

The Simeon Spirit
SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

God's work. Our hands.

June 2023

PO Box 478
Gratz, PA 17030

Celebrating Our Faith

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[illegible]

We Who Live by Faith

For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

Greetings. Summer time is upon us. I know that it is a time for travel and vacations. Still I hope that you will not forget us. Attendance has been pretty steady since the end of the pandemic which had such a devastating impact on so many of our organizations. It was just one of many difficulties the church in America faces today.

There is no mystery as to why we face many challenges. It is a reflection of the changes in our society over the last 30 years in which our lifestyles have become more complex and demanding. People today work longer and more irregular hours and are involved in so many other social activities. Our youth are involved in year around athletics, academic activities, and the technological wave of iPhones, video games, social networking, YouTube, and cable programming. This is the age of instant and constant electronic stimulation.

I struggle with this myself. I was once dismayed when I heard that my son's soccer games were now being scheduled on Sunday mornings. A clear sign that the church and the worship of our God was being shoved out of the way of a busy and overwhelmed society.

I have nothing against these things. Many of these activities build character and bonds of friendship. It is all an issue of priorities. Have we become so busy and bound to our material possessions that we have no room left for God? Over the years America's belief in the biblical God has greatly declined. In a 2017 Pew Research Center poll, only 56% of Americans still have faith in the God of the Bible. This trend reveals that the once 'Christian' nation that was America is on the path to become a mostly secular society. In our own congregation, worship attendance has fallen 38% since 2008. Seven percent of this drop occurs from prior to the pandemic in 2020 to today. What does this trend mean for our congregation?

As disciples of Christ and a congregation united in the love of Jesus Christ and our love for one another, we don't have to bend to the pressures of our secular society or follow the trend of worship attendance apathy. We echo Paul's sentiments that we are not ashamed of our faith in Christ, but in fact we are proud to proclaim the Gospel. We live faithfully in our love for God because it is God who was first in his love for us.

Therefore we don't have to be one of those congregations which looks back in nostalgia to the good old days when the pews were full, the church had ample funding, and volunteers for ministry, and an active and enthusiastic youth ministry. We cannot turn back the clock. Yet I believe more than ever many American's are experiencing a growing spiritual hunger that neither things nor technology can ever fulfill. Moreover, in a society where communication is so fluid and entertainment so accessible, in a great irony loneliness and a sense of disconnection from others is more evident than ever.

These are our opportunities. People all around us need to know that someone loves and cares for them. People who need to hear about the promise of life only God can provide. They are our neighbors. They are

people we work with. They are people we encounter at the store or on the street. Perhaps they are members who have fallen away from regular worship. Invite them to worship. If you don't, who will? And when visitors enter our doors, let them know they are welcome. Let them know that they already belong.

As a people of God empowered by the Holy Spirit, we can choose our own destiny. Every congregation has its own journey to take and its own paths from which to choose. We do this together. In the years to come, may we share our joys, sorrows, and accomplishments with a greater sense of love and caring. It is only through our connection to the Spirit and within our bonds to one another that we can achieve our purpose. We are the church. That really means something wonderful.

Most Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Pastor Greg

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM MAY, 2023

OLD BUSINESS: We started using bread during Communion. The date of when we will be sharing the peace again will be on Pentecost, May 28, 2023, and it will be mentioned in the bulletin. Discussion held regarding the purchase of a new office for Pastor Lindsey and the cost. Motion to spend a maximum of \$350.00 on a chair made by Matthew Ferster and seconded by Darlene Novinger. Approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Worship and Music** –None.

2. **Parish Education**- Bible School will be held June 12-16, 2023, at the Gratz Park from 9:00am – 11:00am. Jenny Sracic resigned as a Nursery Sunday School Teacher.

3. **Stewardship and Evangelism** - Met on May 11, 2023 They plan to complete their Bicentennial Book this year. They are trying to do more within the Community and with the Graz Park and Recreation Committee. Will be working on updating the cemetery listing and make it electronic. Their organization report has been turned in.

4. **Social Ministry** – Their organization report has been turned in.

5. **Youth** – Church wide assembly will be held in 2024 in New Orleans.

6. **Church Property** – Discussion held regarding the Church Secretary chair.

7. **Budget and Finance** - The check for the Love Offering for the Jacob Esh Family has been mailed.

8. **Fellowship** –Had a wonderful turnout for the Birthday party with amateur night talent show. Everyone enjoyed all of the entertainment and ice cream cakes and snacks. Discussion was held regarding the prayer list in the bulletin and sending cards. The Magic Show that will be held on October 21, 202, will be a sit-down lasagna meal. Next event will be selling Tupperware in July.

