

Highfield Happenings

July
2025



My Dear Family Members,

Well, here we are---it's July---hard to believe that the first half of 2025 is gone! Do you feel as if everything around you is moving faster than you are? If so, you are not alone! Not only do things seem to be moving faster, but we are getting flooded with news and more information every day. Here are some suggestions that might help with the sensation of being overwhelmed:

Take time each morning (10-15 minutes for starters) to sit in silence....to read from a daily devotional, pray, or just listen to the birds sing. Take a walk, if you are able. Give thanks for the new day. Believe it or not, this special time will not take away from the rest of the things that you have to doinstead it will energize and center you. Be sure to eat breakfast.

Take time each noontime as you sit to eat lunch—don't skip it and **sit**—no eating standing up--there is still the rest of the day to get through. Use this time to listen to music/read a book. Breathe....relax....breathe.....repeat. Shake out your arms and legs....stretch and give thanks that you are able to do those things.

Take time each evening for time with family and friends. If you live alone, call friends or family....try to have at least one interaction with another human being throughout the day, even if it is just saying hello to a neighbor or the person who delivers your mail. Staying connected reminds us that we are not alone. Give thanks that God has made you a member of God's family.

Take time each night to thank God for the good that has happened and ask God to forgive you for the things you said or did that you know hurt others. Thank God for being with you throughout the day and ask His continued presence as you sleep. The French have a saying: "A clear conscience is a soft pillow." Being at peace with God, others, and yourself will help you to sleep well.

Other suggestions: 1) Limit television and screen time on your electronic devices, 2) Hydrate—drink plenty of water, especially with the hot weather that is forecasted. Dehydration leads to confusion, falls, and UTI's. 3) Eat a balanced diet and exercise as you are able. 4) Weather permitting, get outside and breathe some fresh air.

5) DO AT LEAST ONE THING EACH DAY THAT BRINGS YOU JOY!

With love and prayers,
Pastor Chris

*The Rev.
Christina A. Bridge*

JUST A REMINDER: I will be on vacation from June 23 through June 30. I appreciate your prayers for health and safety as I travel to see my New Jersey friends.

Pastor Eric Damon will provide pastoral care in my absence. His cell # 724-708-4142.

St. Paul's Highfield Lutheran Church
Congregation of the Southwestern PA Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
1595 Dime Road, Vandergrift, PA 15690
Phone: 724.567.7462
Email: hifiels@comcast.net
www.stpaulshighfield.org



Vision Statement

Spreading the good news of
Jesus Christ by living out our
faith in worship, support, and
service to all people.

Mission Statement

SPHLC—
Spiritual
People
Helping
Lead others to
Christ

Parish Staff

Reverend Christine Bridge—Interim Pastor
217 Meadow Lane
Murrysville, PA 15668
Office: 724-567-7462
Cell: 848-467-6556
Email: darluz223@yahoo.com

Gregg LeMay—Director of Music 724-567-7462

Pam Neale—Financial Secretary 724-664-0164

Nicole Ashbaugh—Sexton 724-842-7376

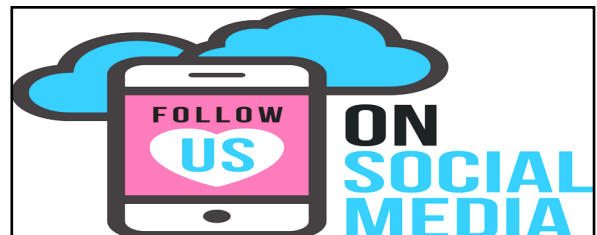
Janine Ballish—Secretary / Treasurer 724-567-7462

Office hours: Wednesdays and Fridays
9:00 am-3:00 pm

*Hours are subject to change for holidays,
etc.*

*If you have questions
or concerns, please
discuss them with one
of the members listed
below.*

Pam Neale—President
Gerry LeMay—Vice President
Robin Stoltz—Secretary
Patty Biss Bill McGinnis
Chris Cominos Nicole Ashbaugh
Judy Grinder Allen Leard



Besides in person, you can join us for a live
stream on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am on:



