



The Newsletter of Nativity Lutheran Church

Shared Life

Newsletter

Summer 2026

From Pastor's Heart

**July 4 – Happy
250th Birthday
America!**

**July 10 – Pirate
Game**

**Aug 7 – National
Purple Heart Day**

**Aug 8 – Kuhns
Grocery Collection**

**Aug 22 – Adult
Picnic**

**Aug 29 – Family
Fun Day**

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly was held on June 12–13 this year. Although this year did not involve as many actions as last year's bishop election, important work was done pertaining to the business of our synod. We voted to approve the budget and a few resolutions. We also voted on conference restructuring, moving from six conferences to three, effective May 2027. We celebrated ordination anniversaries, including Rev. Cyril Hurnyak's 55th anniversary of ordination. We heard from ministry partners, worshiped together, and enjoyed time for fellowship.

The theme of the assembly was *Vibrant Faith: God Shines Through Us*. We were asked to reflect on the question: **How does your congregation show vibrant faith?** I encourage you all to reflect on how you show vibrant faith in your own life, and how we do so together as a congregation.

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 5 that faith is meant to be shared and lived openly. Our witness is offered so others may find hope and see God's love at work. This year's theme invited us to notice and celebrate the many ways God's presence is already shining through our communities. In acts of care, justice, welcome, and creativity, vibrant faith takes shape in everyday ministry.

During the synod assembly, several forums were available for participants. The forum I attended was *Mission Lab: Living a*

Vibrant Faith Through Mission Experiments. We dwelled on Acts 16:6–15 and were asked to consider two reflection questions:

1. **What prevents you from doing more in your community?**
2. **What if the things we think are roadblocks are actually ways the Spirit is nudging us in a different direction?**

I think these are important questions for every person and every congregation. These questions can continue to guide us as we consider a new opportunity coming this fall. Pastor Erin Jones (Assistant to the Bishop and D.E.M.) shared with us about the Mission Lab:

“The Mission Lab is a yearlong cohort, beginning in October 2026, designed for congregational teams (of 3–5 people) to engage in prayer, discernment, and hands-on exploration of their unique mission and context. Through guided exercises and coaching support, teams will explore their congregation’s mission and vision, map their neighborhood and its needs, and name the gifts already present among them. Along the way, they will build connections with other congregations and the synod, discovering they are not alone in this work. Each team will leave with concrete tools, including demographic insights, asset maps, a timeline for next steps, and practices to engage the wider congregation in imagining what comes next.”

I believe this would be a wonderful opportunity for our congregation to take part in. If this sounds like something you would like to learn more about or be involved in, please let me know.

May we continue to be encouraged by one another’s witness and renewed in our calling to reflect God’s grace together.

Blessings,

Pastor Jennifer Sottis

Serving in the month of

July

Offering Counters

Jean Chantz

another volunteer needed

Altar Guild

Linda Ryan

Coffee Hour

volunteer needed

August

Offering Counters

Merlinda Bisese

another volunteer needed

Altar Guild

Kim Brandt

Coffee Hour

volunteer needed



Mike and I want to thank all of you for your prayers during his cardiac problems. He is doing fine now.

Thank You All,
Cheryl Kilbert & Mike Lang

Thank you

All women of Nativity and their friends are welcome to join our weekly meetings and activities which are held on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Our schedule for July & August are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| July 7 | Project Day – Quilting |
| July 14 | Business Meeting |
| July 21 | Bible Study: <i>“I Am Worthy,”</i>
Session Two: <i>“I Am More than One Thing”</i> |
| July 28 | Book Review: <u>The Light After the War</u>
by Anita Abriel |
|
 | |
| Aug 4 | Project Day – Quilting |
| Aug 11 | Business Meeting |
| Aug 18 | Bible Study: <i>“I Am Worthy,”</i>
Session Three: <i>“I Am Because You Are”</i> |
| Aug 25 | Book Review: <u>James</u> by Percival Everett |

NHCO's Back to School Collection

This next project gathers school supplies for families in need. There was an increase need last year compared to previous years, so the need is there. Donations can be brought to the church and placed in the marked bins under the coat rack. The collection will run through the beginning of August.

Additional information for specific items needed are on the flyer posted on the bulletin board across from the kitchen, on the table in the Narthex, on our website under Missions/NHCO.





Fellowship Committee

As we embark on a new church year, the fellowship committee would like to schedule events that you, the congregation, are excited about.

Please give some thought to what activities/events you would like to see us schedule over the next year. Maybe it's some event you have already attended and enjoyed. Why not try it out at Nativity too?