9. **Mutual Ministry** – NONE.

New Business – Received a retirement/resignation letter from Church Secretary Leah Schade, effective July 1, 2023. Leah has served our church as secretary for the past 36 years. Motion to accept the retirement/resignation letter made by Lynne Schadle and seconded by Matthew Ferster. Approved. Leah recommended that the Church Council hire Timothy Ferster as the new church secretary, as he has been assisting her. Motion to hire Timothy Ferster as church secretary made by Susan Krause and seconded by Darlene Novinger. Discussion was held. Motion was approved. President John Novinger will offer the position of church secretary to Timothy Ferster. Received a letter from the Ronald McDonald House. They are looking for 5 volunteers to act as chefs at the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey, to buy, prepare and serve the food to the

families that stay there for free while loved one gets treatment. Stewardship and Evangelism will research this issue. Good Samaritan School in Haiti, sent a letter regarding the passing of Martha Thum and they are requesting a monetary gift due to the school being in desperate need. Discussion was held. Motion to do a love offering on Rally Day and the following Sunday made by Lynne Schadle and seconded by Matthew Ferster. Approved. Tim Leshner with the Gratz Boro will be going door to door to verify water supply lines over the next several weeks. There will be a Spring Cleanup Day in Gratz on June 17, 2023.

The Pastor's Time – Pastor Lindsey received a Thank You letter from the Synod regarding the money that we have given to the Synod. Pastor Lindsey will be attending the Synod meeting June 3, 2023, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Camp Hill. Lynn Schadle offered to attend with Pastor Lindsey.

2023 GIVING

\$49,781.20

2023 EXPENSES

\$53,620.67

Difference between YTD Giving & YTD Expenses \$-3,839.47
{For General Operating Fund}

“VOICE OF SIMEON” RADIO MINISTRY SPONSORS

JUNE 2023

June 4 – Buffington/Reed Funeral Home

June 11 – Willing Workers

June 18 – Hoffman’s Hatchery

June 25 – James A. Reed Funeral Home

We want to thank our faithful sponsors in continuing to help with this important ministry of our church especially during these trying times. God bless you and be safe.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE FOOD BANK

Instant mashed potatoes, pasta, baked beans, canned fruit, peanut butter, ketchup, & mustard.

PRAYER LIST

Members- Gloria Klinger, Rose Fetterolf, Carol Koppenhaver, Barb Klinger, Cathie Wilkinson, Tiffany Wilkinson, Clair & Vivian Engle, Jean Hess, David Hartman, Jim Neiswender, Kenneth Mace

Polk Apartments- Helen Michael, John Kissinger, *Charles Schoffstall*

Tremont Nursing Home- Lena Schwartz

Friends & Family- *Dorothy Lettich Martin, Steve Dagen, Rahn Erdman, Marie Lahr, Christy Warfel, Jeff Latsha, Cheryl Schaffner, Dianna Leshner, Daniel Ferster, Jim Troutman*

Happy Retirement

Leah Schade is retiring as the parish secretary on July 1, 2023 (Her last day will be June 30) after 36 years and 2 months of service to the church. Leah has seen a lot of things change in the way that the church has progressed from her first day back in April, of 1987. We want to wish her well and a Happy Retirement and a **Big Thank You** for all your years of service.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

We will again be celebrating Christmas in July and collecting toys and monetary gifts to donate to the Upper Dauphin Human Services in Lykens. So when you’re out doing your shopping and see that toy on sale or clearance pick it up and bring it to church to donate it to a worthy cause & help keep the **CHRIST in CHRISTMAS**.

SERVING IN JUNE & JULY

JUNE 4, 2023
HOLY
TRINITY
w/ HOLY
COMMUNION

GREETER: Dave Strohecker
READER: Jenny Sracic
USHER: Lynn Schadle
GLASSES: Virginia Moore
ALTAR: Doris Flynn

JUNE 11, 2023
3RD SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GREETER: Lynn Schadle
READER: John Novinger

JUNE 18, 2023
4TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST/ FATHER'S DAY

GREETER: Dennis Barge
READER: Dennis Barge

JUNE 25, 2023
5TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GREETER: Mike Hartman
READER: Virginia Moore

JULY 2, 2023
6TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST w/
HOLY
COMMUNION

GREETER: Doris Flynn
READER: Cameron Smeltz
USHER: John Novinger
GLASSES: Doris Flynn
ALTAR: Lynn Schadle

JULY 9, 2023
7TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GREETER: Matt Ferster
READER: Lynn Schadle

JULY 16, 2023
8TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GREETER: John Novinger
READER: Jean Perkins

JULY 23, 2023
9TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GREETER: Leah Schade
READER: Sharon Erdman

JULY 30, 2023
10TH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GREETER: Virginia Moore
READER: Doris Flynn

!!!!!!!!!!ATTENTION, ATTENTION!!!!!!!!!!