St. Paul's Highfield Lutheran Church

A heartfelt thank you...to all my friends at St. Paul's Highfield Church for all the cards and well wishes on the occasion of my 90th birthday! Love to all ~ *Karlean Kruse*

In Sympathy—We express our deepest sympathy to the families of:

*Clair Byers who died on Sunday, May 18;
Joyce Ward (Marlene Brown's sister) who died on Wednesday, June 4;*

*Tammy Moon (Mary Lou Slicker's daughter) who died on Wednesday, June 4 and
Jean Knepshield (Monty Knepshield's mother) who died on Sunday, June 15.*

"I am the resurrection and the life," says our Lord. "Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25-26, NRSV).

Please Save...your toilet paper rolls for a Pink Day activity. Thank you!

SUMMER OUTDOOR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Wednesdays July 16, August 20 @ SPH
6:00 pm Covered dish dinner 7:00 pm Worship service
Picnic Worship @ Crooked Creek Constitution Shelter
NO SERVICE @ SPH
Sunday, July 20

Worship with Communion 10:00 am
Churches participating are Grace Manorville, Heilman, St. John's Ford City, St. Michael's, United Rockville, Bethel and St. Paul's Highfield.

CHOIR PRACTICE @ SPH, WEDNESDAY, JULY 9TH AT 6:30 PM

Following worship is a potluck picnic and fellowship. Bring a casserole or dessert to share. Beverages and table service will be provided.

Kaufman/Baker Scholarship Awards – on Sunday, June 22, we awarded Joshua Schrader, Sophia Shannon and Taygen Hill with their scholarship checks. May God Bless their future endeavors.

Pastor Phil Ramstad of 1st Apollo is retiring after 60 years of ministry. His last Sunday in the pulpit will be on July 27th. We wish him all the best and thank him for his faithful ministry.

VBS 2025 True North

July 28 – August 1 from 6:00-8:00pm. It is open to all children ages 4-6th grade. Dinner will be provided each night, and Friday will include a cookout and carnival. Please register in advance.

Volunteers are needed. Please make sure your clearances are up to date. Watch for sign-up sheets in the narthex.

Calendar of Causes—Each month we raise up a social ministry supported within our Synod. The loose offering collected on the first Sunday of the month will go to this cause. Also, envelopes are located in the narthex for you to make a donation at any time during the month.

July's cause is Thiel College. Thiel College is an independent liberal arts college rooted in the Lutheran tradition. Offering distinctive programs, Thiel provides an accessible and inclusive learning environment that emphasizes service to society. Learn more at THIEL.EDU.

Kittanning Community Band 2025 Summer Concert Schedule

Friday, June 13, 6:30 pm @ Elks Flag Day, Kittanning
Wednesday, July 16, 6:30 pm @ Concordia of Cabot
Wednesday, July 30, 6:30 pm
@ Union First Presbyterian Church
Saturday, August 2, 1:00-2:30 pm
@ Kittanning Folk Festival

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Kittanning Community Band is made up of students, teachers, musicians, professionals and retirees from all walks of life.

The band is open to anyone ages 14 to 116.

For more information, visit our Facebook page at:

www.facebook.com/kittanningcommunityband.

Jason Venesky, Music Director

A Big Thank You to all who helped with SPH's participation in Vandergrift's Pride Event on June 14: Mary Jane and Glenn, Chris and Bob, Sandy and Leland, Gerry and Gregg, Pam and Bailey. Our presence there sends the strong message that we are all God's children and that God loves us all.

Congratulations to our new Bishop-Elect Melissa Stoller! Elected on the 4th ballot and received with thunderous applause when her election was announced, she will be SWPA Synod's 3rd Bishop. Please keep Bishop-Elect Stoller in your prayers as she prepares to take on the awesome responsibilities that await her. She will be installed in October.

New Financial Secretary – We are pleased to welcome Pam Neale as our new financial secretary. We also extend our sincere gratitude to Clarence Brown for his many years of dedicated service to St. Paul's Highfield Church.

