

## “Christ Bears His Cross”

In high school I attended a special youth retreat where one of the evenings featured the stations of the cross. We were put into groups and went around the dimly-lit rooms of the church, where other youth were dressed in costume, silently demonstrating each part of the crucifixion story. This was a powerful experience for me as the crucifixion was laid out before me in vivid images.

Some years later I was a leader at this same retreat and was asked to act out one of the scenes. I was assigned “Jesus bears His cross.” I knelt down on one knee with a 7-foot beam of wood across my back and a crown of thorns on my head. Group after group of youth would come by and hear John 19:16-17 read:

“So he delivered Him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.”

I had learned a great deal seeing the stations the first time; that night holding that cross I experienced a deeper understanding yet. Over the course of the evening I was overcome with emotion, bearing the weight of this cross and contemplating those two verses over and over again—the hate that Jesus endured, the physical exhaustion, the ridicule and scorn, the weight of the world’s sin.

I knew that as I began to shake under the weight of this cross after an hour, I had the assurance in my mind that I would eventually lay it down and I would join my friends later that night. But not Christ. His cross bearing led Him to a crucifixion, a gruesome death. I felt shame creeping into me as I considered what my Lord had endured and how little thought I had given toward the last hours of His life before burial.

Often when I think of Christ, I think of His miracles, I think of His teachings, I think of His parables, and I think of His resurrection and glory! But that night, for maybe the first time, I really contemplated His pain. What wondrous love that my savior would bear a cross for me, a wicked and ungrateful servant.

This contemplation of Christ’s suffering and death is the purpose of our season of Lent. In a world that gives us cheap pleasures, and turns a blind eye to suffering, and demands instant gratification, it’s easy to feel distance between yourself and this appalling death almost 2000 years ago. So at Lent we meet as a congregation every week to contemplate. We meet to remember. We meet to hear the Word of God. We are reminded of the sacrifice made by the One who chose not to take the easy way out, but to walk each and every painful step on the way to Calvary, and to take the piercing of nails in His hands and feet, and to die upon the cross. All of this suffering was to draw us to Him.

This Lent my prayer is that our church family would have the opportunity to turn from the noise and busyness of life and for some moments to dwell on the wondrous love of Christ displayed in the horrors of Golgotha. Yes, as Christians we celebrate each and every day the victory and joy of the Resurrection, as we should! The joy of Easter is that much more experienced when we understand the sorrow of Good Friday. Christ died. He died for you and He died for me. He bore His cross that you and I would be free. Praise be to Christ for His boundless love.

- Vicar Brian Westerbur

## Ruthfred Lutheran Church

3401 South Park Road  
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www.Ruthfred.org

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The submission deadline for the next Herald is **Saturday, March 14, 2020.**

The publication date is **Wednesday, March 25, 2020.**

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## Member Profile

By Mettelise Ziegler

### Marty and Felicia Rieck

Marty and Felicia Rieck met in the fourth grade at St. Valentine's School in Bethel Park. The two Catholic kids would eventually attend separate public high schools, reconnect after college, marry in 2008, and join Ruthfred Lutheran Church in 2019.



Felicia was born and raised in Bethel Park, while Marty lived in nearby South Park. After high school, Felicia studied at California University of Pennsylvania. Marty went to Mercyhurst. They never forgot each other from their St. Valentine days as children and found each other after college. When they married, Felicia and Marty settled in Bethel Park to start a family and pursue their careers. Their boys, Colin (age 7) and Aidan (age 6) attend Benjamin Franklin Elementary School.

Fall is high school football season for the entire Rieck family. Marty is the head football coach at South Park where he teaches History and Civics. Felicia works in Finance for the Bayer Corporation. When they are not in the stands rooting for the Eagles, they may be in a boat on Lake Arthur. All four of them enjoy fishing just about every weekend when the weather is favorable.

The Rieck family's journey to Ruthfred started with Marty's students. He noticed there was a significant difference between those with a Christian foundation at home and those without. Marty and Felicia wanted those quality characteristics to blossom in their own children. They knew they needed to belong to a Christian community that would help them to teach their children while matching their values.

Marty and Felicia looked for a church with solid Christian education, Gospel focus and pastors that would know them personally.

