GREETINGS AND "MESSAGES" FROM <u>THE HILL</u> ST. JOHN'S CHURCH AUBURN



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Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. (Psalm 127:3)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ...

As I type this article we are uncertain when we will commence worshiping together. Gov. Wolf decrees and grants his permission that certain counties may "open" for limited business. Schuylkill County isn't one of them. Hopefully, by the time this article arrives in your homes hopefully we will be a "yellow county" and we will be back to Sunday morning worship.

I must ask the question, what have we learned in the pandemic? I was heartened in the early weeks of this crisis when I saw politicians set aside their political agendas to work for the safety and accord of the country and our state. They declared a "cease fire in this Cold Civil war" our country seems to be engaged in. Unfortunately the unity didn't last long, the politicians slid back into their typical manner of governance. They politicized the Wuhan pandemic crisis. The old saying "a leopard can't change its spots" seems to ring true for them. Sadly, their behavior doesn't surprise me and I didn't learn anything new there. Enough of this - again what have we learned?

I believe we have learned many positive things. We have learned what is important in life. With the "Social Distancing" we have learned that relationships are of paramount importance. With sports cancelled, nightly meetings cancelled, schools and work cancelled, families are spending time together. As I looked on my social media pages I see wonderful pictures of families enjoying this time. I've seen pictures of families playing musical instruments together, going on outdoor hikes, fathers and sons kicking a soccer ball back and forth. I see videos of families laughing, smiling, and enjoying each other as truly a gift. For some this has been a wake up call so to speak. Some of our families and friends contracted the Wuhan Virus. They have recovered but it was a terrible scare. I believe the Wuhan Virus with our ruler's decrees of social distancing have caused us to reevaluate our relationships with family, friends and with God.

I suppose many of us took our Sunday morning worship time for granted. Now, we look forward to seeing our fellow believers and to interact with them. We look forward in gathering at God's table to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion. We look forward to singing praises to our Lord, hear the Word read and proclaimed. I personally will appreciate Sunday mornings now more than ever.

Subsequently, when we commence our Sunday morning worship it won't be the same for us. As a result of what some have learned of family through this pandemic San Kimmel will no longer be part of our worship team. San has resigned as our Director of Music and our organist. San would like to spend time with her children and grandchildren. She will share a weekend a month with her son and another weekend with her daughter's families who live in Virginia and New York. San will remain a valued member of St. John's and will help out as supply whenever she can. Please thank her for her service to us and her service to her Lord Jesus as well. Sunday mornings will not be the same without her.

We all have learned much during this crisis. We have learned what is important and what isn't important. We have learned much about ourselves and about our relationships with others. We have learned that God the Father was never bound by a governor's decrees of social distancing because during this pandemic He walked right next to us. During this time, God the Holy Spirit was teaching us what is really important, Jesus was giving us His peace. Till we gather again, may the Lord continue to bless you and your families.

In His service...

Pastor Breiner

Mission Update:

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After speaking with Mark Riedel and prayerful deliberation we think it best to cancel our July Mission trip. We all have been looking forward to helping the people in Kentucky but we can't guarantee anyone's safety or endangering the people we ultimately want to help. That's the bad news.

Here is the Good News! We can do something however. Christian Application Project asked Mark if it would be possible for us to make "masks" for the people at the mission and for those people in Application Region. Is this a project you would want to take on? Hey, we can do this from our own homes.

Mark & Sandi Riedel have offered to ship the MASKS where they have to go. The deadline for the shipping is June 20. If you will be making masks, please contact Mark or Sandi at 570-366-2244 so your masks can be included in the shipment.

Again it is with a heavy heart that we cancel the mission trip. When this is all over, I have no doubt we will prayerfully consider another mission project. May God bless you and your families. Easter Blessings to you all. Please know and tell the world that Christ IS Risen!

