

The Simeon Spirit

SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

173 North Center Street, Gratz, PA

June 2024

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We are Easter People

Velma Seawell Daniels in her book “Celebrate Joy!”, tells of interviewing a man who had made a trip to Alaska to visit some people who lived above the Arctic Circle.

“Never ask an Eskimo how old he is,” the man said. “If you do, [the Eskimo] will say, ‘I don’t know and I don’t care.’ And,” the man added, “he doesn’t.”

He said an Eskimo told him that one time, and he pressed the Eskimo a bit further. He asked him a second time how old he was, and the Eskimo said, “Almost--that’s all.”

So he asked, “Almost what?” And the Eskimo said, “Almost one day.”

The man didn’t have a clue what the Eskimo meant by that until he talked to another man who had lived in the Arctic Circle for about twenty years. “He was a newspaperman who had written a book about the Eskimos and their customs and beliefs. He said the Eskimos believe that when they go to sleep at night they die--that they are literally dead to the world. Then, when they wake up in the morning, they have been resurrected and are living a new life. Therefore, no Eskimo is more than one day old. So, that is what the Eskimo meant when he said he was ‘almost’ a day old. The day wasn’t over yet.”

“Life above the Arctic Circle is harsh and cruel, and mere survival becomes a major accomplishment,” he explained further. “But, you never see an Eskimo who seems worried or anxious. They have learned to face life one day at a time.” (King Duncan. Sermons.com)

I like this story. It provides an interesting perspective on how to view both life and death. It is a cultural thing, but these Eskimos use a deep-rooted cognitive mechanism to protect themselves from worries and fears. Something like this must become so entrenched in your thought processes and subconscious else it is just a façade of denial.

When the coming of Pentecost, the official Easter season is past us now. The spiritual high we get on Easter morning is fading as we get back to the routines of daily living. Yet, how can we walk away from Easter without taking the heart of the Easter message with us? We celebrate the Risen Christ, the victory over death, and the assurance that because Christ rose from the dead, we will also to eternal life with God.

How can you measure eternity? One million years? One billion years? A trillion years? How about a quadrillion? That is 1,000,000,000,000,000 years, and we are just getting started. And God has promised that these will be the best years of our life, and he knows. He has lived it.

The gift of life is the gift of love, and no one can put a boundary around God's love. So we should be more like the Eskimos, living each day like it is our first day and an eternity. We are thus freed from the bondage of fear and worries that infect the rest of the world. As Paul so eloquently put it in Romans:

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is another year before the official Easter morning. Yet, let us not lose our zest for the passion of Easter. Make it more than an annual celebration. Make it a lifestyle. That is what it means to be Easter people. Every day is a new day. So may it be.

Yours in the Risen Lord,

Pastor Greg

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM, MAY 2024

OLD BUSINESS: Cleaning person - she started on May 4th, 2024. She will be cleaning every two weeks on a Saturday. Fellowship committee will be taking care of cleaning the basement. Organ – waiting on the contract from Columbia, Larry was working in Ohio and then got sick.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Worship and Music**- Ready for Pentecost and Holy Trinity Sunday's.

2. **Parish Education**- Bible School will be held June 10th -14th, 2024 at the Gratz park from 9:00-11:15 a.m.

3. **Stewardship and Evangelism** – Got a pledge to help fund the community day at the park from Bird in Hand Bank. Do not have a date yet for it. The date they wanted, someone else has taken the park that day. Need a person to represent the church at a meeting with the borough and others in the community on June 1, 2024. Asked for any volunteers? No one can make the meeting, so Matt is going to be the contact for the questionnaire to provide the church side of things.

4. **Social Ministry** – Foodbank needs volunteers to help clean and working the Saturday distribution days. If you can help in any way please see Lisa Perkins.

5. **Youth** – All the expenses are paid so far for the youth gathering. Going to need food money and daily expense money. Will need transportation to and from the airport. Lynn is going to see if he can borrow a 15 passenger van. A youth meeting is scheduled for next week.

6. **Church Property** – Got a quote to repair the roof spots from the insurance risk control evaluation from April. Quote is \$1,450.00 to fix the 2 spots on the roofs. Motion by Lynn Schadle to accept the quote and have the repairs made and seconded by Susan Krause. Approved. John will contact them to schedule the date for fixing the roof. Will fix the roof over the kitchen entrance to the basement as soon as it stops raining. Sensor for the furnace room is installed. Insurance company would like smoke detectors installed at some point.