It started with a laundry room. While painting, Marty listened to a sermon on Ruthfred's website. He told Felicia he really liked what he heard. Felicia pointed out the church was located just down the road. So they went. They connected with the pastors easily. To the couples' surprise, their son Colin announced that he liked church. The emphasis on the Bible was refreshing and stimulating. They felt connected!

The Rieck family attends Sunday School and worship on a regular basis. Marty has already served as usher. They take what they have learned at church home with them, continuing to dialogue and read the Bible. They have found a true church home at Ruthfred Lutheran Church.

## **Official Acts**

January 20 – February 16, 2020

### **Funerals**

\*Shirley Ann Sheatsley – January 27, 2020

\*Indicates Member

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## **Call of Associate Pastor Update**

The Call Committee unanimously recommended Bryce McMinn to be Called as Associate Pastor for Ruthfred Lutheran Church to Church Council. Our Church Council, in turn, unanimously recommended Bryce for a Call as Associate Pastor for Ruthfred Lutheran Church. Bryce, Erin, and family came to Ruthfred on Sunday, February 9th. Bryce gave the sermon at both services.

A Special Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, February 23rd after both services. The Church Congregation voted and approved to send a Letter of Call to Bryce McMinn to be our Associate Pastor for Ruthfred Lutheran Church. The Letter of Call will be sent to Bryce this week.

Please continue to pray for God's clarity and guidance to Bryce and the McMinn family.

Joe Roman,  
Congregational President & Co-Chair of the Call Committee

## Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

# Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Lyrics: Robert Robinson

Music: Nettleton ((composer uncertain))

When Peggy and I attended Concordia College in New York back in the 70's, Dean Thomas Green was already a beloved fixture on campus: ordained pastor, confirmed bachelor, soft-spoken professor of English Literature, never seen wearing anything but his black clericals, and bald as a cue ball, back before bald was chic! I remember a chapel talk he gave one day in which he good-naturedly poked fun at the state of contemporary song lyrics, especially in the arena of romantic love. I don't recall his exact examples, but I believe he first quoted something like an excerpt from a Shakespearean sonnet. Then, using a dry monotone voice (not unlike his normal manner of speaking), he asked us to contrast that with a contemporary song that went something like this: "Oh baby, baby, I love you baby. Oh yeah, baby, baby, baby!" His examples were perhaps a bit extreme, but his point was well taken with a ripple of chuckles throughout the auditorium.

I suppose it is a bit of a truism that the King's English has deteriorated and coarsened over the last couple of centuries. Perhaps that is why I really enjoy such older classic hymns like "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing." Written in 1758, the lyrics are rich in imagery, Biblical allusions, and poetic expression. Every phrase is packed with meaning, with no repetitions to give you time to unpack them!

**Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet, Sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of Thy redeeming love.**



This hymn is not found in our SBH hymnal. I could not find it in my old 1941 Missouri Synod hymnal either. I don't really know why that might be, but one possible explanation is that Robinson's ministerial career and theological journey took him from conversion to Methodism closely associated with the Church of England to Calvinistic Independents to Baptists. Towards the end of his life, some even accused him of becoming too friendly with political and theological radicals, including Unitarians.



How much truth there is to the accusations that Robinson was "prone to wander" appears to be debated. But be that as it may, "Come, Thou Fount" was written when he was 22 and certainly reflects orthodox views of Christian faith. The hymn probably deserves two more articles, one just to discuss all of the hymn's theological content, and another to delve into Robinson's interesting life. But in the little space we have left, what's up with that "Ebenezer" line? **Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I'm come.** This is a reference to the "stone of help" that Samuel set up after his prayers for deliverance from a Philistine attack were miraculously answered. Samuel then said, "Till now the Lord has helped us." (1 Samuel 7).

**O to grace how great a debtor, Daily I'm constrained to be;  
Let Thy grace now like a fetter, Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.**

## Announcements

### “Seek the Peace of the Neighborhood”

This is our theme this Lenten Season. We will be focusing on God’s Word to His people from Jeremiah 29. The background is that they had fallen into sin, and were now going to be in exile in Babylon for 70 years. But God assures them that He has not forgotten them. In fact, God has great plans for them and wants to work through them to be a Gospel witness in their new neighborhood of Babylon. In time, God would restore them to their Promised Land.

