

When Luther first read the Book of Romans, it was like a dark shroud which had always kept him struggling in the darkness of his own fears, was lifted. The God that the Apostle Paul describe was nothing like the God he had been taught about at all. This was a God of love. This was a God who loved the world so much that he did not even withhold his only Son from suffering and death. This was a God who was not impressed with all the works of righteousness in the purchase of indulgences, collecting of relics, performance of masses, and all the other rituals the church had dictated were necessary to reach heaven.

The answer was really, quite simple. All God desired from us was our faith and trust in him, and Jesus had done the rest. Paul taught that the grace from God cannot be earned but was a free gift. For Luther, an overbearing burden had been lifted from his soul, and his whole world was changed. Thank the Lord that Luther did not keep this discovery to himself. With a passion he could not contain, he went out to tell everyone the truth. The world would never be the same. It would be turned upside down in one of the most dramatic shifts in history.

Since the time of Martin Luther, the relationship between the Catholic and Lutheran church has improved significantly over the years, with ongoing efforts toward unity and dialogue. While historical divisions remain, both churches have made strides in fostering mutual understanding.

One of the most important milestones was the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, signed in 1999, which acknowledged a shared belief in salvation by grace through faith. This was a major step in overcoming theological differences that had persisted since the Reformation.

Let us pray for the Catholic church in its new pope, Leo XIV. May the communion of saints of all the Christian faiths work together to share the good news of Jesus Christ, as we proclaim him as the one Lord and Savior for all people.

Yours in the Faith,

Pastor Greg

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM, APRIL 2025

OLD BUSINESS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Worship and Music**- The first payment for the organ restoration was made, have two more to make before the last one after organ is back and working. Haven't heard anything on the progress of the organ. So, hoping no news is good news. May 18- Music Sunday, June 8- Pentecost/Confirmation Sunday w/ Holy Communion, June 15- Holy Trinity Sunday w/ Holy Communion, & June 29- Peter and Paul Festival Sunday w/ Holy Communion.

2. **Parish Education**- Egg hunt went well and had about 45 kids. Had a lot of help to dye the eggs on Friday and to hide them on Saturday. Thanks to all the youth that helped!!

3. **Stewardship and Evangelism** – None

4. **Social Ministry** – Had 16 people for the foodbank. Has gotten a lot of help. Going to schedule a day for cleaning in the future. Foodbank has new signs that were donated by Chad Philips. He won't let the church pay him for them. Going to send him a card of thanks signed by the council.

5. **Youth** – Helped with the Egg Hunt and Dyeing of the eggs.

6. **Church Property** – Elevator-- Inspection by the state and elevator company went well. Elevator company is going to replace the hose to the cylinder that lifts it. They recommend replacing it every 5 years. Gardener-- Three people have volunteered to do it. Matt & John discussed it and are going to have Crystal Keys and family do it. Snowblower-- John put gas in it, and it started right up. It is suggested that we sell it since we don't have room to store it and its easier to shovel than to try and turn it around, John says. It's a 2014 model and has only been used 3-4 times. Discussion was held and decided we should sell it. Going to put it in the newsletter and bulletin asking for a \$100.00 donation for it. Motion to do so by Sharon

Erdman and seconded by Brenda Flynn. Approved. Kitchen roof-- New tin for the roof has been ordered at a cost of \$273.00. It will be one piece with no seems for leaks. Front steps-- Carl is going to be working on them.

7.**Budget and Finance** – Tracy got some prices for the plaque to put the names for the organ restoration donors. The best one is from Roger's Trophies near Sunbury. The price is \$303.00 for everything. the plaque will hold 40 names, there are only 35 names at this point so there is extra. The price Tracy says includes all engraving and everything. Discussion was had and a Motion to order it was made by Sharon Erdman & seconded by Brenda Flynn. Approved. Would like to do a love offering for Craig Schwartz and Bill Byle. Discussion was had on doing them together or separate. Decided to do them separately. Craig Schwartz on May 4 & 11 and Bill Byle o May 18 & 25.

