

The Simeon Spirit

SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

173 North Center Street, Gratz, PA

November 2024

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A Thanksgiving of the Heart

Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)

It was October of 1863. The civil war, which at the beginning many believed would be concluded in six months...perhaps a year, was now in its third year. Just a few months before the war had come to a crescendo at a little rural town in Pennsylvania known as Gettysburg. It was a Union victory. A much-needed victory after a series of battlefield disasters with costly losses for the Union. It also stopped Robert E. Lee’s first and last attempt to invade the north.

Abraham Lincoln was a deeply thoughtful man. Lincoln knew the war would continue for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, inspired by a letter written to the president by Sarah Josepha Hale, a 74-year-old magazine editor, Lincoln declared that the last Thursday in November should be dedicated as...“Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who is in the Heavens. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.” The rest is history.

The Apostle Paul would have approved of Lincoln’s action. Yet Paul calls all Christians to observe thanksgiving as a perpetual daily practice. Paul understood that all things good are gifts from God, and the greatest gift was the life of his son, Jesus Christ. “Rejoice!”, Paul commands. And this is from a man who was at the time imprisoned for his faith with the very real possibility of a death sentence in the future. Nevertheless, Paul understood that a life in Christ is never wasted, never too short, and never without purpose.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let us not wait for the last Thursday of November to observe Paul’s calling, but make it a daily practice and way of life. For in prayer and thanksgiving, we find the peace only God can give. For that reason. we have good reason to be thankful.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,
Pastor Greg

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM OCTOBER, 2024

OLD BUSINESS: ***Correction to the minutes from September is the Fall Festival for this year is canceled not the MI Foundation Meeting. This information was somehow deleted.

Have not heard anything yet about the MI Foundation information that was sent to them as to if they will donate to the organ renovation. Organ contract is signed. Work will begin in January and should be finished by April 18, 2025.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Worship and Music**- October 27th, Reformation Sunday -November 3rd, All Saints Sunday & Bishop visit- November 10th, Music Sunday -November 17th, Healing Service -November 24th, Christ the King Sunday -November 27th, Thanksgiving Eve Service -November 30th, Decorate the Church for Advent & Christmas at 9a.m.

2. **Parish Education**- None

3. **Stewardship and Evangelism** – None

4. **Social Ministry** – Had 14 families for September. Getting 2 smaller shopping carts.

5. **Youth** – Haunted House October 31st at the Gratz park.

6. **Church Property** – John & Carla Hoffman are going to retire from maintaining the flower beds around the church at the beginning of the year. Would anyone like to volunteer to take this over? Going to put in the newsletter and bulletin in the new year asking for volunteers. The roof over the basement kitchen entrance will be just patched for now. Need to find a place to store the snow blower. Going to see if the roof over the steps to the kitchen can be extended to add a place to store it.

7. **Budget and Finance** – The 2025 proposed budget was handed out and Tracy went over a few things. Council will now look it over and vote on it at the November meeting.

8. **Fellowship** – Soup Sunday November 3rd. Cookies after the Sunday School Christmas program on Sunday, December 22, 2024.

9. **Mutual Ministry** – None

10. **Nominating** – Still working on asking people to serve on council. Will have the names by November meeting.

New Business – Need 2 lay people (1 male & 1 female) to go to the Synod Assembly next year in June to elect the next Bishop. Asked for volunteers. Matthew Ferster & Tracy Bixler said to tentatively put them down. Going to ask the congregation if anyone would like to volunteer. Has a family that would like their 3rd grader to have Holy Communion instruction and be able to take communion. Pastor Greg feels that 3rd graders are able to understand and know the meaning of it. Discussion was had. Pastor Greg made a motion to allow 3rd graders to receive Holy Communion instruction, seconded by Brenda Flynn. Approved. It was mentioned that Julie Ferster has breast cancer and would like to do a love offering. Susan Krause made motion to have a love offering on Sunday's, October 27th & November 3rd, Seconded by Sharon Erdman.

The Pastor's Time – Pastor Greg thanks everyone for the pastor appreciation card. He would like to visit his family in Virginia in November. Asking for vacation time of November 18-25, 2024. Susan Krause made motion to approve vacation time, seconded by Brenda Flynn. Approved. Tracy Bixler suggested since pastor Greg is on vacation on Sunday, November 24 (Christ the King Sunday) that Music Sunday be moved to the 24th and no Holy Communion. Then we do not need a supply pastor, everyone agreed. Going to ask Dennis Barge, Mike Hartman, or Lynn Schadle if they would lead worship that day.

2024 GIVING

\$98,885.49

2024 EXPENSES

\$111,143.66

**Difference between YTD Giving & YTD Expenses \$-12,258.17
{For General Operating Fund}**

“VOICE OF SIMEON” RADIO MINISTRY SPONSORS

November 2024

November 3 - Buffington/Reed Funeral Home

November 10 - Willing Workers

November 17 - Bellevue Bees

November 24 - Ray & Jean Deppen

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.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE FOOD BANK

Brownie mix, sugar, cooking oil, cake mix, canned tuna, & pasta.