This so closely parallels with us, as God’s people! The human race fell into sin and was exiled from the Garden of Paradise. However, God has not forgotten us, but calls on us to experience His grace and to share His Good News of the peace of salvation with the neighborhood of this world! In time, God will also bring us back into the Land of Paradise (Heaven). Indeed, that is exactly why Jesus left His home in heaven and moved into our earthly neighborhood of exile in order to save us by His death on the cross. When Christ returns at the appointed time, God will reunite the neighborhoods of heaven and earth in the recreation and restoration of the New Heaven and New Earth!

Our Wednesday Lenten Services are at 2:00 7:30 PM. A Soup & Sandwich Supper will be served each week from 6:00 - 7:00 PM. Come and enjoy some fellowship together!

### Seeking the Peace of the Neighborhood,

**Pastor Carlson**

### Church Camping Trip!

For a number of years, we have thought it would be a wonderful experience for our church to take a camping trip together! However, we were never able to put this into action. But now, two of our resident expert campers have taken on this dream and are turning it into reality! Dave Compel and Brandon Fouks LOVE camping, and they are putting this camping trip together for our congregation!

Event: A tent camping weekend.  
Where: Moraine State Park.  
When: June 26 - 28 (two nights).  
Capacity: Our campground designation has a limit of 80 people.  
Activities: Include bike trails, hiking trails, boat rentals and a beach on Lake Arthur.  
Contacts: David Compel Jr. at [www.sdcremodeling.com](http://www.sdcremodeling.com) & Brandon Fouks at [brandonfouks@ruthfred.org](mailto:brandonfouks@ruthfred.org).

**Digital Task Force Committee:** Ruthfred is putting together a committee focused on brainstorming and recommending how Ruthfred can best utilize and benefit from digital technologies. If you are interested in learning more and potentially becoming a member of this committee, please reach out to Don Roose at [DonRoose@ruthfred.org](mailto:DonRoose@ruthfred.org).

**Ruthfred Lutheran’s Preschool** is now open for registrations for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. Paper registrations are by the preschool door or available online. Submitted by Erin Campion.

### Looking for a Few Good Volunteers

Ruthfred Lutheran Church has decided to survey the congregation to identify members to volunteer a maximum of one day per week with the Washington County Habitat for Humanity Chapter. Habitat for Humanity is currently building a home on Ford Street in Washington, PA for a single mother who has adopted four children from her drug-addicted sister. For more information, contact Neil Wagner at (724) 969- 0434.

## RUTHFRED LUTHERAN CHURCH

(Association of Free Lutheran Congregations)  
3401 South Park Road  
Bethel Park, PA 15102  
(412) 835-7140

### 2020 Lenten Schedule

#### Ash Wednesday Morning

Service at 6:30 a.m. with Holy Communion.  
Breakfast at 7:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

*Beginning on Ash Wednesday, we shall have  
a series of sermons based upon the theme,*

***“Seek the Peace of the Neighborhood”***

#### Ash Wednesday – February 26

Holy Communion 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Promise”

*Jeremiah 29: 1-7, 10*

#### March 4

Services - 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Plant”

*Jeremiah 29: 5-6*

#### March 11

Services - 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Peace”

*Jeremiah 29:7*

#### March 18

Services - 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Plans”

*Jeremiah 29: 11*

#### March 25

Services - 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Pray”

*Jeremiah 29: 11-13*

#### April 1

Services - 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Proclaim”

*Jeremiah 29: 15-23*

#### Palm Sunday – April 5

Worship Service - 8:30 & 11:00

#### “Praise”

*Zechariah 9: 9*

Sunday School - 9:45 a.m.

#### Maundy Thursday – April 9

Holy Communion - 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

#### “Place”

*Jeremiah 29: 10-14; 30: 1-3*

#### Good Friday – April 10

12:30 - 3:00 p.m.

#### Meditations & Music on “Good Friday Perspectives”

*Luke 23*

#### Tenebrae Service

7:30 p.m.

#### “Pain”

*Jeremiah 31: 31-34*

#### Easter Sunday – April 12

Worship Service

7:00, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

#### “The Power of the Resurrection!”






*1 Corinthians 15*

Holy Communion after the  
8:30 and 11:00 a.m. services.