Pastor Breiner



June, **2020**

A message from the Joint Board

Joint Board Updates:

- We are sad to announce the resignation of San Kimmel, our music director. Please see her letter to the Board and the congregations. On a bright note, we have 3 people interested in the position, and 2 planned interviews at the time of my writing this.
- The pastor is giving live sermons on our FaceBook page at the same time as the normally scheduled service. If you do not have a computer, internet or cell phone, he is presenting the service in church. YES, you MAY come and listen to the service in St. John's. Please do not sit near others for everyone's health safety. It is now the 6 foot rule of distancing. There MIGHT be 2 other worshipers in attendance. (The letter from Ami Dalkner was supposed to only go the Board members for discussion. It was not supposed to be published.)
- When we anticipate opening the church to everyone, our sextons will take appropriate measures to clean the church before public opening. Jack & I discussed this at the beginning of the quarantine.
- We do not have a date as yet when we will be able to meet for worship services. We will probably use the Emergency Call-Chain to inform everyone when we can worship in the church again.
- Meetings have been cancelled, so there is nothing else new to report.
- I did a volunteer schedule just to be prepared.
- At this time, it is unknown as to when the confirmation class will be officially brought into the church.

- The lift IS completed! You must "PRESS & **HOLD**" the buttons to make it work.
- The annual church picnic is scheduled for Sept. 20.
- In this time of health crisis, if you need groceries or other supplies, please let me know. I travel Rte 61 to Reading & back almost daily. I can pick-up & deliver.

May God keep His arms around each and every one of you. Keep your church's leaders in your prayers, so that we keep an open ear and heart to God's voice, and do His will, not ours.

Remember to focus on Christ Jesus and the future & to share Christ's love with your neighbors!

Peace & Hugs, Betty R. 570-573-1143



There will be open meeting of the task force on Tuesday, June 2 at 6 P.M. The by-laws and constitution are being gone over with a fine tooth comb. The meeting is open to all members of the church.



They are doing a fine job! The church grounds,

including the church signs, look 'picture perfect.' We are so blessed to have such a committed crew. The following letter of resignation was received from Sandra Kimmel on April 27th

Dear Pastor Breiner, St. John's Council, St. John's Consistory, church family and friends,

This pandemic has made me realize what is really important to me, my family. After prayerful contemplation, I feel that I must resign from the position of Music Director at St. John's Church Auburn, PA. effective June 1, 2020.

I wish to have a bigger role in the lives of my grandchildren. As they are all in school Monday through Friday that leaves only weekends to see them. I know many of you are also grandparents who have good relationships with your families, including children and grandchildren and can understand this. My grandchildren are each a 3-hour plus drive away, in different directions. I miss them and wish to be part of their lives.

Enclosed is a check for **To** use toward the operating expenses of the church. I am not leaving the church, just the Music Director position.

Sincerely, San Kimmel

2067 King Avenue, Pottsville, PA 17901



you! Th tl

215-429-4823 <u>sankimmel@gmail.com</u>

Thanks so much to San for her beautiful music for the past 3 years! We have all enjoyed your talents as music director.



Thanks to our members who continue to mail donations to support St. John's ministry. Your support is appreciated.

Rules for St. John's Cemeteries:



Any work performed in the cemetery must be approved by the cemetery committee or parish office.

No digging or planting of any trees or shrubs (flowers, etc. limited to one foot in front of the headstone)

Cleanup dates of cemetery are March 15th, August 1st, <u>and</u> November 1st. All items must be removed by these dates or they will be discarded

The Food Mobile ('Helping Harvest') ALWAYS the 3rd Wed. of the month. Will be in <u>the Auburn Borough Building</u> on Wed., June 17th from 10 to 12 noon 79 families were helped in May.





The food bank will be up at the Borough bldg. till further notice.

Due to the corona virus scare I have decided to <u>cancel</u> the Fun Day planning meeting until further notice. When we get through this trying time we can reschedule. Jot down your ideas and REMEMBER we can still call each other. Thank you and I pray we all stay healthy! Peggy

Face book is here to stay! We have church services online..every

Sunday at 9 A.M. Join us as Pastor Breiner takes us through our Sunday morning worship. And if you sleep in you can still watch the Facebook recorded video at your convenience.