THE WEEKLY BULLETIN DEADLINE IS GOING TO BE TUESDAY! IF YOU DO NOT HAVE YOUR ITEMS IN TO THE OFFICE BY TUE. IT WILL NOT BE IN SUNDAY'S BULLETIN.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

The Daily Devotionals for April-June, 2023 are available in the narthex. Pick yours up or have someone get them for you.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

JUNE

Sunday, June 4 - Holy Trinity Worship Service 10:15am w/ Holy Communion

Saturday, June 10 - Food Bank Open, 9-11 a.m.

Sunday, June 11 - Worship Service 10:15am / HEALING SERVICE

Wednesday, June 14 – Flag Day

Thursday, June 15 - Council Meeting 7 p.m.

Friday, June 16 - Newsletter Deadline

Sunday, June 18 - Worship Service 10:15am/ Happy Father's Day

Monday, June 19 – Juneteenth National Independence Day

Wednesday, June 21 - Summer Begins

Sunday, June 25 – Worship Service 10:15am / Leah's Retirement Celebration Sunday

BIBLE SCHOOL WILL BE HELD JUNE 12-16 AT THE GRATZ PARK FROM 9-11am

JULY

Sunday, July 2 - Worship Service 10:15am w/Holy Communion

Tuesday, July 4 – INDEPENDENCE DAY

Saturday, July 8 - Food Bank Open, 9-11 a.m.

Sunday, July 9 - Worship Service 10:15am

Sunday, July 16 - Worship Service 10:15am

Sunday, July 23 - Worship Service 10:15am

Sunday, July 30 - Worship Service 10:15am

GRATZ HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAPPENING'S

June 22, 2023 - 7:00 P.m. - The Gratz Historical Society will hold its annual June meeting at Kessler's One Room School near the Erdman Gun Club in Erdman. The fully restored and furnished structure is a regularly scheduled meeting where we encourage parents and grandparents to bring their children/grandchildren/or neighborhood children to experience "learning and lessons" the way their ancestors did up until 70 years ago. The evening will have a short history discussion while children will sit in the seats and experience "school!" Old time games will follow with refreshments and freshly popped popcorn!

July 15, 2023 - 6 p.m. - The Gratz Historical Society Memorial Dinner will be held at the Gratz Community Center, 125 N. Center St., with a served ham dinner. Be prepared to have some former Gratz residence make surprise appearances from beyond as they tell us about their lives and experiences in the Gratz of yesteryear. Tickets for the meal at \$25 and may be obtained by calling 717-979-9329 and leaving a message or emailing lynnshadle@yahoo.com.

September 28, 2023 - 7 p.m. - The Gratz Historical Society will host a visual presentation and talk entitled "The History of the Williamstown Colliery" by speaker Marlin "Shorty" Umberger at the regular September meeting. The meeting will be held at the Gratz Community Center, 125 North Center Street, Gratz at 7 p.m. Admission is free and the public is invited to attend. Refreshments following meeting.



Celin Sitlinger

Thanks to Celin (and family) for hosting an evening of learning and fellowship. He gave an informative



talk about the history of the Odd Fellows and displayed a lot of memorabilia. It was held in the original Odd Fellows Hall and attended by about 50 people.

The eye pictured is in a decorative circle on the ceiling.



We kicked off 2023 with a combination of Soup Sunday, Amateur Talent Night and Everybody's Birthday Party all rolled into one. The committee wants to thank all who came out to celebrate and the amazing talent acts: Doris and Brenda Flynn, / Dennis Barge and Kierra Roe, / Ruthie Sitlinger and Lynn Schadle, / Andrew Romberger, Leonard, and Sadie Sitlinger, / Dennis and Susan Krause. The food was amazing – thanks to Traci's Place for the soup donation and to all who brought food to share. We had fifty(ish) attendees – it was hard to count with everyone moving around. All in all, we have to say it was a huge success. Stay tuned for upcoming events.

Assorted pictures follow – I know I missed people but it was like trying to film a bee hive.