Please catch myself or Charlie Brandt with those ideas and we can discuss them!

Thank You,
Jerry Sever

Freedom Worth Guarding

Because many Americans have never known life without freedom, it can be easy to take our liberties for granted. The Israelites, however, knew the harsh reality of slavery. Yet even after God led them out of Egypt, they struggled to embrace their newfound freedom. Faced with uncertainty, they grew fearful and complained against Moses and Aaron, longing for the familiarity of their former bondage rather than trusting God's provision.

Their story feels surprisingly familiar. As Christians, we have been set free through a far greater deliverance. Our freedom was secured at a great cost through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And yet, we sometimes drift back toward old habits, attitudes and patterns that once held us captive.

Scripture reminds us to stand firm in the freedom we have been given. As Paul writes in Galatians 5:1 (NKJV), *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage."*

True freedom is not simply the absence of restraint. It is the opportunity to live fully in God's grace, walking in obedience, joy and purpose. This kind of freedom is worth celebrating, protecting and living out every day.

Safety Fair scheduled for September 13

With all the crazy shootings in the news, do you ever wonder how Nativity would handle such an event? Do you know how to use the defibrillator on the wall by the mailboxes?

Stay after church on Sunday, Sept 13 to find out answers to these questions and more.

We will have blood pressure checks, an AED practice module, fire extinguisher demonstration/practice & discussions on how to handle emergency situations. If you have questions, please see Jean Chantz



On-Going Prayer List

Members, Family & Friends in need of
on-going prayers

- ♥ Andy & Katy Greer (*Friends of the Heyne's*)
- ♥ Katie Wallaart-DeBeor (*Niece of the Dollhopf's*)
- ♥ Carol Boylan (*mother of Pr Jennifer's friend*)
- ♥ Adam Brandt (*Charlie Brandt's Nephew*)
- ♥ Pr. Tony Schneck (*SWPA pastor*)
- ♥ Pr. John Cawkins (*SWPA pastor*)
- ♥ Beth Neese (*Friend of the Brandt's*)
- ♥ Andy & Linda Halcoussis (*Nativity Members*)
- ♥ Janet Liotta (*Nicole Kirkland's Aunt*)
- ♥ Tim Wargo (*Friend of the Bank's*)
- ♥ Terri Brandt (*Charlie Brandt's Sister*)
- ♥ Dave Miller (*Lori Coon's Father*)
- ♥ Matt Fickes (*Friend of the Coon's*)
- ♥ Lorraine Howell (*Traci Saunder's mom*)
- ♥ Keith Huffman (*Carol Huffman's son*)
- ♥ Sandy Hutchins (*Friend of Ruth Kiefer*)

Service Personnel:

- ✠ Sarah Foster (*Traci Saunder's daughter*)
- ✠ Allison Stover (*Cheryl Kilbert's granddaughter*)

Church FAMILY —PRAYER LIST—

**Need To Submit a
Prayer Request?**

Call the Church
(412) 346.4971

Email the Church
NativityLC@verizon.net

submit one through our
website's [on-line form](#)

Almighty and merciful God,
you are the source of health and
healing; you alone can bring calmness and
peace. Grant to our siblings, an awareness
of your presence and a strong confidence
in you. In their pain, weariness, and
anxiety, surround them with your care,
protect them by your loving might, and
grant to them once again the gifts of health
and strength and peace; through Jesus
Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.



Birthdays

Andrew Halcoussis	1
Milan Glock	1
Richard King	3
Mary Lynne Bennett	6
Kai Edmonds	6
Emily Chantz	7
Tyler Zelnis	18
Jim Shuey	23
Samantha (Chantz) Edmonds	29
Bethany Roefs	29

Anniversaries

James & Dorothy Zaffuto	1
Tom & Judy Beecher	11
Donald & Sharon Schmitz	12
Mike Lang & Cheryl Kilbert	17
Raymond & Nancy Smith	18



Birthdays

Rev. Kirk Bish	3
Jonathan Chantz	7
Nan Shuey	10
Jerry J. Sever	11
Mark Ambill	14
Carol Banks	19
James Zaffuto	23

Anniversaries

Don & Carol Messner	4
Charles & Kim Brandt	14
Rev. Brian & Mary Lynn Bennett	14
Rev. James & Jane Dollhopf	14
Andrew & Linda Halcoussis	15
Carl & Donna Heyne	28