New Web site for St. John's Auburn

Website: https://www.stjohnsauburn.com

Special thanks to Dennis Reed, Jr. for his expertise with the new and improved web site.

A special note: If anyone is in need of basic needs pick-up and delivery in the local area, or require assistance, Rick Wessner and Ami Dalkner may be available to help. Rick – 570-640-1752 Ami – 484-951-8374

Food Pantry Donations: Can you help????

Our donations are in need of a BOOST! There are lists of the needed items in the Narthex. Although we collect Food Pantry items all the time, remember, we also collect <u>cash</u> for the Food Pantry on the last Sunday of each month as you leave church. This is a great idea, since it is much easier to carry! You may also mail a check to the church, remember to put "Food Pantry" in the memo.

"No man stands taller than when he stoops to help a child." —Abraham Lincoln **Boyer's Key Tags** This is an easy way to donate, by shopping for your groceries using the Tag. Boyer's will donate a % to the St. John's

Youth Fund. If you already use one, maybe you would like one for a family member or friend----with this card our youth fund benefits. ****Key Tags are available in the Narthex**



Donations Needed!

Becky Boltz is looking for YOUR tapes. There is a <u>RED</u> PLASTIC ENVELOPE in the Narthex

for your TAPES This Fundraiser benefits the Youth Fellowship group – please help them raise money for their activities. <u>If</u> <u>you shop for Groceries – YOU CAN HELP----Thank you!</u>

for submitting your **Redner's** Save-A-Tape store receipts, which are used to provide funds for St. John's Youth Fellowship. Redner's provides a 1% rebate for all qualifying purchases on the Save-A-Tape receipts. For the receipts to be validated by Redner's, they must have <u>Save-A-Tape message</u> printed on the receipt, which is added when you use your Save-A-Tape card at the time of purchase. The way to identify the qualifying amount on the receipt is to find the amount printed as "Today's contribution: \$(Amount)" or "Today's 1% Save-A-Tape Total \$(Amount). <u>In order for the church to use the</u> <u>receipt, that portion of the receipt must remain attached.</u> Any receipts without the Save-A-Tape amount shown should not be submitted.

+Christian Symbol+ Olive

The olive branch is a symbol of peace, harmony and healing. Olive trees provide shelter, as well as oil used for ointment and consecration. The olive branch also represents deliverance from hardships and anxiety because a dove brought an olive leaf back to Noah's ark after the flood ended (Genesis 8:11).







This Month

Dates Available



<u>June, 2020</u>

Altar Flowers: June 7, 14, 21 or 28 Bulletins: June 7, 14, 21 or 28 Children Bulletins: June – 1st or 2nd Half Memorial Flowers: June 7, 14, 21 or 28



<u>July, 2020</u>

Altar Flowers: July 5, 12, 19 or 26
Bulletins: July 5, 12, 19 or 26
Children Bulletins: July – 1st or 2nd Half
Memorial Flowers: July 5, 12, 19 or 26

2020 Flower & Bulletin Date papers are in the Narthex,

please sign-up early for your favorite dates. Please remember to call or hand a paper to Judy with your information, thank you.

"In your Neighborhood"

Don't throw away those Aluminum Cans! The Auburn Fire Company has been collecting aluminum cans at the back of the parking lot for many years. The money from the cans help with fire company expenses.

Another aluminum can site is alongside the Auburn Church of God, behind the Memorials on Market St. The money from this collection site benefits the Church's "Community Outreach Program." Either site would appreciate your donations. **Used Clothing**? The Auburn Fire Co. has a clothing shed in the lot across from the firehouse. We take used clothing, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, drapes and <u>stuffed</u> toys. The items donated are sorted and sent to the needy in the U.S. and around the world. Our mission is to get USEABLE clothing to people in need. The Fire Co. is paid a % according to the weight of the items. This money helps with our expenses.