7. **Budget and Finance** – Got a donation for the organ fund in Honor of Violet and Ramond Hartman. Have \$35,000.00 so far in the fund. Still have some pledges to come in yet. Going to cash in the Youth CD that comes due on June 1, 2024.

8. **Fellowship** – Talent show was a tremendous success. Mother’s Day booklet was a big hit too. The Murder Mystery for October 12, 2024, all the actors are booked and has people proof reading the script. As soon as script is ready will be giving it to the actors to learn parts. Cookbook is ordered and waiting to hear on when it is shipped and be here. There is 700 recipes in the book. With the extra books they give and what was ordered it will be around 390 cookbooks ordered.

9. **Mutual Ministry** – None

New Business – Lynn Schadle wants to make an announcement on Sunday to the church that Men in Harmony will be doing a concert on Sunday the 19th of May at 3 p.m. at Trinity UCC in Tower City. Historical Society will be having an Open House on Saturday May 25th from 12-4 all are welcome.

The Pastor's Time – Pastor Greg made a motion for approval of the following students to be confirmed on Sunday May 19, 2024, Pentecost Sunday. Brody Benjamin Barge, Brooklynne Mackenzie Dively, & Jason Bradly Dively having completed the Affirmation of Baptism Instruction. Motion was Seconded by Sharon Erdman. Approved. Has a funeral service on Saturday May 25, 2024 for Joe Laudenslager.

2024 GIVING

\$44,822.84

2024 EXPENSES

\$51,147.40

Difference between YTD Giving & YTD Expenses \$-6324.56
{For General Operating Fund}



We kicked off 2024 with a combination of Italian Food, Amateur Talent Night and Everyone’s Birthday Party all rolled into one. The committee wants to thank all who came out to celebrate. We had a packed house about 85 people in attendance (*it was hard to count with everyone moving around.*) A Special THANKS to our amazingly talented people for the entertainment: Leslie’s Amazing dance group, Jean Perkins, Lisa Perkins, Doris Flynn, Brenda Flynn, Ethan Roe, Brody Barge, Kierra Roe, Ruthie Sitlinger, Lynn Schadle, Jessica Sitlinger, Bruce Wolf, Aspen Keys, Andrew Romberger, Susan Krause. The food was amazing – thanks to everyone who brought food to share. It was a huge success. Stay tuned for upcoming events.

ORGAN REPAIR

At the Congregational Meeting on April 14, 2024 the Congregation approved the proposal from Columbia Organ Works company to repair the Organ. The Church is making a General Appeal to our members to contribute to the Organ Fund to cover the costs of this Project. Any funds leftover will remain in the Organ Fund for future work on the Organ. There are envelopes in the Narthex, for your use. The more we raise the less memorial money we will need to use. **THANK YOU** for supporting this priceless 96 year old *magnificent musical masterpiece*.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE FOOD BANK

Soup, pasta, fruit, & sugar free items.

SERVING IN JUNE & JULY

JUNE 2, 2024
2nd SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST w/
HOLY COMMUNION

Greeter: Jenny Sracic
Reader: Dennis Barge
Usher: Dave Strohecker Altar: Sharon Erdman
Glasses: Brenda Flynn

JUNE 9, 2024
3rd SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Anna Coleman
Reader: John Novinger

JUNE 16, 2024
4th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Darlene Novinger
Reader: Virginia Moore

JUNE 23, 2024
5th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Becky, Max, & Lincoln Hoover
Reader: John Novinger

JUNE 30, 2024
6th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Lynn Schadle
Reader: Barbara & Keith Klinger

JULY 7, 2024
7th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST w/
HOLY COMMUNION

Greeter: Dave Strohecker
Reader: Crystal Keys
Usher: Lynn Schadle
Glasses: Doris Flynn

Altar: John Novinger

JULY 14, 2024
8th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Dennis Barge
Reader: Sharon Erdman

JULY 21, 2024
9th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Deb Trautman
Reader: Lynn Schadle

JULY 28, 2024
10th SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Greeter: Barb & Keith Klinger
Reader: Doris Flynn

SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

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GRATZ, PA 17030

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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 2024

June 2 – Buffington/Reed Funeral Home

June 9 – Willing Workers

June 16 – Hoffman’s Hatchery

June 23 – James A. Reed Funeral Home

June 30 – The Hartman and Kessler Families

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS:



Sunday, June 2 - Worship Service w/Holy Communion 10:15a.m. /Food Collection

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

Sunday, June 9- Worship Service 10:15 a.m.