STEWARDSHIP

Contributions



GIVING VS. BUDGET FIGURES 2025

NEED \$2,009.96 WEEKLY TO BREAK EVEN

	CURRENT DEPOSIT	NEEDED	OVER / (SHORT)	YTD OVER/(SHORT)	ATTENDANCE In person/online
January	\$8,270.00	\$8,039.84	\$230.16	\$230.16	226 / 23
February	\$6,875.00	\$8,039.84	\$(1,164.84)	\$(934.68)	210 / 19
March	\$9,801.00	\$10,049.80	\$(248.80)	\$(1,183.48)	280 / 18
April	\$8,947.00	\$8,039.84	\$907.16	\$(276.32)	267 / 11
May	\$6,037.00	\$8,039.84	\$(2002.84)	\$(2,279.16)	204 / 12

The above totals do not include any designated giving for specific ministries.

They only include the money given to support the 2025 budget.

If you have any questions, please call me ~ *Janine Ballish, Treasurer*



HOLY GROUND

For me, there's nothing quite like taking off my sandals in the summer and walking through the grass. But when our sons were infants, neither shared that love of going barefoot. When we'd attempt to lower them to play outside, they'd raise their legs, trying not to touch the tickly, prickly, green ground. "Do not come any closer," the Lord warned Moses through the burning bush. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5, NIV). In God's presence, Moses faced a turning point: either resist God's instructions or obey, leading the Israelites out of Egypt. Maybe taking off my sandals this summer can remind me that I'm standing in God's presence. I may not hear a booming voice, and I might just be standing at the kitchen sink doing chores. Or I might be at a barbecue, with the opportunity to truly listen to my neighbors. God's presence permeates life's big moments as well as the mundane.

How can you "take off your sandals" and enter what God has for you?

—Janna Firestone

St. Paul's Highfield Prayer List

Carol Ramer	Linda S.
Michael Rossi	Kathy Simpson
Ed Dobrowolski	Family of John Phillips
Frank Raspotnik	Dot Schaeffer
Dylan Eckman	Beth Stone
Neal Smith	Karen Koller
Michele Stefanik	Nancy Hart
Jim Hutton	Doug Rearick
Michelle Biss	Dona Ramer
Randy Bright	Andy Johns
Ron Loudon	Frank Mooney
Linda F.	Justin Kennedy
Michael Geltz	Melanie Hickey
Congregation of Faith, Natrona Heights, & Pastor Jeffrey Truscott	Ronnie
Jane Broda	Ann Krafick
Patrick	Gary Pilkington
Jaycee	Family of Clair Byers
Jerry Bish, Jr	Carol Swarc
Marianne Rossi	Family of Joyce Ward
Pauline Hutton	Jen Bridge
David Frew	Helen Novak
Marietta Blongaux	Blair Shick
	Kathryn Olinger
	Family of Tammy Moon

FOOD BANK ITEMS

Below is a complete list of items for you to keep at home of the items that our food bank needs:

Thank you in advance for any help you can offer.
God Bless—"The Food Bank Club"

Boxed or canned potatoes	Canned vegetables—corn, peas, green beans
Canned fruit	Canned soup—tomato, chicken noodle, vegetable beef
Pasta & Pasta sauce	Peanut butter & Jelly
Cereal	Toilet paper
Macaroni & Cheese	Paper towels
Rice mixes	Hygiene products - toothpaste, soap, etc
Canned tuna, chicken or ham	
Canned baked beans or kidney beans	

This ministry is made possible in part by the Ethel L. Verney Fund of the SWPA synod.



@ ST. PAUL'S HIGHFIELD

Don't forget to include our confined members in your prayers.
Names, addresses, and birthdays are listed below.