DAILY DEVOTIONALS

The Daily Devotionals for (October - December, 2024) are available in the narthex. Pick yours up or have someone get them for you.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

We want to thank all our church members who keep sending their offering envelopes through the postal system as well as coming to church in person to worship and donate that way. If you still belong as a member of our church and go elsewhere to services, we still appreciate your offerings, as well as missing your fellowship and presence with us. God be with you.

2024 CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE

The 2024 calendars are here and in the narthex. Please pick some up and give them to your neighbors and friends!!!

HARVEST SUNDAY THANKS

Thanks to all who donated to our foodbank in honor of Harvest Sunday. A large amount of food was received and is going to those in need. THANK YOU ALL!!!!



Members – Craig Schwartz, Marlin Erdman, Celin Sitlinger, Julie Ferster, 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 – *Tricia Hile Rebuck, Ken Keiter, Miriam Logan, Jon Bower, Jeff Latsha, Shirley Reed, Linda Sitlinger, Randy Rebuck, Blair Deitrich, Kathie Dresel, Dorothy Lettich Martin, Steve Dagen, Jim Troutman*

SERVING IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

November 3, 2024

All Saints

Sunday w/ *Holy*

Communion

Greeter: Deb Trautman

Reader: Becky Hoover

Usher: Matt Ferster

Glasses: Linda Koppenhaver

Altar: John Novinger

& Dennis Barge

November 10, 2024

25th Sunday after

Pentecost

Greeter: Lynn Schadle

Reader: Mike Hartman

November 17, 2024

26th Sunday after

Pentecost

Greeter: Becky, Max, & Lincoln Hoover

Reader: Dennis Barge

November 24, 2024

Christ the King

& Music Sunday

Greeter: Barbara & Keith Klinger

Reader: John Novinger

November 27, 2024

Thanksgiving Eve

Greeter: Susan Krause

Reader: Virginia Moore

December 1, 2024

1st Sunday of

Advent w/ *Holy*

Communion

Greeter: Mike Hartman

Reader: Tracy Bixler

Usher: Dave Strohecker

Glasses: Virginia Moore

Altar: Sharon Erdman

December 8, 2024

2nd Sunday of

Advent

Greeter: Doris Flynn

Reader: Nathan Steinbach

December 15, 2024

3rd Sunday of

Advent

Greeter: Matt Ferster

Reader: Jason Dively

December 22, 2024

4th Sunday of

Advent

Greeter: John Novinger

Reader: Lynn Schadle

December 24, 2024

Christmas Eve

Service w/ *Holy*

Communion

Greeter: Virginia Moore

Reader: Keith Klinger

Usher: Matt Ferster

Glasses: Brenda Flynn

Altar: Lynn Schadle &

John Novinger

December 29, 2024

1st Sunday After

Christmas

Greeter: Susan Krause

Reader: Sharon Erdman

SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

173 NORTH CENTER STREET

PO BOX 478

GRATZ, PA 17030

Rev. Gregory B. Lindsey, Pastor

Church Phone: (717)365-3139

Pastor Cell: (717)521-9402

Secretary Email: sulc.angel80@gmail.com

Church Website: www.simeonchurch.org

YouTube channel: Simeon Church, Gratz PA

ELCA Website: www.elca.org

Lower Susquehanna Synod: www.lss-elca.org

UPCOMING EVENTS:



Wednesday, November 1- All Saints Day

Sunday, November 3 - All Saints Sunday Worship Service & Bishop visit w/Holy Comm. /Food Collect/Fellowship after church w/soup & sandwiches.

Tuesday, November 5 – Election Day

Saturday, November 9 - Food Bank Open, 9-11 a.m.

Sunday, November 10 –Worship Service 10:15am

Monday, November 11 – Veterans Day

Sunday, November 17 - Healing Worship Service 10:15am

Monday, November 18th – 25th Pastor Greg on Vacation

Thursday, November 21 - Council Meeting 7 p.m.

Friday, November 22 – December Newsletter Deadline

Sunday, November 24 – Christ the King & Music Sunday Worship Service 10:15am

Wednesday, November 27- Thanksgiving Eve Service 7p.m.

Thursday, November 28- HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!!!!

Saturday, November 30 – Decorate the Church 9:00a.m.



Sunday, December 1 – 1st Sunday of Advent Worship Service w/Holy Communion /Food Collect 10:15a.m. /Christmas Tea 2p.m.

Saturday, December 7 – Pearl Harbor Day

Sunday, December 8 – 2nd Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15a.m.

Saturday, December 14 - Food Bank Open 9-11 a.m.

Sunday, December 15 – 3rd Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15a.m.

Wednesday & Thursday, December 18 & 19 – Little Hands Christmas Parties

Thursday, December 19 - Council Meeting 7 p.m.

Friday, December 20 - Newsletter Deadline For January Newsletter!!!!!!

Saturday, December 21 – First day of Winter

Sunday, December 22 – 4th Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15a.m. /**Sunday School Program** & Fellowship with cookies after worship

Tuesday, December 24 P.M. – Christmas Eve Worship Service w/Holy Communion 7p.m.

Wednesday, DECEMBER 25–MERRY CHRISTMAS-CHRIST THE LORD IS BORN!!