ATTENDANCE

June Worship Statistics

<u>In-person</u>	<u>YouTube</u>
38	26



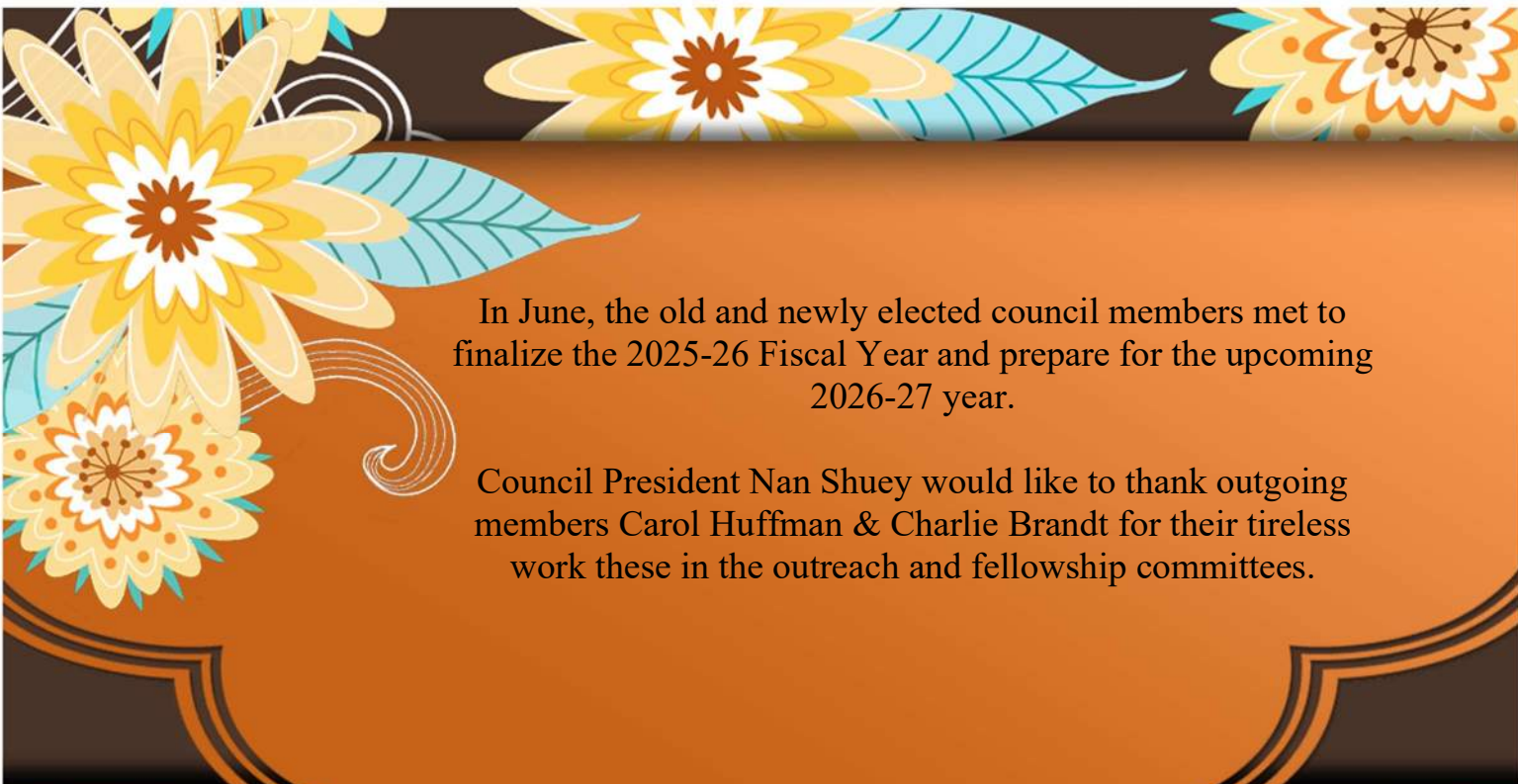
Amanda Zelnis
Luca Romero Lauro
Andrew Halcoussis
Jeremiah Bennett
Kim Brandt
Emily Chantz
Donna Heyne



The Christian Outreach/Social Ministry committee recently purchased magnets and pens with our name & information on them.

We invite you to take some for yourselves and would like you all to help in taking and dispersing the pens throughout the community. This is another way in which our presence could be visible in the community, along with the Nativity t-shirts.

If you haven't already gotten yours, we still have some available!



In June, the old and newly elected council members met to finalize the 2025-26 Fiscal Year and prepare for the upcoming 2026-27 year.

