

RUTHFREDHERALD

June 2020

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Ascension Day. Pentecost Sunday. Trinity Sunday. **Red Light: Stop, Worship, and Pray. Green Light: Go, Witness, and Proclaim.**

Currently our nation is in a time of upheaval and limbo. We have been going through the Coronavirus uncertainties. This has affected people in different ways, but it is true that our world will never be the same again. Now it appears that things are starting to open up again, but can things go back to “normal”? No. Things will never be the same again. So, how are we to do life now?

This causes me to reflect on the three church festivals that we are presently in the midst of observing. On May 21st we observed Ascension Day, celebrating Jesus’ ascent into heaven, where He is seated at the right hand of the Father until He comes again in glory as King of kings, Lord of lords, and Judge of all the earth at the end of time as we know it, and ushers in eternity. Among Jesus’ last words to His disciples were instructions to “wait” until the Holy Spirit came upon them. God tells them to stop and wait. The divine light is RED. They faithfully do this and wait in Jerusalem. While they are waiting, they are worshipping and praying.

Pentecost Sunday occurs ten days later, and Jesus’ promise is fulfilled as the Holy Spirit comes and fills them with power and the ability to share the Gospel in all languages present in the city. The divine light is now GREEN! They are now to GO FORTH and be God’s witnesses of Jesus’ death and resurrection, and to proclaim the Gospel of salvation. They go! They do just that, and the church grows as people are being saved daily!

This coming Sunday is Trinity Sunday. We celebrate the unity of the Trinity. We worship Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Three in One. I love singing “Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty . . . God in three Persons, Blessed Trinity” as we open the service on Trinity Sunday.

God is in perfect fellowship and communion with Himself. God’s heart is that we also would experience fellowship and communion within the church, the body of Christ.

According to the church liturgical calendar, we have just begun the second part of the church year. The first portion of the year focuses on presenting Jesus and the salvation of God for us. The second portion of the year (beginning with Pentecost) is called Pentecost or Trinity Season. It focuses on how we live out our new life in Jesus through the power and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Just as we prayed for the Confirmands today, “May the Father in heaven, for Jesus’ sake, renew and increase in you the gift of the Holy Spirit, unto your strengthening in faith, unto your growth in grace, unto your patience in suffering, and to the blessed hope of everlasting life.” May this be a new season of spiritual life for each of us, as we GO FORTH with the Gospel and live out our Christian faith.

God bless you!

Pastor Carlson

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The submission deadline for the next Herald is **Saturday, June 20, 2020.**

The email publication date is **Wednesday, July 1, 2020.**

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Member Profile

By Mettelise Zeigler

Jacqueline Battaglia

A Bethel Park native, Jacqueline Battaglia joined Ruthfred last year with her young sons, Sam (5) and Theo (2). Community and family connections made Ruthfred a likely choice for a woman who says she is still “learning” about the Christian faith.



Jacqueline was an only child born to a mother who passed away when she was just four years old. Her father was in college, unequipped to raise a daughter by himself. A grandmother and step-grandfather raised Jacqueline. Her grandmother passed away when she was ten. The grandfather is also departed. Jaqueline’s father died just a year ago.

Jacqueline, however, is not alone in the world. God provided a family for her. She has been married to Amos for eight years. They met at the St. Louise de Marillac parking lot where Amos, as a Good Samaritan, fixed her flat tire. Her cherished in-laws live right next door. Interestingly, her mother-in-law happens to be the sister of one of our active members, Pete Huwe. Jacqueline’s step-daughter, Vienne, is also a member of our church, and very much a part of her life.

When Jacqueline’s father died, little Sam had many questions about God. Jacqueline realized she did not have the answers. It was actually Vienne’s mother, Lauren Habovick, who suggested she come to their church—Ruthfred.

Jacqueline and Sam love Ruthfred. Sam is particularly fond of Miss Rachel, his Sunday School teacher. Jacqueline is appreciative of the love that shines through Rachel Anderson and through the many people they have been able to get to know at the church.

Jacqueline worked at First Bethel United Methodist Church as a childcare teacher for ten years before earning a Master’s Degree at California University in Communication Disorders. She works part time for the Moon Area School District as a Speech Pathologist. Although she enjoys her job, Jacqueline is devoted to family life and enjoys activities with them at home and Deep Creek where an aunt has a vacation house.

An interest in personal development led to forming a group called South Hills Community Wellness. The group met at the Historical Society building in Bethel Bark until Covid-19. Now online, the 300 members consult experts on such topics as nutrition and health & wellness. Content is available on YouTube.

Now that we are able to congregate in person again, make sure you get to know Jacqueline Battaglia, a woman eager to grow in the Christian Faith.