Jean and Linda Bozzarelli
(February 27, October 2)
112 Oregon Avenue
Vandergrift, PA 15690

LaRue Ciuca
1147 Crawford Avenue
Vandergrift, PA 15690

Martha Abarbanell
(May 31)
1166 Pleasant View Drive
Vandergrift, PA 15690

Kathye Schaeffer
(December 29)
Quality Life Services
151 Goodview Drive
Room #318
Apollo, PA 15613

Evelyn McGuire
(August 2)
Concordia Lutheran Ministries
615 North Pike Road
Building 4, Room 2306
Cabot, PA 16023

REV. MELISSA STOLLER ELECTED BISHOP

The Rev. Melissa L. Stoller was elected to serve a six-year term as bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). She is the first woman to hold the position of bishop in the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

The election took place during the synod assembly, held June 12-14 at La Roche University. Rev. Stoller was elected on the fourth ballot, with 283 votes. "In these liminal times, it is important that we strengthen our ties," Rev. Stoller said, "so that we may be Church together, communities of justice of hope, sharing the Good News with our neighbors."



The bishop-elect has served as Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) and Assistant to the Bishop for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod since 2017. Prior to this role, she was Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Penn Hills, Pennsylvania (2011–2016), Trinity Lutheran Church in Cook, Minnesota (2005–2010), and Intern Pastor at the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy in Russia (2003–2004). Before entering ordained ministry, she worked in housing and healthcare advocacy for the Minnesota Senior Federation. Her current synod leadership includes stewardship coaching, transitional ministry training, and vocational formation initiatives.

Rev. Stoller earned her Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Governmental Affairs from Augustana University.

Rev. Stoller begins the work of bishop on September 1, and will be installed on Saturday, October 18, 1 PM at Berkeley Hills Lutheran Church, 517 Sangree Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237.

Farewell Celebration for Bishop Kusserow

Sunday, August 10

Lutherlyn (500 Lutherlyn Lane, Butler, PA, 16001)

Give thanks for the steadfast and faithful leadership of Bishop Kurt Kusserow, who has shepherded our shared work for 18 years. Join for any or all of the activities; this will be an open-house style gathering where you may come and go as you please.

Worship: 2 PM @ Amphitheater

A shuttle from the main office will be available beginning at 1:30 PM for those who would like assistance getting to the amphitheater. (Rain Location: Chapel)

Reception: 3:30 @ Dining Hall

Please contribute to the cookie table by bringing a dozen cookies to share.

Campfire: 4:30 PM @ Friendship Circle

Top off the afternoon with a classic campfire at the fire pit located directly in front of the dining hall. (Rain Location: Dogwood Pavillion)

Bishop Installation Service for Rev. Melissa Stoller

Saturday, October 18: 1 PM

Berkeley Hills Lutheran Church

517 Sangree Road, Pittsburgh, PA, 15237

By the grace of Almighty God, your prayers and presence are requested at a celebration of the rite of installation for Pastor Melissa Stoller into the ministry of Synod Bishop.

Join the Choir: Volunteer to be a part of the synod-wide choir at the installation service by signing up here.



Every year, at the January council meeting, the council members discuss and plan the year's event schedule. It gives us a clear picture of what lies ahead for us.

At June's meeting, Council decided to share this calendar with you to show you what we've done so far and how much more there is to do this year! It's commendable for a church our size that we can accomplish so much!

We cannot do this without your help! We express our gratitude to everyone who has participated in any event held this year. Furthermore, we extend an invitation to every member of St. Paul's Highfield to review the upcoming events for the remainder of 2025 and become involved.

Stewardship encompasses not only financial contributions but also involves dedicating your time and talents to support our church family.

We look forward to serving God, our church and our community throughout the remainder of the year. If there's an event that you'd like to see us participate in, let one of your council members know!

January 2025 12th Council Installation
19th Annual Congregational meeting

February 9th Souper Bowl Sunday
28th Calm 6:30-7:30 pm

March 2nd Pancake Sunday
(Shrove Tuesday)
5th Ash Wednesday 11:00am (light lunch)
& 8:00 pm
7th, 14th, 21st, 28th Lenten Fridays @ VAND
Presbyterian Church NOON
12th, 19th, 26th Lent midweek service time?
Soup?
12th Church Night Out
16th Potato Bake

April 2nd, 9th Lent midweek service time?
Soup?
4th, 11th Lenten Fridays @ VAND Presbyterian
Church NOON
5th Easter Egg Hunt/Breakfast
9th Church Night Out
17th Maundy Thursday service 7:00 pm
18th Good Friday service 7:00 pm
19th Easter Vigil service 7:00 pm
20th Easter Sunday
26th Spring Cleaning Day 9:00 am