Council President Nan Shuey would like to thank outgoing members Carol Huffman & Charlie Brandt for their tireless work these in the outreach and fellowship committees.

2026-2027 Church Council Officers

Officers



President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Pr. Jennifer Soltis
Jean Chantz
Kim Brandt (*appointed*)
Tom Beecher (*appointed*)

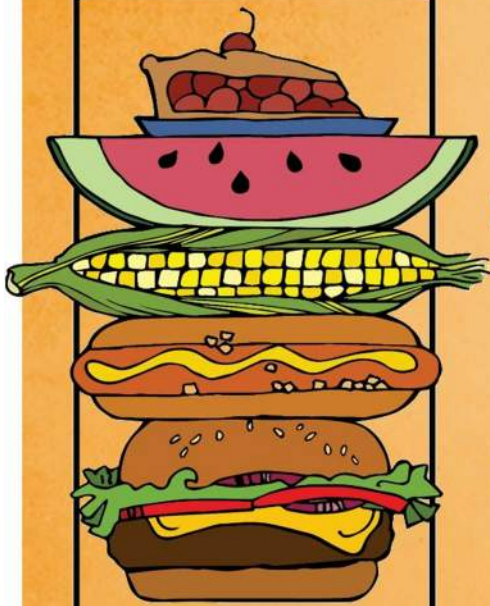
Committees

Christian Education/Youth
Outreach & Social Ministry
Communications
Fellowship
Finance
Mutual Ministry
Property
Stewardship
Worship & Music
Financial Secretary

Diana Mitchell
****vacant****
Margie Radebaugh
Jerry Sever
Pam Hoskins
Jean Chantz
Bonnie Varley
Nan Shuey
Merlinda Bisese
Kim Brandt (*appointed*)

The next Council meeting will be on Tuesday, **July 9** at 7:00 pm via Zoom
The August meeting will serve as a council retreat/workshop

ADULT



PICNIC

Saturday, August 22th

Mark your calendars and plan to attend our annual Adult Picnic at the Alcoa Pavilion in the Hampton Community Park.

From 4:00pm - dusk.

The Cost is \$10 per person to cover the cost of the rental, chicken and drinks.

Chicken Tenders, water, soft drinks will be provided. Please bring your own place setting. You may bring your own beer or wine. Picnic benches are provided, but you are encouraged to bring lawn chairs for comfort.

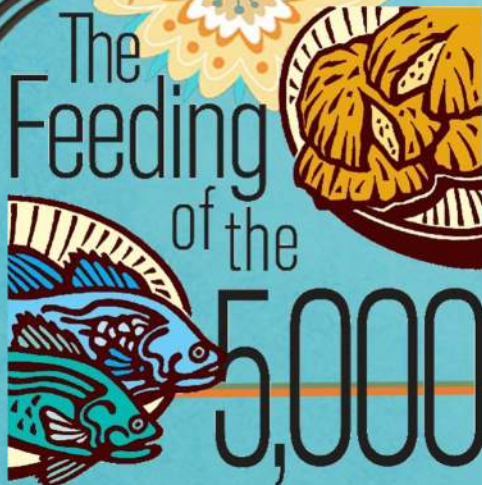
Family
FUN
Day

Saturday, August 29

The Christian Education Committee will be hosting a Family Fun Picnic, beginning at 4pm. Everyone is welcome to attend!

The theme this year is "**Jesus Feeds the 5,000.**" We will have activities for ages 3 to fifth grade. Come for story time, crafts, games and a picnic dinner. Families are encouraged to attend, and all are welcome!

We will be collecting non-perishable food items for the North Hills Community Outreach food pantry.





If you are thinking about back to school supplies or would just like to donate needed items to Nativity, please consider the following items that we are in constant need of in the office:

- **Reams or Cases of printer paper**
- Printer Toner (Brother TN850)
- Printer Drum Unit (Brother DR820)

Did you know that you can have any donations to Nativity counted on your yearly giving statement as non-cash contributions! Just see Kim if you have any questions or want to know how to donate these items.

Have you visited our website lately? Do you know all the things it contains or things you can do on there?



