

# PARISH UPDATE

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## NEWS & NOTES

### August Birthdays

16 ..... Madeline Martin  
 19 ..... Wesley Martin  
 29 ..... Julie Ayres  
 31 ..... Dorothy Solyan

### August Anniversaries

4 ..... Christopher and Julia Headley  
 8 ..... James and Dodie Edge  
 11 ..... Lawrence and Patricia Lane  
 13 ..... William and Juliann Trischler

### Our Deepest Sympathy:

to the family of Kitty Fullerton who died on July 10. A memorial service for Kitty was held at our church on July 17.

### Summer Church Cleanup: Sat., Aug. 9, 8am – noon

The church grounds and some parts of the inside need a little TLC. Everyone is welcome all or part of the work time. Bring yard equipment. If we have the manpower, we'll tackle the lower lot. Doughnuts, coffee, and drinks provided.

### Bishop Scriven to Visit Aug. 24

Fresh from the Lambeth Conference, Bishop Scriven will be anxious for a little Christ-centered love and worship. Mark your calendar and plan on joining him at either service, 8 or 10:30 am. Let's show him some love. He'll also be glad to answer any questions we have about the upcoming convention and realignment.

### The Dog Days of Summer

No doubt you've heard of the "Dog Days of Summer," but did you know that the phrase comes, in part, from the Book of Common Prayer? The phrase 'Dog Days' refers to the hottest, most sultry days of summer. They usually fall between July and early September but the actual dates vary greatly from region to region, depending on latitude and climate. But the term itself was coined by the ancient Romans, who called these days 'caniculares dies' (days of the dogs) after Sirius (the "Dog Star"), the brightest star in the heavens besides the Sun. The Old Farmer's Almanac lists them as the 40 days beginning July 3 and ending August 11, coinciding with the ancient heliacal (at sunrise) rising of the Dog Star, Sirius.

But, according to The Book of Common Prayer (1552), the "Dog Daies" begin on July 6 and end on August 17.

## Parish Update

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## Rector's Message:

### Long Train Runnin'

Dear Friends,

Have you ever taken a train ride? The good thing about trains is you don't have to worry about driving. You just buy your ticket to St. Louis, hop on and hang out in the passenger cars until you get there. Rarely do you bother yourself with the locomotive or engage in much conversation with the engineers. You assume they'll do their job and take the train where it is supposed to go.

Most people who bought tickets and boarded the Episcopal train years ago assumed it was going where the ticket said it was. We assumed that landmarks such as the nature of God, the person of Christ, the truth of the Gospel, and the sacredness of marriage were all components of the trip we could count on. We also thought the plain meaning of the Prayer book and the Bible would be maintained throughout the duration of the trip.

The problem for many people on the Episcopal train right now is that we've woken up from a nice night in the sleeper car and realized that the desert sand and cacti out the window do not look like St. Louis. What was supposed to be a western route from Pittsburgh somehow turned south and is now heading for Tijuana.



Now the focus of this article is not to rain down criticism on Tijuana, although much could be said in that regard. The point in question here is the dishonesty of selling a ticket for one destination then changing tracks to head in a completely different direction.

Whether or not Tijuana is a fun city, that is not the argument here; the point is that it's just disingenuous to take people there who paid to go to St. Louis.

Of course, Tijuana represents the new direction of the Episcopal Church that we've talked about ad nauseum. Last month we noted the diocese of Northern Michigan violating the Nicene Creed by calling all people "begotten children of God." This month the Presiding Bishop called the creation the "Body of God." That's one of the oldest heresies in the book, not distinguishing the creation from the Creator (See Rms. Ch. 1). And on, and on.

Anyway, no more criticism of the new direction, some people are obviously excited about the excursion. The important thing is to recognize that we've been duped and the train is not heading in the direction our ticket said it would, and figure out our next move. For us in Pittsburgh, there are three options: 1) Stay on the train and start developing a taste for Tequila, 2) Stay on the train and hope to influence the engineers to change their mind and direction, 3) Attach our car to another Anglican locomotive (realign) and resume our trip to St. Louis.

In October, the diocese will be voting on whether or not to proceed with option three. As a church, we have one clergy vote and two lay votes. Our lay delegates are Julia Headley, Barb Grundler, and Sarah Perry (alternate). Feel free to express your thoughts to any of us. In the end, our main concern is that we continue to ride with Christ and his gospel and treat others out of his love. Without which, as the song "Long Train Running" says, "Where would you be right now?" Pray for direction.

Blessings,  
 Joseph



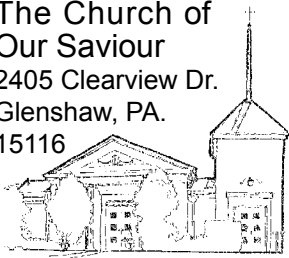
## Calendar of Events

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday ..... 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I  
 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service w/Sunday School  
 Family Service the first Sunday of the month w/o Sunday school  
 Tuesday ..... 6:30 p.m. Intercessory Prayer Time  
 Last Thursday of the Month ..... Healing Service and Lunch 12:00 noon

Please pray for the all the parishioners and friends of Church of Our Saviour

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## Worship in the Church

Excerpts from the article in Modern Reformation Magazine: *Michael Horton talks with pastors from three denominations*

**HORTON:** .....First of all, what is worship? Some say that the era of the church is over. You can satisfy your own spiritual needs on the Internet, or in just getting together with other Christians informally. You don't *need* to go to church. Why *do* we get dressed on Sunday and go to church?