Monday, June 10th thru 14th Bible School will be held at the Gratz Park from 9-11a.m.

Friday, June 14 – Flag Day

Sunday, June 16 – Worship Service 10:15a.m. /Happy Father's Day /Church Picnic at the Gratz Park following worship

Wednesday, June 19 – Juneteenth National Independence Day

Thursday, June 20 – Council Meeting 7 p.m. /First Day of Summer!!!

Friday, June 21 – Deadline For July/August Newsletter!!!!!!

Sunday, June 23 – Worship Service 10:15a.m.

Sunday, June 30 – Healing Worship Service 10:15a.m.



Thursday, July 4 – INDEPENDENCE DAY

Sunday, July 7 - - Worship Service w/Holy Communion 10:15a.m. /Food Collection

Saturday, July 13 - Food Bank Open, 9-11 a.m.

Sunday, July 14 - Worship Service 10:15am

Sunday, July 21 - Worship Service 10:15am

Saturday, July 27 – Community Day at Gratz Park

Sunday, July 28 - Worship Service 10:15am



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 & make a child's Christmas better!!!!



Members – Gloria Klinger, Julie Ferster, Sandra Matter, Cindy Wolfgang, Janet Rumfelt, Barbara Klinger, Marie Lahr, Clair & Vivian Engle, David Hartman, Jim Neiswender

Northern Dauphin Nursing & Rehab. - Kenneth Mace

Polk Apartments - Martha Koppenhaver, Charles Schoffstall

Friends & Family – Jeff Latsha, Shirley Reed, Amanda Marie Beiler, Sheri Johns, Darlene Hain, Miriam Logan, Linda Sitlinger, Randy Rebeck, Blair Deitrich, Kathie Dresel, Dorothy Lettich Martin, Steve Dagen, Rahn Erdman, Jim Troutman

Chefs Corner



Goulash

1 Tbsp. olive oil	1 lb. ground beef
1 cup onion, finely chopped	1 carrot, grated
1 celery stick, finely chopped	3 garlic cloves, minced
Salt and pepper to taste	1 tsp. oregano
¼ tsp. sugar	2 Tbsp. tomato paste
1 (28 oz.) can crushed tomatoes	1 Tbsp. Worcestershire
2 cups chicken broth	1 cup water
2 cups macaroni pasta	¼ cup parmesan cheese

In a 5 1/2 qt. Dutch oven or heavy pot, heat the olive oil over medium/high heat. Add the ground beef and break it up with a spatula, cooking for about a minute. Stir in the carrot, onion, celery, and garlic. Cook until the vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes. Season with salt, oregano black pepper, and sugar. Add the crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, chicken stock, and water into the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and let it cook for 20 minutes. Mix in the macaroni pasta, ensuring it's fully submerged. Continue to simmer, covered, for about 20 minutes or until the pasta is tender, stirring occasionally. Add extra water by 1/4 cup increments if needed to maintain a moist and saucy consistency. Once the pasta is cooked, stir in the grated parmesan cheese. Adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if necessary. Serve the goulash hot, topped with additional parmesan cheese.

Carrot Cake Whoopie Pies

2 cups all-purpose flour	1 tsp. baking soda
1½ tsp. ground cinnamon	½ tsp salt
½ cup unsalted butter, softened	½ cup brown sugar
½ cup granulated sugar	2 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract	1½ cups grated carrots
1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)	