8.**Fellowship** - Murder mystery was well received and got a lot of good comments. There were 26 volunteers in total to make this happen. We made a profit of \$1,178.00 with \$1,000.00 of it going to the organ fund. Next event will be on April 27 with a guinea pig lunch after worship. Please no actually roasted guinea pigs please. Would like some council members to help with the next basement cleanup date, which will be scheduled later. Some issues we need help with are 1. The green chairs that are stacked on the stage and in bad shape and the wooden ones that are no longer used. They are taking up space on the stage that is needed when doing performance's. Discussion was had on this matter and the green chairs since they are all torn will be disposed of. The wooden chairs, we will see if any other churches can use them for a donation to the organ restoration fund. 2. Kitchen Equipment and things being borrowed and not being signed out or letting anyone know that it's being borrowed. Had an incident that happened recently that the basement was reserved and when they came to use the basement for the party things were gone and they had to run and get stuff to use cause the church stuff was gone. Had a discussion on this and it was decided that going forward if you are going to borrow "anything" from the basement from the church you must contact either Susan Krause or Sandra Matter who are the co-chairs of the fellowship committee to let them know and make sure the basement is not being used.

9.**Mutual Ministry** – None

New Business – John read a letter from St. Peter Lutheran Church in Halifax inviting us to the 65-ordination anniversary celebration they are having for Retired Pastor Jay Bond on May 25, 2025. The letter was asking if anyone would like to attend or have a story to share about Jay. Please rsvp by May 18th. Decided to have the congregation sign a card and send it to him.

The Pastor's Time – Thanked Tim for a wonderful job on Holy Week stuff. There is a lot he does that people don't know has to be done. He also thanked all those behind-the-scenes people that made everything go smoothly. The whole week went extremely well.

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM , MAY 2025

OLD BUSINESS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1.**Worship and Music**- June 8th -Pentecost/Confirmation with Holy Communion, June 15th -Holy Trinity with Holy Communion, June 22nd -Healing Service, June 29th -St. Peter & St. Paul Festival Sunday with Holy Communion. Going to be doing Christmas in July again

collecting toys and monetary gifts for Human Services. Organ work is coming along, going to be coming in June sometime to start the rewiring of the organ.

2.**Parish Education**- Sandra Matter has taken over Jean's Sunday School Class currently and has also taken over as the contact and head of Bible School this year. Bible School is June 16th – 20th from 9-11:15am. Will need to reorganize to see where we go from here with all the stuff Jean did. Adult Sunday School is open to everyone and is a discussion time all are welcome to join.

3.**Stewardship and Evangelism** – None

4.**Social Ministry** – Had 15 people for the foodbank this month. Need more help!!!!

5. **Youth** – Need to regroup and have a meeting to figure out where we go from here.

6.**Church Property** – Matt and Dave Ferster are going to replace the rain spouting that came down in one of the storms we had. They are also helping Crystal Keys and Keith Klinger with some landscaping around the church. –Insurance Company did not say they wanted prof that the things they recommended last year were taken care of. Tracy is trying to get this straightened out, so they don't cancel the policy. –Need to scrape and paint around the windows and sills. –Need to figure out what we are going to do to fix the cracking plaster.

7.**Budget and Finance** – Plaque is ordered. Love offering for Craig Schwartz is done, starting the one for Bill Byle on Sunday.

8.**Fellowship** – Guinea Pig Dinner had about 35 people in attendance. Thanked Mike and Sharon for bringing the coffee for it.

9.**Mutual Ministry** – Mike has sent out an email to the members of the committee to schedule a meeting in June before the next council meeting.

New Business – Snow Blower has been sold, got more than was asking for it.

The Pastor's Time – Pastor Greg made a motion to confirm Breanna Davis on June 8th and seconded by Brenda Flynn. Approved. Pastor Greg would like to go from a 2-year class down to a 1-year class for the confirmation class. Discussion was held. Pastor Greg made a motion to make Confirmation class a 1-year class for 8th grade students, seconded by Carl Slough. Approved

2025 GIVING

\$47,580.86

2025 EXPENSES

\$56,182.25

Difference between YTD Giving & YTD Expenses \$-8,601.39

{For General Operating Fund}



Nathan Steinbach

!!!!ATTENTION, REMINDER!!!!

The Weekly Bulletin Deadline is TUESDAY!!!!!! If you do not have your items into the Office by **5pm Tuesday** it will **not** be in Sunday's Bulletin!!!!

Our Collage Graduate!!!

Nathan Steinbach Graduated from Messiah Collage on Saturday, May 10th, majoring in cyber security and a minor in theater. He currently is doing an internship at Penn State Health.

Congratulations on your Graduation!!!