**BOMBARO:** I think this first part, namely 'the definition,' is where we begin to go astray. There is the dictionary definition: "Worship is a reverence, adoration, homage paid to a divine being in a formal or perhaps informal setting." Though that's true, it's only half the story; and if we only take that as "worship is what we do," then yes, we could stay at home. But worship also entails service. Service is what God does when God comes to meet with us, imparting his grace and bolstering our faith through the means of grace. This requires the assembly of believers being in the environment in which God has attached his "for you" promises. That doesn't happen when I'm in my car listening to Amy Grant at the red light; it does happen when I'm sitting under preaching and when I attend to the sacrament at the altar.

**HYDE:** When I utter the opening words of our liturgy—"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit"—something *happens*; we are set apart from the world at that moment, we are distinct, we have been called out of the world, and we've actually been ushered into heaven itself into the presence of God, into his holy assembly.

**HORTON:** There are a lot of people who'll say, "I understand that the covenant of grace is based on God's faithfulness to his people even though they are faithless." But when you say something like that, Danny, when you introduce the service with the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, something happens and people are set apart. Aren't they set apart on Tuesday as well as Sunday? Does something happen that makes them something that they're not in relation to God on other days of the week?

**HYDE:** There's obviously a pretty clear distinction, in my understanding, in Scripture of Christians being members of the body of Christ, living their lives in the world; but yet there's something different when the Old Testament speaks of 'the holy assembly,' or when Paul describes it in 1 Corinthians as "when you come together as the church." Yes, we are living a life of gratitude, laying our lives down (Romans 12), our whole life; but there's something special, something particular that God says he's going to do when we show up at his beck and call.

**LANDRY:** God doesn't attach certain promises to our getting together with our Christian next-door neighbors over a beer and a barbecue; God *does* attach certain promises to the preaching of the Word, to the words of absolution, to baptism, to the Lord's Supper; those are where the promises of God are located. That's where God's people then have a certain responsibility to come and to receive those words of life from the hands of the ministers.

**HORTON:** Isn't that a completely different motivation than, "Where were you last Sunday?"

**BOMBARO:** I often say that there are 'musts' in going to church. "I must go to church because if I don't go, then Tony / Betty / Sally's going to think I've fallen off the wagon, and of course I must make a good showing there." The second must could be, "I must to go because the law is driving me." So I'm going out of servile fear. We need to go because we have a need to hear God's word and to receive his gifts; we need to go because we love our Father; we love the Son and we love the Holy Spirit, and God wants to meet with us and give us good gifts. That's what worship means—that we ascribe worth to God.

**HORTON:** It's really fascinating to me how often John 6 has been appealed to: "The Spirit gives life, the flesh profits but nothing." Down through the ages, many sects have emphasized this and said, "See, it's not external things like preaching, that's just some man up front; it's not external things like formal ways of teaching, called catechism, or formal ways of confessing, called confessions, or formal liturgies; it's not the *external* stuff, certainly not bread, wine and water; it's the exciting, extraordinary, direct, immediate work of the Spirit!" And yet Jesus says immediately after that sentence, "The words that I am speaking to you right now are Spirit, and they are life."

**LANDRY:** And I think when that is expressed to people who are tired of the spiritual rat-race found in other churches, they latch on to it like there's no tomorrow. They want to know that it is through these ordinary, mundane things that God comes to meet with them, because frankly, their lives are not exciting; their lives are not filled with spiritual signs and wonders. So it's a great comfort to them to know that it is in the simple gifts that God comes and is present with them. People who come to our church from a non-church background would not be impressed by any kind of entertainment that our little group could muster up; but when they come here they know that something special is going on, even if it's not flashy; it's something that is still very important to them.

**BOMBARO:** And it's not *all* mundane; the story itself is absolutely extraordinary. If you can't get passionate about the idea that God has come down to rescue humanity by taking on human flesh, by being born of a virgin, crucified, raised up in a human body and taken up into the midmost mysteries of the Holy Trinity—if you can't get excited about that, then I don't know what! The drama itself has the passion and the charisma.

**HORTON:** Charles Wesley couldn't help but expose the wonder of the gospel as the reformers understood it in his hymn, *And Can it Be*?: "My chains fell off. My heart was free." He was dead and then he was suddenly made alive, and now his tongue is loosened to be able to sing God's praises.

**BOMBARO:** I think the greatest act of worship and the most God-honoring is receiving the Lord's promise-gifts in Christ through faith. So, what is it that God ultimately wants from us? Is it prayer, is it praise, is it thanksgiving? I say ultimately, no; but rather that we receive his gifts. This is what faith is all about, this is the foundation of worship, namely receiving him, receiving his promises, his benefits in belief.

**HORTON:** Obviously, Lutheran and Reformed traditions have different interpretations at some points regarding the Supper, but we can all agree here with the Apostle Paul when he says, "This bread that we break, is this not a participation in the body of Christ? This cup that we bless, is this not a sharing in the blood of Christ?" This is for the forgiveness of sins. If you don't get it in God's greeting, if you don't get it in the absolution, you got the sermon around the corner, you get it in the Supper. To summarize: we believe the biblical approach to worship is that God directs our worship, not because he's a cosmic legalist (although he could because he's the lawgiver of all the earth), but he directs our worship primarily so that it will lead us to salvation rather than judgment. Saving us from ourselves again.

**BOMBARO:** Bringing glory to himself through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**HORTON:** And that's how he brings glory to himself. All we can do is celebrate and thank God for his grace.