Next Red Cross Blood Drive is Thursday, **July 2**nd **from 1-6 pm** at the Auburn Ambulance Bldg. Blood is in high demand with the blood going to a person in need within days.

Maddie Dalkner would like your TABS. The Blue Mtn. Elementary East is participating in the "Grab-A-Tab" project. They recycle your aluminum beverage or product tabs, and deposit



the tabs at the school. The Ronald McDonald House of Danville relies on this collection to help finance the many programs it offers, as well as the day-to-day operation of the House LET'S COLLECT TABS FOR A GOOD CAUSE!

Love – the best prayer

He prayeth best who loveth best All things, both great and small; For the dear God who loveth us, He made and loveth all.

-Samuel Taylor Coleridge



"A kindled fire"

I can worship outside among nature just as well as I can inside a church building." That claim is especially common during the summer, when church attendance tends to decline.

Certainly it's possible to worship and talk to God among his creation. In fact, George Washington Carver called nature "an unlimited broadcasting station, through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in." And Martin Luther said, "God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars."

Yet corporate, or church, worship is still vital. Luther also noted: "At home, in my own house, there is no warmth or vigor in me, but in the church when the multitude is gathered together, a fire is kindled in my heart and it breaks its way through." When we're away from God's house, we miss blessings and opportunities including communion, fellowship and support. So this summer, spend time in nature but don't neglect "to meet together" (see Hebrews 10:25)!

"Our Father"

You sum up the whole of New Testament religion if you describe it as the knowledge of God as one's holy Father. If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all.

-J.I. Packer, Knowing God

"Getting a glimpse "

Marital love is a blessing but not necessarily "easy," even when both spouses are Christians. When issues inevitably arise, couples who cling to one another and to God can benefit from that "threefold cord" (Ecclesiastes 4:12). During joyful times, changes, challenges and other adventures, married followers of Jesus can support one another while knowing that Jesus supports them both.

In The Meaning of Marriage, Timothy Keller describes falling in love as looking at another person, glimpsing what God is creating in their life, and then proclaiming: "I see who God is making you, and it excites me! I want to be part of that. I want to partner with you and God in the journey you are taking to his throne. And when we get there, I will look at your magnificence and say, 'I always knew you could be like this. I got glimpses of it on earth, but now look at you!'"

"Highly esteemed"

After returning from a lengthy mission trip overseas, John Huffman and his fellow passengers were held up in customs for two hours. When he finally made it to the packed airport lobby, Huffman realized it might take a while to find his family. But suddenly his 3-year-old daughter ran toward him yelling, "Daddy! Daddy! That's my daddy!" and launched into his arms.

"What a welcome," he writes. "I have never felt so loved and acknowledged in my life." Perhaps that's how God feels when we call on his name in worship and prayer, acknowledging him as our heavenly Father — and honoring him above all else.

"Too great to grasp"

For more than three decades, St. Augustine of Hippo toiled over the mind-boggling doctrine of the Trinity. According to legend, one day the church father was strolling along a shore, wrestling with this puzzle. He saw a boy running back and forth, using a seashell to pour water from the ocean into a hole he'd dug in the sand. When Augustine asked what he was doing, the boy proclaimed, "I'm going to pour the entire ocean into this hole!"

"That's impossible," replied Augustine. "The sea is so great, and the shell and the hole are so little."

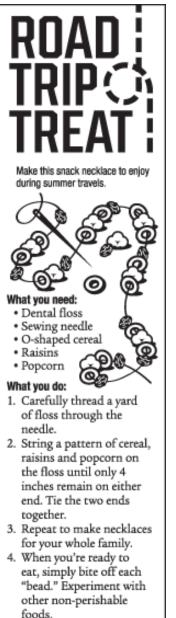
"That's true," the boy said. "But it would be easier to draw all the water out of the sea and fit it into this hole than for you to fit the mystery of the Trinity and his divinity into your little intellect."