Chefs Corner

Disneyland Peanut Butter Squares

14 whole graham cracker sheets
8 Tbsp. butter, softened
½ tsp. salt
4 Tbsp. shortening

2 cups peanut butter
2 tsp. vanilla
¾ cups powdered sugar
4 cups chocolate chips

Spray a 9×13-inch glass baking dish with non-stick spray. Place 2 whole graham cracker sheets in a bag and crush them into crumbs. Set aside. Mix the peanut butter, butter, vanilla, and salt. Slowly add the powdered sugar, a little at a time. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate chips with shortening. Heat for 30 seconds at a time, stirring between, until smooth. Be careful not to overcook. Lay the first layer of graham crackers (6 whole sheets) in sprayed baking dish. Pour about ⅓ of the chocolate into a thin layer over the graham crackers. Using your hands, take fistfuls of the peanut butter mixture and flatten it. Lay it on top of the chocolate layer. Cover as best you can without breaking the graham crackers below. You will use all the peanut butter mixture. Layer another ⅓ of the chocolate on top of the peanut butter and then layer again with graham crackers (6 whole sheets) and pour the remaining chocolate on top. Sprinkle the crushed graham cracker crumbs on top. Let cool in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour. Cut into squares, big or small.



Smoky Cheddar Ranch Chicken & Sausage Pasta

1 lb. chicken breast, diced
12 oz penne or rotini pasta
1 cup heavy cream
1 packet ranch seasoning mix
2 Tbsp. garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste

1 lb. smoked sausage, sliced
4 cups chicken broth
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup onion, diced
2 Tbsp. olive oil

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add diced chicken and sausage, cook until the chicken is browned. Add onion and garlic, cooking until softened. Stir in chicken broth, heavy cream, ranch seasoning, and uncooked pasta. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until pasta is cooked. Remove from heat and stir in shredded cheddar cheese until melted and creamy. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve warm, garnished with chopped parsley if desired.

Meatballs in a Rich Mushroom Gravy

1 lb. ground beef
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 egg
1 tsp. onion powder
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 cup sliced mushrooms
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

½ cup breadcrumbs
¼ cup chopped parsley
1 tsp. garlic powder
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup beef broth
1 packet onion soup mix

In a large bowl, combine the ground beef, breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, parsley, egg, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper. Mix until well combined and form into meatballs, about 1 inch in diameter. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Brown the meatballs on all sides, for about 5-7 minutes. Transfer the meatballs to the slow cooker. In the same skillet, add the sliced mushrooms and sauté for 3-4 minutes until they are tender. Add the beef broth, onion soup mix, and Worcestershire sauce, stirring to combine. Pour the mixture over the meatballs in the slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours or on high for 3-4 hours, until the meatballs are cooked through and tender. If you prefer a thicker gravy, mix cornstarch with a little water to create a slurry and stir it into the slow cooker during the last 30 minutes of cooking. Serve the meatballs over mashed potatoes or egg noodles, garnished with additional parsley if desired.

Jesus Is The Answer

*Jesus is the answer
To the needs of our world today
He is here to guide us
and protect us along life's way
He never will forsake us
His love for us is real
"Peace" He says, "I leave with you
My peace, now ye be still."*

*Jesus is the answer
We only need to pray
And ask Him to come into our hearts
And walk with us each day
he loves us more than anyone
He made the sacrifice
Just put your faith in Jesus
Through the blood he paid the price.*

*Jesus is the answer
He died for you and me
He arose again that we may live
With Him eternity
So ask Him into your heart today
In His glory you'll abound
Because Jesus is the answer
And through Him true peace is found!*

FOOD COLLECTION is the first Sunday of every month. The Food Bank is open on the second Saturday of every month, from 9 to 11 a.m.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE FOOD BANK are pasta, ketchup, canned pasta meals, and tuna. Thanks for your continued support.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

The Daily Devotionals for (July-September, 2025) are available in the narthex. Pick yours up or have someone get them for you.

THE 2025 FLOWER & BULLETIN SPONSOR CHARTS

The new charts are in the narthex. Please help by sponsoring them. If no one sponsors them the money comes out of the general fund which is not budgeted. If you would like to sponsor them and can't, make it to church please call the church office and leave a message at (717)-365-3139 or Email Tim at sulc.angel80@gmail.com. The price to sponsor the flowers is \$41 for both vases and \$21 for one. The bulletins are \$18 for all or \$9 for half.