May 10th Mother's Day Dinner 2:00 pm
14th Church Night Out
20th Election Day Hoagie/Soup Sale
29th Ascension Day Service

June 8th Pentecost Sunday
14th Vandergrift Pride Day
11th Church Night Out
12th-14th Synod Assembly
18th Midweek Outdoor Service 6:00 pm

(Continued on page 8)

July 9th Church Night Out

16th Midweek Outdoor Service

28th-Aug. 1st VBS 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

20th Crooked Creek Joint Service @ Crooked Creek

27th Vandergrift Arts Fest

August National Night Out

13th Church Night Out

20th Midweek Outdoor Service

Blessing of Backpacks, Students and Teachers

September 7th God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday

10th Church Night Out

13th Church Fall Cleaning Day 9:00 am

14th First Responders Sunday

20th Pink Day

27th Fall Festival

October 8th Church Night Out

25th Trunk or Treat 2:00 pm-4:00 pm

November 4th Election Day Hoagie/Soup Sale

9th Harvest Home

16th Annual Congregational meeting for Council elections/Budget approval

23rd Thanksgiving Dinner

December 12th Christmas Recital

@ First, Apollo 6:30 pm

13th Santa's Workshop

21st Blue Christmas 6:00 pm

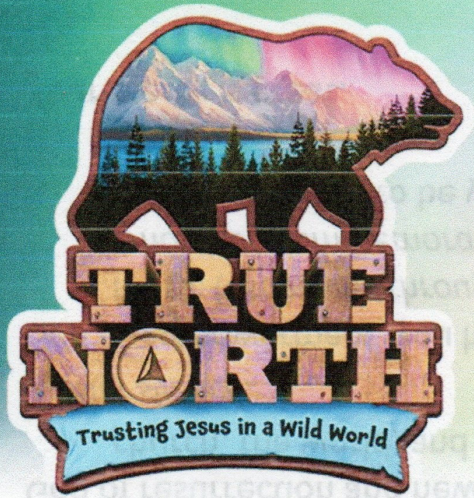
January 2026 18th Annual Congregational meeting for Annual Report

First Sunday of Month
- Potluck lunch after worship
- Bingo

Church Night Out
March – October
2nd Wednesday 6:00 pm

New Hope Food Pantry
3rd Tuesday of month
9:30-11:30 am

Lunch Outings
1st Wednesday of month
NOON



VBS 2025

July 28-Aug 1 • 6-8pm

Light dinner served each evening.

Family carnival and cookout on Friday!

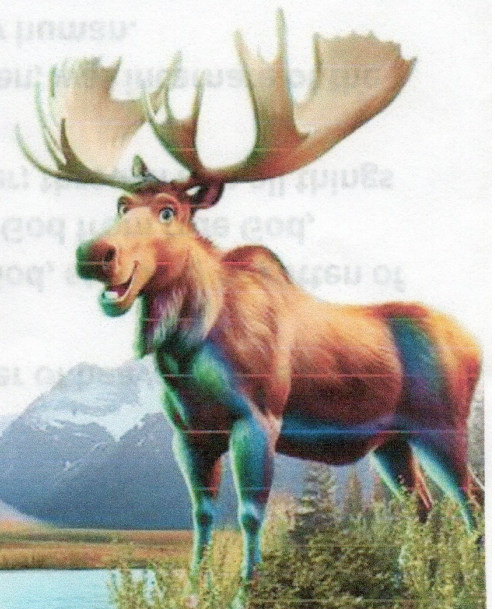
St. Paul's Highfield Lutheran Church

1595 Dime Rd • Vandergrift, PA 15690

Open to all children, age 4 – 6th grade

No Charge

Register here
or visit us on
Facebook

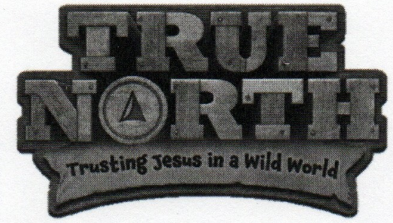




St. Paul's Highfield Lutheran Church
Vacation Bible School 2025

July 28-Aug 1, 2025 | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

For: Children 4 years old through Grade 6



Join us on a thrilling adventure through the Alaskan wilderness! Together we'll learn how we can trust Jesus in a wild world. Dinner will be provided at the beginning of each evening. On Friday evening there will be a short program, followed by a carnival celebration.