Announcements

Ruthfred's Library

Great to have you back! Your library holds many new books and most importantly, some new resources for our members. You will find two new magazine racks on the wall in front of you as you enter the library. Many new magazines are there for your reading pleasure. They include: Home Life, Parent Life, Mature Living, Biblical Archeology Review, Bible Illustrator Magazine, Lutheran Ambassador, Christianity Today, and Voice of the Martyrs, so it should be easy to find some quick reads for your growth in faith. Please take one out for a week and return it the next so others can enjoy. We hope you find these useful.

Corrections to the Church Directory

Virginia and Charles DiSalvo are living in Georgia, not PA.
Martha Kanagy: 5103 Brightwood Road, Bethel Park, PA 15102.
Carol Hall: Concordia of South Hills, 1300 Bower Hill Rd. Apt. 1214, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Mark and Peggy Arelt: 5625 Willow Terrace Drive, Bethel Park, PA 15102
Mrs. Linda Donolo: 1029 Waterford Ct. E., Canonsburg, PA 15317
David Del Bianco: 206 Hays Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241

-Submitted by Pat Lutz

2020 Confirmation Class

After baptism, years of Sunday School and home training, and two concentrated years of Confirmation study in the Word of God and in the Catechism of Luther, the following young people have been confirmed:

Samuel Christopher Carlson	1 Samuel 3: 10; Isaiah 12: 2
Isaac Shane Cox	Genesis 22: 7-8
Connor Nelson Esposito	Matthew 6: 33
Meghan Anna Ghise	Jeremiah 29: 11
Patrick Ryan Gold	John 3: 16
Reilly Albert Gusky	Acts 4: 12
Megan Joy Huwe	2 Timothy 3: 14-15
Nathan Michael Stutzman	Proverbs 3: 5-6
Alea Rose Taylor	Psalms 37: 4
Megan Kristina Wentz	1 Corinthians 15: 58

Normally there would be a cake reception for our Confirmands in the Fellowship Hall, but this year we were unable to do this given the restrictions of Covid-19. Please consider sending them a card to congratulate and encourage them!

Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

Beautiful Saviour

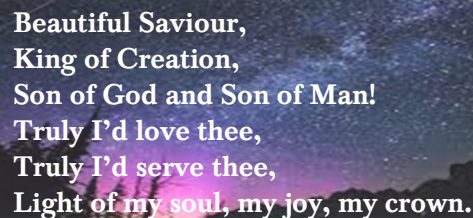
Lyrics: Unknown

Music: Silesian Folksong

As the unusual spring polar vortex finally recedes and Covid-19 lockdown restrictions ease up, many of us are enjoying the great outdoors once again. With that in mind, “Beautiful Saviour” seemed like an appropriate hymn to feature this month. This old favorite does, after all, extol the fairness of the meadows and woodlands “robed in flowers of blooming spring.” It talks about the fairness of the sunshine, moonlight, and “the sparkling stars on high.” As the title indicates, however, these things are not the focus of the hymn. It is Jesus, “King of Creation, Son of God and Son of Man” who is fairer and purer, and worthy of “glory and honor, praise and adoration.” As Christians we believe the words of Genesis that creation is good, as God Himself so declared it. We believe that we are to appreciate creation and to be caretakers of it, but that it is not to be worshiped. Unfortunately this has been a false trap for much of mankind throughout history. Consider God’s warning to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 4:19:

When you raise your eyes to heaven, when you see the sun, the moon, the stars,
All the array of heaven, do not be tempted to worship them and serve them.

You might ask: “Is nature worship really an issue anymore in our modern 21st-century world?” One is left to wonder, what with the way the atheistic secularists of our day treat such issues as pollution, recycling, climate change, etc. These things seem to have become a religion for them, with Earth Day as the new “holy-day.” Nature is eternal and humans are temporary. Some even feel that man is a kind of viral plague on the earth! To these ideas Christians counter that each individual soul is eternal while the current order of the universe is temporary. Taking care of the earth is certainly important—in fact a mandate from the Creator. However, it is not the end-all and be-all of our existence. It is Jesus who “makes our sorrowing spirit sing.”



Beautiful Saviour,
King of Creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee,
Truly I'd serve thee,
Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

As noted above, the lyricist for this hymn is unknown. It first appeared as an anonymous German text in a manuscript dated 1662. The translator, however, is known and actually has a Pennsylvania connection. Joseph Augustus Seiss completed his theological education at Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg and ended his pastoral career at two Lutheran churches in Philadelphia.

The musical composer is also unknown. What is known is that the tune is a Silesian folksong. When I first saw that, I thought to myself, “Silesia—sounds vaguely familiar—but where is that?” Maybe you’re more geographically or historically astute than I am, but I had to look it up. Turns out Silesia “is a historical region of Central Europe located mostly in Poland, with small parts in the Czech Republic and Germany.” (Wikipedia) Coincidentally, I recently learned that some of my paternal ancestors are from Hunsdorf in what is now Slovakia. This is not within historical Silesia, but pretty close to it. While there is no particular significance to that piece of personal trivia, let me conclude by saying that I find “Beautiful Saviour” yet another example of our rich, varied, Christian musical heritage.