

A LIFE OF FAITH

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
MECHANICSVILLE, MD

INDEPENDENCE DAY

BY JENNY MOONEN

A few years ago before I moved to the area, I had the privilege of viewing the original document of the Declaration of Independence on display in the National Archives in Washington DC. It is in a dimly lit and temperature controlled room. It is very faded, but still a very powerful document. It caused me to pause a moment and think about what it meant to me. When our ancestors moved to this country, one of the reasons they did so was to be able to freely practice the religion of their choosing. I think it is something I often take for granted until I watch the news and see others being persecuted or even killed for their faith. What a blessing it is to live here in the USA where we are able to freely practice our faith. Here are some fun facts about Independence Day.

The official Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776 and announced our independence from England. The actual signing of the document did not occur until August 2, 1776 in Philadelphia.

On July 8, 1776, the 'Liberty Bell' was rung in the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall), in Philadelphia, summoning citizens to the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence (history.com). Even the Liberty Bell has a biblical reference on it. It says, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Leviticus 25:10, KJV).

INSPIRING READS IN THIS ISSUE:

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Did You Know?

that 27 of the 56
founding fathers were
trained as ministers?
(www1.cbn.com)

Happy Independence Day!

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR REV. GARY R. POMRENKE

Beloved,

How wonderful it is to be inching back towards what we all once knew as normal. As we enter July, we are finishing up what I project will be a very successful VBS campaign. We missed a lot last year, and most definitely VBS was missed.

We are getting to the hotter months of the year ... but its amazing to watch God's creation change as the seasons pass. Summer is a wonderful time to reflect. Graduations, major life transitions, and many times these life changes occur in the summer. I was looking through some online illustrations and I came across the following poem and it caught my eye.



Summer Love by Deborah Ann

*I love the summer's rays,
shinning from the sun
the warmth of laughter
with children having fun.*

*I love summer's breezes,
gently drifting in the air
the sounds of pure delight
when the weather is fair.*

*I love summer's laziness,
the strolls down the lane
the sound of peacefulness
upon summer's gentle rain.*

*I love summer's smells,
fragrant with memories
the happy thoughts wafting
of BBQ's , friends and families.*

*I love summertime,
it's smells, sights, its sounds
I love that God blesses me
when summer comes around!*

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR (CONTINUED)

We are coming out of a time where there has been great concern regarding how we deal with health concerns, how we interact together in the church and in our communities. I urge you all to continue to stay the course. I have just heard that Governor Hogan has lifted all COVID-19 mandates and restrictions as of 1 July 2021. This order will also bring pause to many of our friends and family members. But it also reminds us of the freedoms that we most assuredly took for granted prior to COVID. We are once again free to live as we did before. In taking this huge step, let us not forget that there are many in our families and communities that will not be comfortable with these new changes. We must allow them Grace ... the same grace that we are given by our Savior Jesus Christ. Grace will get us through these changes. I want to leave you with a thought from one of my favorite Psalms.

I pray you find comfort in these verses. To me, they are a constant reminder of what a great God it is that we serve! So Beloved ... “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” Amen?

Psalm 118: 1-24 Tells us ...

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! 2 Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” 3 Let the house of Aaron say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” 4 Let those who fear the Lord say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” 5 Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. 6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? 7 The Lord is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. 8 It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. 9 It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes. 10 All nations surrounded me; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! 11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! 12 They surrounded me like bees; they went out like a fire among thorns; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! 13 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the Lord helped me. 14 The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. 15 Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous: “The right hand of the Lord does valiantly, 16 the right hand of the Lord exalts, the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!” 17 I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord. 18 The Lord has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death. 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. 20 This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it. 21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. 22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

- Rev. Gary R. Pomrenke

FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY JOHN BOWLING

I hope everyone will be enjoying a great summer now that so many things are opening up across the country. It has been a very long time coming. Please be safe and always keep God the center of your life wherever the summer may lead you and always remember that God never takes a vacation from us! Our Vacation Bible School mission outreach will be well under way by the time you read this. A big thank you to everyone who helped make this great week possible! It's always a wonderful thing to see St. Paul's full of activity during the week as so many volunteers come together to share His Word with love and enthusiasm! With COVID prayerfully behind us, I hope this is just the beginning of many outreach programs in the future at the church. If you have ideas for future mission activities, fund raisers and or fellowship ideas please let me or someone on the council know.

In His Service,

John Bowling Council President



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MELISSA CHEW

Melissa Chew was born and raised in St. Mary's County Maryland. She is the youngest of three children. She has one older brother and sister. She was born the year the sanctuary was built.

Melissa attended Concordia University in Texas. She taught History and Psychology at Leonardtown High School for 15 years. She has been at the Teacher Academy of Maryland, as an instructor, at the Forrest Center (Tech Center) for the last 5 years. This program works with high school students who want to be teachers. She loves her job!