RADIO SPONSORS ARE STILL NEEDED for the following dates in 2025, September 28, October 19, & December 21. If you sponsored a Sunday in the past, we did not carry individuals over, only Business's. If you would like to sponsor any of these dates, please contact Tracy Bixler at 1-570-449-3532 or email at bix@epix.net. Cost is \$50.00 a Sunday.



June 5- Nicole Martz
June 14- Melissa Peters
June 16- Cindy Wolfgang
June 23- Angie Sitlinger

June 13- Aaron Troutman
June 14- Tracie Ferster
June 18- Faith Reed
June 30- Brock Troutman

June 13- Brooklynne Dively
June 16- Ann Strohecker
June 20- Sandy Kissinger
June 30- Ethel McMullen

SERVING IN June & July

June 1, 2025

**7th Sunday of
Easter w/
Holy Communion**

Greeter: Lynn Schadle
Reader: Sharon Erdman
Usher: Mike Hartman
Glasses: Brenda Flynn

Altar: Keith Klinger

June 8, 2025

**Pentecost
Sunday w/
Holy Communion**

Greeter: Dennis Barge
Reader: Lynn Schadle
Usher: Matthew Ferster
Glasses: Sharon Erdman

Altar: John Novinger

June 15, 2025

**Holy Trinity
Sunday w/
Holy Communion**

Greeter: Deb Trautman
Reader:
Usher: Dave Strohecker
Glasses: Lisa Perkins

Altar: Dennis Barge

June 22, 2025

**2nd Sunday After
Pentecost**

Greeter: Barbara & Keith Klinger
Reader: Crystal Keys

June 29, 2025

**Peter & Paul
Sunday w/
Holy Communion**

Greeter: Mike Hartman
Reader: Barbara Klinger
Usher: Lynn Schadle
Glasses: Tracy Bixler

Altar: Susan Krause

JULY 6, 2025

**4th Sunday After
Pentecost w/
Holy Communion**

Greeter: Brooklynne Dively
Reader: Dennis Barge
Usher: Mike Hartman
Glasses: Linda Koppenhaver

Altar: Lynn Schadle

JULY 13, 2025

**5th Sunday After
Pentecost**

Greeter: Matthew Ferster
Reader: Mike Hartman

JULY 20, 2025

**6th Sunday After
Pentecost**

Greeter: John Novinger
Reader: Virginia Moore

JULY 27, 2025

**7th Sunday After
Pentecost**

Greeter: Virginia Moore
Reader: John Novinger

SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

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PO BOX 478

GRATZ, PA 17030

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Church Website: www.simeonchurch.org

YouTube channel: Simeon Church, Gratz PA

ELCA Website: www.elca.org

Lower Susquehanna Synod: www.lss-elca.org

“VOICE OF SIMEON” RADIO MINISTRY SPONSORS

June 1 – Buffington/Reed Funeral Home

June 8 – Willing Workers

June 15 – Hoffman’s Hatchery

June 22 – The Schadle Family

June 29 – Boardwalk Ice Cream of Gratz

We thank our local businesses and individuals that sponsor our “Voice of Simeon” Radio Ministry. It can be heard each Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m. on WQLV-98.9 FM.

Music Notes



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Onward, Christian Soldiers

Onward Christian Soldiers

1865

Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould was born in Exeter in 1834. His father, an officer with the East India Company, had a disabling carriage accident and decided that if he couldn't work, he could at least travel. As a result, little Sabine was dragged from one end of Europe to the other, year after year. It gave him an unsettled childhood, spotty schooling, and a wanderlust he never outgrew. He later managed to scrape through Cambridge, but for the most part he is remembered as a brilliant, self-taught scholar. That helps explain why he developed certain eccentric habits. When he taught school, for example, he kept a pet bat on his shoulder.

From Sabine's original mind flowed an endless number of books, articles, poems, hymns, and tracts. This particular hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers," was written on a Whitsunday's evening in the mid-1860s.

Whitsunday is better known as Pentecost Sunday, it got its "nickname" because it became a popular day for new Christians to be baptized. The baptismal candidates marched to the rivers or fonts wearing robes of white. Thus, it came to be called "White Sunday" or Whitsunday.