STUDENT REGISTRATION FORM

Church Contact: (724) 567-7462 or hifields@comcast.net

Director Contact: Bailey Neale, baileymneale@gmail.com

Child's Name: _____

Child's Age: _____ Grade Child Will Enter in Fall 2025: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____

Primary Phone: _____ Secondary Phone: _____

May we take photos of your child? Yes ☐ No ☐

May we use photos of your child in a post-VBS slideshow or on our website/Facebook page?

Yes ☐ Yes, Slideshow Only ☐ Yes, website/Facebook Only ☐ No ☐

EMERGENCY INFORMATION -----

Emergency Contact

(If different than Parent/Guardian): _____ Phone: _____

Allergies or Special Needs of Child: _____

Email (optional): _____

Would you like to receive information via email regarding future children's events?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Parent Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

St. Paul's Highfield Lutheran Church • Vandergrift, PA • (724) 567-7462 • hifields@comcast.net

ROOTED IN CHRIST, GROWING IN STEWARDSHIP

The heartland is now awash in various hues of green. The doldrums of winter give way to the colors of spring. Now, the promise of spring gives way to the growth of summer. Fields are planted and sprouted. Gardens are planted. Flowers adorn the beds of neighborhood homes and roadside ditches. Green is the shade of life!

Green growth is also the hue of the faithful steward. The seed of faith planted in human hearts in the waters of Holy Baptism grows as it is nurtured in the Word proclaimed and ingested in the Holy Supper. This faith does indeed save. But our stewardship of the Gospel is also designed to bear fruit for God's glory and the benefit of our neighbor.

To consider this, let us look at the hymn, "Fruitful Trees, the Spirits Sowing" (LSB 691). It is very much a stewardship hymn!

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's sowing, May we ripen and increase, Fruit to life eternal growing, rich in love and joy and peace.

The tree of faith is not planted in us by us. It is the Spirit's work! We do not claim the title "steward." Rather, we are created for it (Gen. 1:26–28).

He is the One who makes it grow in us. The fruits of the Spirit are borne out because we, by grace through faith, are connected to the vine that is Jesus (John 15).

Laden branches freely bearing Gifts the Giver loves to bless; Here is fruit that grows by sharing, Patience, kindness, gentleness.

Our stewardship is NOT about what we do. It is about what the Holy Spirit does in and through us. That is the fruit that we bear. His fruit for His purposes.

But that fruit is lived out through us. The world sees the fruit of our stewardship of the Gospel in lives lived connected to Word and Sacrament.

Rooted deep in Christ our Master, Christ our pattern and our goal, Teach us, as the years fly faster, Goodness, faith, and self-control.

Stewards have been created and redeemed to reflect the image of Jesus in the world. He is the pattern. We reflect to others around us the Light of the Gospel He has shone on us.

This reflection comes when Christ's goodness flows from us to others.

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's tending, May we grow till harvests cease; Till we taste, in life unending, Heaven's love and joy and peace.

Just as the Spirit has created us for stewardship of the Gospel, so also does He cause our faithfulness! He calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and KEEPS us in this faithful stewardship of the Gospel.

The ultimate goal of our faithful stewardship is eternity. For us. For our neighbor. All worked out by the Spirit.

Green is the color of the world right now. It is also the color of our stewardship and it is growing in us as we are connected to the vine, Jesus! God grant our growth in Him!

All are welcome to join us

6:00 pm Meal 7:00 pm Service

Wednesday, July 16

Midweek Outdoor Worship

9:00 am in person and Facebook

Sunday Mornings

Join us for worship



St. Paul's Highfield Lutheran Church

1595 Dime Road
Vandergrift, PA 15690

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