Melissa met her husband Matt, who is also a teacher, when they started at Leonardtown High School. They have been married for 17 years - and still work together. They have three sons, Thomas (15), Owen (13), and Ryan (9). They are very involved in sports and other activities. They also have a dog, Roxy, and the boys have bunnies, chickens, and pigeons as well.



Melissa once spent a year living in China as an LCMS Missionary. Currently at St. Paul's she is the Stewardship Chairperson on the Council. She also does Sunday School openings and helps out with Sunday School.

In her spare time Melissa loves to garden and travel. She loves to go on trips in their RV with her family and visiting new places.

A VIEW FROM THE PEW

Thoughts on Sharing Christ's Salvation Message

by Jim Shewbridge



"From Whom Do You Get Your Directions?"

In a recent article contained in Boat US magazine, I learned of a service for boaters in

which a "Marine Weather Router" is used to direct seafarers to safe destinations during perilous journeys. The routers communicate with vessels via various radio systems, satellite phones and the internet. Often the router is on-line with a boat captain 24/7 due to immediate perils. One such example is the story of a captain of a 38-foot Cruiser in the South Atlantic. The captain sailing alone was in a storm that lasted 45 days during his then 1,000-mile journey. He contacted his router and advised him of the severe seas, low fuel and supplies and the need of a safe port. His router directed him to a port but, the captain was advised not to come into port due to the coronavirus. Again, his router directed his charge 1,500 miles east to Cape Town, South Africa and upon reaching there was denied landing due to coronavirus. Thus the saga continued as the captain was rerouted to St. Helena (denied entrance), the Ascension Islands (denied entrance) and finally to the

Virgin Islands where he made harbor. His odyssey assisted by his Router finally ended after 75 days and travelling 3,400 miles.

Who is your Router? Do you need directions travelling as Jesus' disciples? Is Holy Scripture your Router? The captain had reasonable resources, reasonable until the extended storms and low fuel and supplies that he sought help. Today as we slowly return to normalcy, we will have opportunities (as the Holy Spirit leads us) to share God's salvation. We must continually be prepared to route those without Christ into the safe harbor of Christ's salvation. Daily Study God's Word and,

SHARE

Cleansed in Christ's Blood, daily by words and deeds tell the story of salvation in Jesus' name.

PRAY

Pray for the people that they may receive the gift of living water to purify their lives.

LOVE

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another."

ESV John 13:34

Amen

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

BY MEREDITH JOHNSON

I would like to say a huge **THANK YOU** to all who participated and volunteered during our Rocky Railway VBS this year! Everyone was thrilled to be back together again after having to cancel VBS last year due to COVID. Our kids had an amazing time learning how Jesus' power helps us do hard things, gives us hope, helps us be bold, lets us live forever, and helps us be good friends. All of the kids (and adults!) had a great time and we can't wait to see them come back next year for another amazing adventure!

I also wanted to take a minute to say how awesome our volunteers are. Whether it was building sets, teaching a station, being a crew leader, or donating supplies; no matter how you volunteered, it was greatly appreciated! Without our volunteers, we would not have been

able to put together such an awesome week for our kids. Coming together as a congregation to support this amazing outreach really shows how much everyone cares for the future of our church. Again, thank you all for the support!

In His love,
Meredith Johnson



Check out our Facebook page for pictures of our fun event.



facebook.com/StPaulsLutheranSOMD

HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAY

June Shewbridge - July 3
 Kenneth Mueller - July 4
 Christopher Pipho - July 6
 Nettie Trimbath - July 7
 Lisa Reithmeyer - July 8
 Kristina Lacey - July 9
 Bob Maxey - July 9
 Andrew Wigen - July 12
 Ryan Chew - July 18
 Elizabeth Butterfield - July 19
 Wendy Gates - July 23
 Kenneth Sprouse III - July 25
 Mark Lewis - July 27
 Christopher Green - July 28
 James Green - July 28
 William Green - July 28
 Nicole Williams - July 30
 Janet Butterfield - July 31



JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- Mathew & Kelly Price - July 16
- Pastor Gary & Tracie Pomrenke - July 19
- Nicholas & Rebecca Drury - July 24
- Stephanie & Stephen Stowers - July 26

KID'S CORNER

<p>M N R H B L P K E Y P K D L O V G O L T C M I S S K T I R V A H L A T O U I A U S E N F Y R I E O J E D R S R A O V N O E I R G I E A N D E C Y T W C A H I G P T L H U H G R T K R N R M L Z A G R A C I O U S I O G L I F M X N L A L O U C Y R K T B D U Q B P S H A</p>	<p>WAYS TO DESCRIBE GOD</p> <p>-Love -Father -Great -Marvellous -Compassion -Gracious -Creator -Righteous -Strong -Kind</p>
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Drop down, ye heavens,
 from above, and let the skies
 pour down righteousness:
 let the earth open, and
 let them bring forth salvation,
 and let righteousness spring
 up together; I the Lord
 have created it.

- ISAIAH 45:8, KJV -

BUSYBOOKSANDMORE.NET