Filling

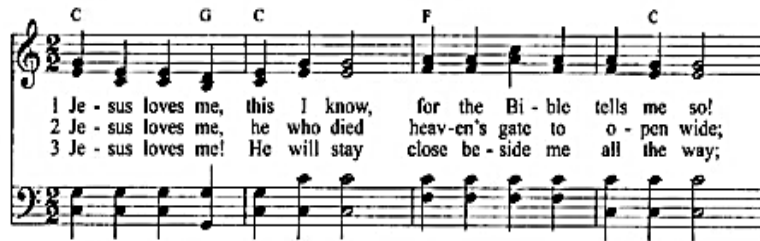
½ cup cream cheese, softened	¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
2 cups powdered sugar	1 tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350* and line baking sheets with parchment paper. Mix flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt in a medium bowl. In a large bowl, beat butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar until fluffy. Incorporate eggs and vanilla. Gradually add dry ingredients, then fold in carrots and walnuts. Drop tablespoon-sized balls of dough onto the prepared sheets, 2 inches apart. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until golden. Cool on sheets, then on racks. Filling: Beat cream cheese and butter till smooth. Add powdered sugar and vanilla, beat until creamy. Spread filling on half the cookies; top with remaining cookies to form sandwiches.

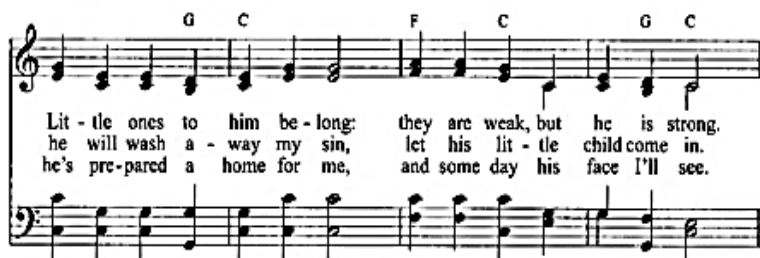
Music Notes



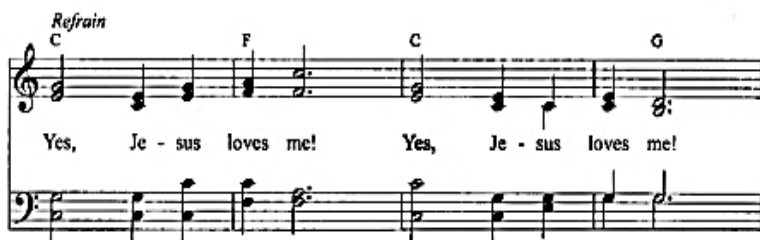
Jesus Loves Me



1 Je - sus loves me, this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so!
2 Je - sus loves me, he who died heav-en's gate to o - pen wide;
3 Je - sus loves me! He will stay close be - side me all the way;



Lit - tle ones to him be - long: they are weak, but he is strong.
he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
he's pre - pared a home for me, and some day his face I'll see.



Refrain
Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me!



Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so.

Jesus Loves Me

1860

Anna and Susan Warner lived in a lovely townhouse in New York City where their father, Henry Whiting Warner, was a successful lawyer. But the "Panic of 1837" wrecked the family's finances, forcing them to move into a ramshackle Revolutionary War-era home on Constitution Island on the Hudson, right across from the Military Academy at West Point.

Needing to contribute to the family income, Anna and Susan began writing poems and stories for publication. Anna wrote "Robinson Crusoe's Farmyard," and Susan wrote, "The Wide, Wide World." The girls thus launched parallel literary careers which resulted in 106 publications, eighteen of them co-authored.

One of their most successful joint projects was a novel titled *Say and Steal* in which a little boy named Johnny Fox is dying. His Sunday School teacher, John Linden, comforts him by taking him in his arms, rocking him, and making up a little song: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so....."

The novel became a best-seller, second only to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; and when hymn writer William Bradbury read the words of John Linden's little song (written by Anna), he composed a childlike musical score to go along with them. "Jesus Loves Me," soon became the best-known children's hymn on earth.

Despite their success, the Werner sisters never seemed able to recover from the staggering

financial reverses of 1836. Years later a friend wrote, "One day when sitting with Miss Anna in the old living room she took from one of the cases a shell so delicate that it looked like lace work and holding it in her hand, with eyes dimmed with tear, she said, 'There was a time when I was very perplexed, bills were unpaid, necessities must be had, and someone sent me this exquisite thing. As I held it I realized that God could make this beautiful home for a little creature. He would take care of me.'"

For forty years, Susan and Anna conducted Bible classes for cadets at West Point, and both were buried with full military honors. They are the only civilians buried in the military cemetery at West Point. To this day, their home on Constitution Island is maintained by West Point as a museum to their memory.