Indeed, only through faith can we accept the infinite nature of our Three-in-One God; for our finite human minds, it's simply too great to grasp.

"A surprising solution"

The only solution for being broken is ... brokenness. By brokenness, I mean the acknowledgment of it, the full and unflinching acceptance that we are bankrupt, poor in spirit and have nothing to offer. In our culture, that's a hard sell. ... Brokenness is not trending on Twitter. It's not written on anyone's résumé, and it's no business strategy at all. It is, however, the one hope Jesus holds out for us, the inside-out, upside-down way that is somehow the only path that ultimately is right side up. Embrace the paradox: brokenness is the way to wholeness. —Kyle Idleman, The End of Me







"Seeing stars"

The stars shine over the mountains, the stars shine over the sea, The stars look up to the mighty God, the stars look down on me; The stars shall last for a million years, a million years and a day, But God and I will live and love, when the stars have passed away. —Robert Louis Stevenson

Bible Quiz

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Which of the following are mentioned in the list that follows?

A. a time to teach, and a time to learn

B. a time to mourn, and a time to dance

- C. a time to fast, and a time to eat
- D. a time to work, and a time to rest

Answer: B (See Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.)





Answer: plane, car, sign, ship, world, suitcase. The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Pealm 121:8, NIV

"An invitation to rest"

Summer calls to mind a slower pace, time off from school and work. But many still face daily demands this time of year: farmers work long hours; teachers may take seasonal work to make ends meet; parents with kids now home all day may catch up on work late at night. Still, may the longer days and warmer weather beckon you into a bit of free time this season. Listen:

"When you take time to replenish your spirit, it allows you to serve others from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel." —Eleanor Brownn (public speaker and educator)

"Sometimes it's important to work for that pot of gold. But other times it's essential ... to make sure that your most important decision in the day [is] which color to slide down on the rainbow." —Douglas Pagels (author)

"Rest time is not waste time; it is economy to gather fresh strength. ... In the long run, we shall do more by sometimes doing less." —Charles Spurgeon

"Come to me, all you that are weary ... and I will give you rest. ... For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." —Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30)

Bible Quiz

While 70 Israelite men were commissioned as prophets at the tent of meeting, two others, Eldad and Medad, were reported to have prophesied in the camp — not following "proper" protocols. Who defended them?

- A. Moses
- B. Joshua
- C. Jethro
- D. The Lord

Answer: A (See Numbers 11:24-29.)



"Welcoming the Holy"

Abraham and Sarah welcomed three strangers who turned out to be the Lord. Jesus said, "If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple," the giver will be rewarded (Matthew 10:42, NIV). An ancient Jewish proverb asserts: "Hospitality is one form of worship." A Russian Orthodox monk is said to have told a younger one, "Sometimes I see a stranger coming up the road and I say, 'Oh, Jesus Christ, is it you again?'" And an old Gaelic poem declares, "Often, often, often, goes the Christ in the stranger's guise."

Sometimes we think we must do something big to serve God. Today, when you smile at someone on the street, take time to entertain a child's question, bring cookies to a new neighbor, thank a server or clerk ... know that you are serving Jesus, that you are worshiping God.

–Heidi Mann

"Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul."

–Samuel Ullman

* * *

"Always laugh when you can. It is cheap medicine." —Lord Byron

June OOPS

From a church bulletin:

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Psalm 100 (to be read responsibly)

Offering humn

We're glad they take such care with responsive readings.