Sunday School - 9:45 a.m.  
(for the children)

# ~Holy Week~

# MARCH 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1 HAPPY 91<sup>st</sup> BIRTHDAY</b>  <b>JOAN TEICHART</b> Holy Communion 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Holy Communion 11:00 Holy Communion 6:00	<b>2 HAPPY 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY</b>  <b>SUE KOVAC</b> JTTW Leaders Meeting 9:15 Craft & Sew 9:30 Elders Meeting 7:00	<b>3</b> 7:00 Worship Team	<b>4</b> 9:15 JTTW 2:00 Lenten Service 5:45 Children's Choir 6:00-7:00 Soup & Sandwich Supper 6:15 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:30 Bell Choir * Senior Choir 7:30 Lenten Service	<b>5</b> Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>6</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's	<b>7</b> TURN YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD BEFORE BEDTIME
<b>8 GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY</b> <b>EASTER FLOWER SALE BEGINS</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00	<b>9</b> JTTW Leaders Meeting 9:15 Elders' Prayer Time 7:00 Council 7:30	<b>10</b> 7:00 Worship Team 7:00 Women's Ministry Planning Meeting	<b>11</b> 9:15 JTTW 12:00 Esther 2:00 Lenten Service 5:45 Children's Choir 6:00-7:00 Soup & Sandwich Supper 6:15 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:30 Bell Choir * Senior Choir 7:30 Lenten Service	<b>12</b> Knit Wits 10:00 Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>13</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's	<b>14</b> HERALD ARTICLE DEADLINE Mary Bible Study 9:30
<b>15</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 Evening of Prayer & Praise 6:00	<b>16</b> JTTW Leaders Meeting 9:15 Craft & Sew 9:30	<b>17 HAPPY 91<sup>st</sup> BIRTHDAY</b>  <b>PAT RADKE</b> 7:00 Worship Team Men's Night 7:00	<b>18</b> 9:15 JTTW 2:00 Lenten Service 5:45 Children's Choir 6:00-7:00 Soup & Sandwich Supper 6:15 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:30 Bell Choir * Senior Choir 7:30 Lenten Service	<b>19</b> Ruth 2:00 Young Adult Group 7:00 spring is here	<b>20</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's	<b>21</b> Movie Night 6:15
<b>22</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 GIFT Bible Study 6:30	<b>23</b> JTTW Leaders Meeting 9:15	<b>24</b> 7:00 Worship Team	<b>25 HERALD DISTRIBUTION DATE</b> 9:15 JTTW 2:00 Lenten Service 5:45 Children's Choir 6:00-7:00 Soup & Sandwich Supper 6:15 Jr. & Sr. Confirmation Classes 6:30 Bell Choir * Senior Choir 7:30 Lenten Service	<b>26</b> Knit Wits 10:00 Young Adult Group 7:00	<b>27</b> Men's Prayer Group 6:30 a.m. @ Panera's XYZ noon 	<b>28 HAPPY 91<sup>st</sup> BIRTHDAY</b> <b>GLADYS STEWART</b> 
<b>29 LAST DAY TO ORDER</b> <b>EASTER FLOWERS</b> Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00	<b>30</b> JTTW Leaders Meeting 9:15	<b>31</b> 7:00 Worship Team				

\* Senior Choir will meet at 7:00 and then after the 7:30 service



# March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  <b>No SWAP</b>	2	3  TNT @ Church 7-9pm	4	5	6	7
8  SWAP 6-7:30pm @ Church	9	10  TNT @ Church 7-9pm	11	12	13  <u>Parents Night</u> <u>Off 6:30pm</u> <u>@ Church</u>	14
15 <b>Brunch</b>  SWAP 6-7:30pm @ Church	16	17  TNT @ Church 7-9pm	18	19	20	21
22  SWAP 6-7:30pm @ Church	23	24  TNT @ Church 7-9pm	25	26	27  <u>Fri Night</u> <u>Movie night</u> <u>7-9:30pm</u>	28  <u>SWAP</u> <u>Late Night</u> <u>5-9:30pm</u>
29  SWAP 6-7:30pm @ Church	30	31  TNT @ Church 7-9pm				

## Ruthfred Youth Ministry Calendar