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

THANK YOU

We give special thanks to John & Carla Hoffman for the beautiful landscaping they have done around the church. It gives a person great joy to see the beauty of it when you come to church. Many thanks and blessings to you, John & Carla.

FLAG DAY

June 14th is Flag Day. It commemorates the adoption of the Stars and Stripes of the United States on June 14, 1777, by resolution of the Second Continental Congress. On this day, we *celebrate* the Flag of the United States of America.

To be clear, we ought not *worship* the American Flag, but we should spend time reflecting upon the philosophical and theological foundation in which the Star Spangled Banner represents. Contrary to popular opinion, The United States of America is based upon theology. Not just mere theology, but a theological objective truth:

“We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights...”

Notice the “Creator” with a capital “C.” This is where objective, unalienable, and equal human rights come from — not from a government comprised of humans. This is why we ought to treat everyone with respect — and why it is objectively wrong, even for a government comprised of humans, to violate a fellow human’s objective and unalienable rights.

Although our nation has not always acted consistently with our theological underpinnings, these underpinnings are the epitome of “GREAT,” if not nearly perfect. Indeed, this foundation of self-evident objective truths has allowed us to correct horrible sins in the past. The American Flag also symbolizes the hope we have to correct the sins our nation is plagued with today.

For example, today we murder little humans by the millions while the masses “shout their abortion” with pride! We abuse and mutilate children who can’t distinguish fantasy from reality. We cannot even define what a woman is (so much for women’s rights), allow men to dominate women’s sports, and we celebrate being prideful of sin for the entire month of June (if not the entire year). We must turn back to God!

America was never perfect. No nation prior to The Kingdom of God in the New Heavens and New Earth will be perfect. However, because the philosophical and theological foundations of America are objectively true, our nation has approximated to perfection to a greater degree than any other nation in the history of the world. We have since lost our way and are quickly “progressing” to destruction.

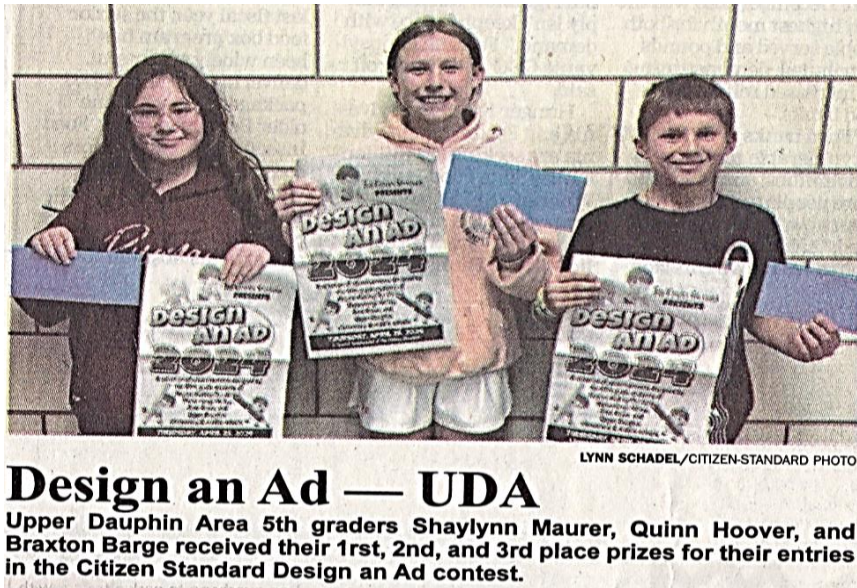
Our nation must get back on track. We must get back to the theological truth — that all humans possess equal rights given to us by our Creator — that The American Flag represents.

Do not merely wave the Red, White, and Blue today. Spend time reflecting upon our nation’s theological foundations in which this beautiful flag represents. Spend time thinking about how the God revealed in The Bible is the only way to make sense of the equal human rights in America’s Declaration of Independence.

Make America Theological Again.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

The Daily Devotionals for July - September, 2024 are available in the narthex. Pick yours up or have someone get them for you.



Congratulations Braxton Barge

GRANDMA'S APRON

The principle use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath because she only had a few. It was also because it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and aprons used less material. But along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids.

And when the weather was cold, Grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls.

In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men folk knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner.

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the window sill to cool.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old-time apron' that served so many purposes.

Author Unknown