- View the [events Calendar](#) (updated in real time)
- Submit a [Prayer Request](#)
- [Sign-up for something](#) (Worship helpers, Pirates game, altar flowers...etc.)
- View the latest [Newsletter](#)
- Utilize our electronic giving option ([Vanco](#))
- Watch [a Sunday Service](#) live or one from a previous Sunday

<https://nativitylutheranchurch15101.org/>

Scripture Readings for July

July 5

- [Zechariah 9:9-12](#)

The king will come in humility and peace

- [Psalm 145:8-14](#)

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion. (Ps. 145:8)

- [Romans 7:15-25a](#)

The struggle within the self

- [Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30](#)

The yoke of discipleship

July 12

- [Isaiah 55:10-13](#)

The growth of the word to accomplish God's purpose

- [Psalm 65:\[1-8\] 9-13](#)

Your paths overflow with plenty. (Ps. 65:11)

- [Romans 8:1-11](#)

Live according to the Spirit

- [Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23](#)

The parable of the sower and the seed

July 19

- [Isaiah 44:6-8](#)

There is no other God than the Lord

- [Psalm 86:11-17](#)

Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth. (Ps. 86:11)

- [Romans 8:12-25](#)

The revealing of the children of God

- [Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43](#)

The parable of the weeds

July 26

- [1 Kings 3:5-12](#)

Solomon's prayer for wisdom

- [Psalm 119:129-136](#)

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. (Ps. 119:130)

- [Romans 8:26-39](#)

Nothing can separate us from God's love

- [Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52](#)

Parables of the reign of heaven

Puzzle!

Use the Scripture verses below to locate the places in the puzzle. (If a verse mentions more than one place, only one appears in the puzzle, so choose carefully.) Circle each place as you find it.

Answers go: → ↓ ↘

Genesis 2:15	Isaiah 23:1	Luke 24:13
Genesis 11:9	Isaiah 23:2	John 2:1
Genesis 35:1	Isaiah 23:3	Acts 8:5
Exodus 13:18	Jonah 1:2	Acts 11:22
Ruth 1:1	Matthew 3:6	Acts 17:16
1 Kings 18:19	Matthew 4:18	Romans 1:15
1 Chronicles 11:4	Matthew 26:36	

S	I	D	O	N	G	N	I	L	E	S	O
J	J	O	R	D	A	N	R	I	V	E	R
E	S	G	A	A	R	C	A	N	A	A	M
R	A	E	T	B	D	C	D	B	E	O	O
U	M	T	H	B	E	T	H	E	L	F	U
S	A	H	E	T	N	E	A	T	N	G	N
A	R	S	N	Y	O	M	N	H	I	A	T
L	I	E	S	R	F	M	T	L	N	L	C
E	A	M	D	E	E	A	I	E	E	I	A
M	F	A	R	S	D	U	O	H	V	L	R
G	H	N	O	A	E	S	C	E	E	E	M
I	J	E	M	B	N	A	H	M	H	E	E
T	O	W	E	R	O	F	B	A	B	E	L

Answers: Garden of Eden, Tower of Babel, Bethel, Red Sea, Bethlehem, Mount Carmel, Tyre, Sidon, Nile, Nineveh, Jordan River, Sea of Galilee, Gethsemane, Emmaus, Cana, Samaria, Antioch, Athens, Rome

Scripture Readings for August

August 2

- [Isaiah 55:1-5](#)

Eat and drink that which truly satisfies

- [Psalms 145:8-9, 14-21](#)

You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:16)

- [Romans 9:1-5](#)

The glory of God's people Israel

- [Matthew 14:13-21](#)

Christ feeding five thousand

August 9

- [1 Kings 19:9-18](#)

The Lord speaks to Elijah on Mount Horeb

- [Psalms 85:8-13](#)

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying. (Ps. 85:8)

- [Romans 10:5-15](#)

Hearing and confessing the word of faith

- [Matthew 14:22-33](#)

Jesus walking on the sea

August 16

- [Isaiah 56:1, 6-8](#)

A house of prayer for all peoples

- [Psalms 67](#)

Let all the peoples praise you, O God. (Ps. 67:3)

- [Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32](#)

God's mercy to all, Jew and Gentile

- [Matthew 15:\[10-20\] 21-28](#)

The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter

August 23

- [Isaiah 51:1-6](#)

The enduring foundation of God's salvation

- [Psalms 138](#)

O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever. (Ps. 138:8)

- [Romans 12:1-8](#)

One body in Christ, with gifts that differ

- [Matthew 16:13-20](#)

The profession of Peter's faith

August 30

- [Jeremiah 15:15-21](#)

God fortifies the prophet against opposition

- [Psalms 26:1-8](#)

Your love is before my eyes; I have walked faithfully with you. (Ps. 26:3)

- [Romans 12:9-21](#)

Live in harmony

- [Matthew 16:21-28](#)

The passion prediction and rebuke to Peter

