office supplies!

New Policy

To ensure the safety and security of our congregation during worship, **all doors except for the main entrance** beneath the tower **will be locked by an usher** following the processional hymn.

Electronic Giving



First Lutheran Church is now accepting online giving. Go to our website, servinggodgracefully.net then click on **give on line**

Follow the directions.



Planning for the Fall



Planning for the fall will begin soon. If you are interested in helping in any way, contact the church office and Janice or Pastor Jim will put you in contact with the correct person.



Alexis Shaffer

Graduate of Kiski Area High School
Scholar athlete throughout high school career
Gold Presidential Award for Outstanding Excellence

Lexi will be attending Pitt University, Main Campus to study Nutrition and Dietetics

Andrew Muth

Graduate of West Shamokin High School
Eagle Scout
Murphy Music Award
Commander's Award for Public Service from US Army Corp of Engineers

Andy will be attending Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Major is undecided



Precious gift

A 42-year-old man told H. Jackson Brown Jr. that his most prized possession is a shoeshine box made by his 8-year-old son at Vacation Bible School.
—Found in Brown's book,
Live and Learn and Pass It On



Abiding Gifts and Memorials

Abiding Memorials:

In Memory of Alvie Eshelman Sr. and Kevin Eshelman

Given by Eileen Eshelman



Just Born

Clara Genevieve Smail March 1st

Daughter of Jeremy & Ashley Smail

Henry John Szarek June 7th

Son of Alicia & Matt Szarek

**Proud grandparents
John & Debbie Smail**

Congratulations!

A congregational prayer

Loving God, we your children ask for your blessing upon us. We recall that your love surrounds us and touches us. We know that your nature is compassionate and to be in your presence is to know joy. We know that we discover truth in your Word, peace in doing your will, and fulfillment in seeking your kingdom and its righteousness. We, therefore, lift up our hearts in praise and worship knowing that to do so is to find joy immeasurable.



**Mark your calendar!
Picnic
Northmoreland Park
September 9**

We will be eating
Later in the day
Watch for more details!



People become really quite remarkable when they start thinking that they can do things. When they believe in themselves, they have the first secret of success.

—Norman Vincent Peale



Relay for Life Car Cruise

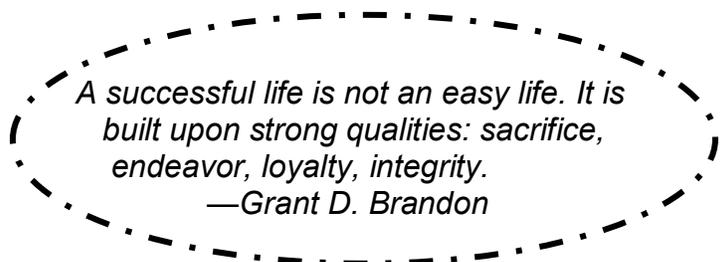
The Car Cruise is coming up fast!



**July 19, from
4 PM – 8 PM
@ Kalmar's on
Route 66**

Rain date is July 26

Cars, music and good food!



A successful life is not an easy life. It is built upon strong qualities: sacrifice, endeavor, loyalty, integrity.

—Grant D. Brandon