Sunday, December 29 – 1st Sunday of Christmas Worship Service 10:15 a.m.

Tuesday, December 31 - New Years Eve

Music Notes



When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder 107

J. M. B.

J. M. Black



1. When the trum-pet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no
2. On that bright and cloud-less morn-ing when the dead in Christ shall
3. Let us la-bor for the Mas-ter from the dawn till set-ting



more, And the morn-ing breaks e-ter-nal, bright and fair— When the
rise And the glo-ry of His res-ur-rec-tion share— When His
sun, Let us talk of all His won-drous love and care; Then when



saved of earth shall gath-er o-ver on the oth-er shore, And the
cho-sen ones shall gath-er to their home be-yond the skies, And the
all of life is o-ver and our work on earth is done, And the



roll is called up yon-der—I'll be there! When the roll — is called up yon-der,



When the roll — is called up yon-der, When the roll — is called up yon-der, When the



came down with him. When his bare feet hit the damp ground, the electricity shot through him like bolts of lightning. His mother, who had been interred with the students, tried to reach him, but the others held her back or she, too, would have been electrocuted. Finally someone found an old wooden stool and managed to detach the electrical wire, but it was too late.

At roll call night, when the name “Brian Thompson” was called, there was no answer. David Mitchell later wrote: “Our principal and Mr. Houghton led a very solemn yet triumphant funeral service the next day. The shortness of life and the reality of eternity were brought home to us with force as Paul Bruce related that Brian had missed the roll call at camp but had answered one in Heaven. How important it was for us to sing and know, “When the Roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.””

When the Roll is Called Up Yonder 1893

This old favorite was inspired by disappointment. James Black was calling roll one day for a youth meeting at his Methodist church in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. One name didn't answer—young Bessie, the daughter of an alcoholic. Crestfallen at her absence, James commented, “O God, when my name is called up yonder, may I be there to respond!” Returning home, a thought struck him while opening the gate. Entering the house, he went to the piano and wrote the words and music effortlessly.

Years later, this song comforted a group of traumatized children in a Japanese concentration camp. In his book, *A Boy's War*, David Mitchell, tells of being in boarding school in Chefoo, China, during the Japanese invasion. On November 5, 1942, the students and faculty were marched from their campus and eventually ended up in Weih sien Concentration Camp.

Among the students was Brian Thompson, a lanky teenager. One evening about a year before the war ended, Brian was restless, waiting for the evening roll call which was long overdue. A bare wire from the searchlight tower was sagging low, and some of the older boys were jumping up and touching it with their fingers. “Whew, I got a shock off that,” said one.

Brian decided to try. Being taller than the others, his hand was drawn into the wire, and it

Chefs Corner



Rice Krispie Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 cup butter, softened	1 cup brown sugar
1 cup granulated sugar	2 tsp. vanilla
2 egg	2 cup flour
1 tsp. baking powder	1 tsp. baking soda
2 cup Rice Krispie cereal	2 cup rolled oats
2 cup chocolate chips	

Preheat the oven to 350*. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and baking soda. Set aside. In a large bowl, cream together the butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar with an electric mixer for 3 minutes, until light and fluffy. Next add the eggs and vanilla to the butter mixture, and mix for another 2 minutes until fully combined. Gradually add the flour mixture to the wet ingredients, mixing until just combined. Stir in the rolled oats, Rice Krispie cereal, and chocolate chips, ensuring everything is evenly distributed. Use a cookie scoop to place dough balls onto the prepared baking sheet, spacing them about 2 inches apart. Bake for 9-10 minutes, or until the edges start to turn light golden brown. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Country Ranch Green Beans 'n Potatoes with Bacon

1 lbs. fresh green beans, trimmed	1½ lbs. baby potatoes halved or quartered
8 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled	1 packet ranch seasoning mix
3 Tbsp. butter, melted	2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste	

In a large pot, bring salted water to a boil. Add the potatoes and cook for 10-12 minutes, or until they are tender when pierced with a fork. Drain and set aside. In the same pot, bring water to a boil and cook the green beans for 5-7 minutes, until tender-crisp. Drain and set aside. While the veggies are cooking, fry the bacon in a skillet until crispy. Remove the bacon and crumble it. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the bacon grease in the skillet. In a small bowl, whisk together the melted butter, ranch seasoning, and minced garlic. In the skillet with the reserved bacon grease, toss the cooked potatoes, green beans, and crumbled bacon. Pour the ranch butter mixture over everything and gently toss to coat and serve.

Garlic Butter Pork Chops

4 bone-in pork chops (1 inch thick)	3 Tbsp. olive oil
2 Tbsp. butter	4 cloves minced garlic
2 sprigs fresh thyme	Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 350*. Season the pork chops with salt and pepper. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Sear the pork chops until golden brown on both sides (about 3-4 minutes per side). Remove from the skillet and set aside. In the same skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add minced garlic and thyme, cooking until fragrant. Return the seared pork chops to the skillet, spooning the garlic butter over them. Place the browned pork chops in a baking dish and pour the garlic butter sauce over top. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until the pork chops are cooked through.