****We'll be selling Tupperware during the month of July as a fundraiser. Plan to reorganize your pantry and refrigerators with these containers, etc. all the while supporting our efforts in keeping the Simeon Spirit alive!**









Simeon United Lutheran Church

1822 to 2022 – Celebrating 200 Years of Ministry

AN INVITATION TO TELL THE STORY

As part of our bicentennial celebration at Simeon, we are making a collection of memories and stories people have of their life and times at Simeon United. Childhood and youth memories, weddings, special services and traditions, holiday memories, family recollections, humorous stories are just some of what we would like to hear. Plans are to have this collection bound into a booklet so they can be shared with everyone.

Please feel free to write on this flyer, add additional papers, or include news clippings, pictures, or other items to help to tell the story. If you would prefer to tell the story verbally, please let me know, and I will be glad to write it down for you. Thanks for making this a special and rememberable celebration.

Name: _____

Chefs Corner



Rhubarb Cobbler

4 cups chopped rhubarb

1½ cups sugar

1 Tbsp. butter

2 tsp. cinnamon

In a greased 9x13 inch pan spread rhubarb. Mix sugar and cinnamon together and sprinkle over top. Dot top with the butter. Bake in oven at 350* for 10 minutes.

Topping

1½ cups flour

¾ cup sugar

3 tsp. baking soda

½ milk

¼ cup butter

¼ tsp. salt

1 egg (beaten)

Mix flour and butter together and add sugar, salt, and baking soda and mix. Next mix milk and egg together and add to flour mixture and mix together. After the rhubarb has baked for its 10 minutes remove from oven and spread mixture over top and place back in oven and bake for 35 more minutes or till done.

Oven Fried Chicken

12 chicken pieces

8 Tbsp. flour

4 cups cornflake crumbs

1 tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

1 egg (beaten)

2 Tbsp. milk

3 Tbsp. parmesan cheese

8 tsp. butter (melted)

Preheat oven to 350*. Mix flour, salt, pepper together; set aside. Blend egg and milk together; set aside. Mix cornflake crumbs and parmesan cheese; set aside. Coat chicken with flour mixture, then in the egg mix, then into the cornflake crumb mix. Place in a greased or sprayed 9x13 inch baking dish. Drizzle with the butter over the top and bake for about 1 hour or till tender.

Easy Sloppy Joes

2lbs. hamburger

4 Tbsp. water

1 tsp. chili powder

5 Tbsp. brown sugar

2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

2 Tbsp. onion (minced fine)

2 tsp mustard

1 cup ketchup

2 Tbsp. vinegar

2 Tbsp. flour

Brown hamburger and onion. Add remaining ingredients and simmer for 1 hour stirring at times to prevent sticking and burning.

Music Notes



Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty 1826

Reginald Heber was born April 21, 1783, to a minister and his wife in an English village. After a happy childhood and a good education in the village school, he enrolled at Oxford where he excelled in poetry and became fast friends with Sir Walter Scott. Following graduation, he succeeded his father as vicar in his family's parish, and for sixteen years he faithfully served his flock.

His bent towards poetry naturally gave him a keen and growing interest in hymnody. He sought to lift the literary quality of hymns, and he also dreamed of publishing a collection of high-caliber hymns corresponding to the church year for use by liturgical churches. But the Bishop of London wouldn't go along with it, and Heber's plans were disappointed.

He continued writing hymns for his own church, however, and it was during the sixteen years in the obscure parish of Hodnet that Heber wrote all 57 of his hymns, including the great missionary hymn. "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," which exhorted missionaries to take the gospel to faraway places like "Greenland's icy mountains," and "India's coral strand."

*From Greenland's icy mountains, /
From India's coral strand, / Where Africa's
sunny fountains / Roll down their golden sand; /
From many an ancient river, / From many a
palmy plain, / They call us to deliver / Their land
from error's chain.*

This hymn represented an earnest desire for Reginald, for he felt God was calling him as a missionary to "India's coral strand." His desire was fulfilled in 1822, when, at age 40, he was appointed to oversee the Church of England's ministries in India.

Arriving in Calcutta, he set out on a 16-month tour of his diocese, visiting mission stations across India. In February of 1826, he left for another tour. While in the village of Trichinopoly on April 3, 1826, he preached to a large crowd in the hot sun, and afterward plunged into a pool of cool water. He suffered a stroke and drowned.

It was after his death that his widow, finding his 57 hymns in a trunk, succeeded in publishing his *Hymns Written and Adopted to the Weekly Service of the Church Year*. In this volume was the great Trinitarian hymn based on Revelation 4:8-11, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty."

Taken from the book "Then Sings My Soul" By Robert J. Morgan