It was on this day in 1865, in the little town of Horbury, England, that Sabine stayed up late searching through hymnbooks for a martial-type hymn for children. The next day, Monday, all the village children were marching to the neighboring town for a Sunday School rally. Sabine wanted to give them a "marching

song" for the trip. Searching his hymnals and finding nothing, he began scribbling on a piece of paper, playing with words, dashing off lines until he had written a hymn of his own just for the occasion:

*Onward Christian Soldiers, / Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus / Going on before.*

"It was written in great haste," he later said, "and I am afraid some of the rhymes are faulty. Certainly, nothing has surprised me more than its popularity."

Perhaps you've noticed that several of our greatest "adult" hymns were originally written or translated for children. See, for example, the stories behind "All Creatures of Our God and King," "I sing the Mighty Power of God," "I heard the Voice of Jesus Say," and "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Add "Onward, Christian Soldiers" to that list, and visualize this eccentric preacher, singing in step, marching alongside the children—perhaps with a pet bat on his shoulder.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS:



Sunday, June 1 – Ascension Sunday Worship Service w/Holy Commu. 10:15a.m. /Food Collect.

Sunday, June 8 – Pentecost Sunday Service w/Holy Communion 10:15 a.m.

Monday, June 9 – Bible School Meeting 7pm

Saturday, June 14 – Food Bank Open 9-11 a.m./ **Flag Day**

Sunday, June 15 – Holy Trinity Worship Service w/Holy Commu. 10:15a.m. /Happy Father's Day

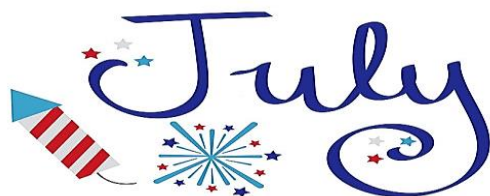
Monday, June 16th thru 20th Bible School will be held at the Gratz Park from 9-11a.m.

Thursday, June 19 – Council Meeting 7 p.m. / Juneteenth National Independence Day

Friday, June 20 – Deadline For July/August Newsletter!!!!!! **First Day of Summer!!!!**

Sunday, June 22 – Healing Worship Service 10:15a.m.

Sunday, June 29 – Peter & Paul Festival Worship Service w/Holy Communion 10:15a.m.



Friday, July 4 – INDEPENDENCE DAY

Sunday, July 6 - Worship Service w/Holy Communion 10:15a.m. /Food Collection

Saturday, July 12 - Food Bank Open, 9-11 a.m.

Sunday, July 13 - Worship Service 10:15am

Sunday, July 20 - Worship Service 10:15am

Sunday, July 27 - Worship Service 10:15am

We will again celebrate Christmas in July by 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 & make a child's Christmas better!!!!



Community Outreach -Talent Show/ Spaghetti Dinner – October 11th

This is a free event (donation only) for the community. Due to limited seating RESERVATIONS will be required. Stay tuned for more details. I know several people working on their acts, and you won't want to miss it. It's guaranteed to be another fun-filled evening. Keeping the Simeon Spirit alive!

BIBLE SCHOOL MEETING will be held on Monday June 9th at 7pm. If you need more information, please contact Sandra Matter at (717)-350-2775.

Palm Sunday Passion Play



The Cast was—Narrator-Pastor Greg, Jesus-Jason Dively, Peter-Keith Klinger, Pilate-Carl Slough, Priest-David Ferster, Crowd-the choir, Disciples-Matthew Ferster, Servant 1-Doris Flynn, Servant 2-Breanna Davis, Criminal 1-Andrew Romberger, Criminal 2-Nathan Steinbach, Soldier-Micheal Hartman, & Centurion-John Novinger. Thank you all!!!!

PRAYER REQUEST

Members – Craig Schwartz, Linda Koppenhaver, Rosalie Fetterolf, Julie Ferster, Janet Rumfelt, Barbara Klinger, Marie Lahr, Clair & Vivian Engle

Northern Dauphin Nursing & Rehab. - Kenneth Mace

Polk Apartments - Martha Koppenhaver, Charles Schoffstall

Friends & Family – Shirley Bixler, Dean Harner, Sherry Johns, Jeff Latsha, Linda Sitlinger, Randy Rebuck, Kathie Dresel, Dorothy Lettich Martin, Steve Dagen, Jim Troutman

Easter Egg Coloring and Hunt