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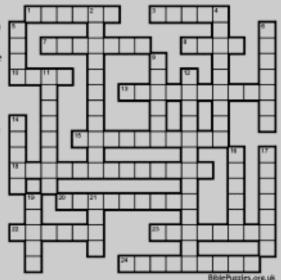
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Across

- Not to be put under a bushel. (6)
- 3 Let yours shine before menl (5)
- 7 Moth and rust will do this to your earthly store. (7)
- 8 If you do this, you will find. (4)
- 10 These should not be done in view of men. (4)
- 13 The eight sayings by Christ at the beginning of his sermon. (10)
- 15 They sound trumpets in the streets when they are being charitable. (10)
- 18 The peacemakers will be called this. (8,2,3)
- 20 They were with Jesus when he gave the sermon. (9)
- 22 You can't serve God and this. (6)
- 23 Fellow believers. (8)
- 24 The earth is this to God. (9)

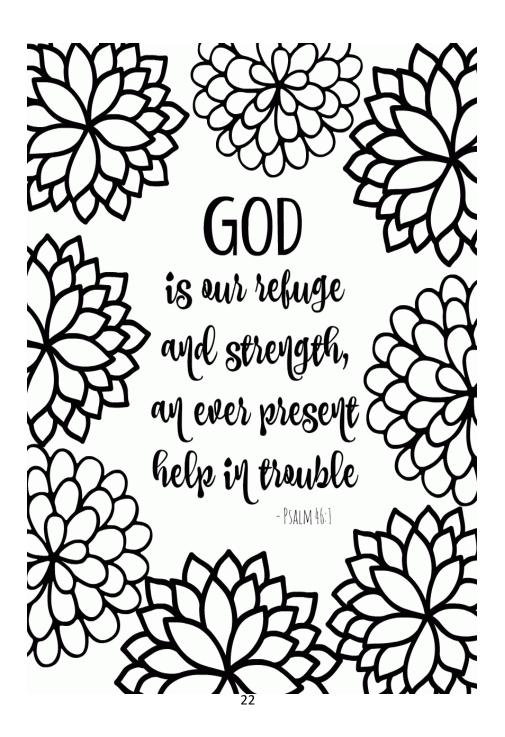
Down

 Jesus gave this as example of how to commuicate with God. (5,6)



- 4 Don't lay these upon the earth. (9)
- 5 Whoever says this to his brother shall be in danger of the council. (4)
- 6 Those who are given happiness and good fortune. (7)
- 9 When engaging in this, you should enter into your closet and shut the door. (6)
- Where the sermon was given. (8)

- 12 You should search for this first, before worrying about food and clothing. (13)
- 14 What you should do to your eye if it offends. (5)
- 16 They which do this shall be filled. (6)
- 17 The hypocrites disfigured their faces while doing this. (7)
- 19 If you are forced to go a mile with someone, this is how far you should go. (5)
- 21 The foolish man built his house on this. (4)



The act of asking

In Everyday Spirituality, James Hazelwood explores 27 ordinary activities that are, he asserts, more spiritual than we tend to think. One is asking questions. "We see God in all the questions we ask, whether or not they are religious. The simple act of asking questions indicates that we are meaning-seeking creatures."

The pastor continues: "We inquire of the meaning of life, the purpose of work and relationships. We even ask it of our very own existence. The answers often come not in clear proclamations of certainty but in stories, tales and the myths of life. ... Inquiry, wonder, and discovery are things that the human mind loves." Then he offers this thought-provoking statement: "When we ask questions, we are engaging in prayer."

Do you agree? What other daily activities might be more intertwined with your faith than you thought? While you ponder even these questions, do you sense the Holy Spirit moving you?

Joint Board – meets 2nd Thursday of each month (except July) President – Betty Renninger 570-573-1143 Vice-President – Sandi Riedel – 570-294-3228 U.C.C. Consistory – Quarterly meetings - to be announced President – Jim Peiffer 570-366-0066 Vice-President – John Naftzinger 570-754-4021

Lutheran Council – meets 3rd Tuesday of each month President – Peggy Bachman 570-754-2201 Vice-President – Ami Dalkner 484-951-8374 The Church Staff:

Joint Board President: Betty Renninger – 570-573-1143 Sextons: Jack & Pat Hinchey – 570-754-4236 Parish Secretary/Treasurer: Judy Epting – 570-754-3014 Music Director: Open Position

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran & United Church of Christ 200 Pearson St., P.O. Box 103 Auburn, PA 17922

Address Service Requested

June 2020

Dated Material