2016 Eggstravaganza!

The Lord provided a beautiful spring afternoon for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. The church lawn was filled with brightly colored eggs and the sounds of young children could be heard experiencing one of Beaver Lutheran’s traditions.

The eggs were hidden in areas around the church for various age groups from birth through 12-years. The Youth Group helped out by hiding the eggs for the younger children.

The Fellowship Committee provided snacks for those who attended after all of the eggs were gathered.

See Page 2 for photos of Holy Week.
MAUNDY THURSDAY

GOOD FRIDAY

THE EASTER VIGIL

Alleluia
He is Risen
Three Welcomed into this Family of God

We celebrated three baptisms at our Easter Vigil (Saturday, March 26). Please welcome Cyrus Jacob Bickhart, son of Nathan and Kimberly Bickhart; Braxston Hayes Fike, son of Aaron Fike and Jenna Dutrow; and Nola Rea VanHorn, daughter of Ryan and Jenelle (Mattern) VanHorn.

Next Baptism Opportunity

The next opportunity for baptisms will be All Saints Sunday, November 6. They will be preceded by several sessions of learning and followed by reflection. If you would like to receive the sacrament of baptism for yourself or your children, please contact Pastor Nathan.
It’s Red for Pentecost!

Pentecost Sunday will soon be upon us … May 15! This Sunday marks 50 days after Easter and the coming of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is often symbolized as Fire, it has become our tradition to wear red and bring red geraniums. So plan on doing both! We’ll plant the red geraniums outside the sanctuary entrance.

Confirmation Sunday

Four of our young people will affirm their baptism on Pentecost Sunday, May 15. Those individuals are: Alex Beaver, Gavin Goss, Lauryn Goss, and Alex Hockenberry. All are invited to a reception after worship to mark their completion of this faith formation process. And, don’t forget to wear red!

Faith On First

Our next Faith On First event is May 1. This fellowship and educational opportunity for families with preschool and elementary-aged children includes a sit-down meal followed by activities for children and their parents together. We conclude by 1:30 with a brief closing worship in the sanctuary.

Vacation Bible School: Save the Date!

VBS will be held this year from Sunday through Thursday, June 5-9. Sunday’s gathering will follow worship and the remaining gatherings (Monday through Thursday) will be held in the evening from 5:30-8:00. More information and registration will be available in next month’s newsletter.
Just for Men: Breakfast and Bible

Men of the congregation are invited to join Pastor Nathan for breakfast and Bible study on the first Saturday of the month from 8:00-9:30 a.m. on May 7, June 4, and July 2. We’ll enjoy a light breakfast, hear God’s word together, and pray for one another. Please contact Pastor Nathan if you would like to attend.

Spirited Women Coming This Summer!

How can the stories of scripture connect us more deeply to God and one another? Do we have moments to enjoy fellowship while learning? The Spirit is at work within us and all around us, but do we notice or pay attention?

This June and July, I will host two evening gatherings for women. The name “Spirited Women” was the name of a similar women’s book/bible study at a congregation we were privileged to be a part of during Nathan’s internship. I find the name compelling because indeed, we are made most whole and alive by God’s Spirit.

Mark your Calendars for two summer Monday evenings: June 20 (the First Day of Summer!) and July 18 at 7 p.m. We will gather at our home (on the patio, weather permitting). Stay tuned for the particular scriptures/topics we will consider together.

Each session is independent of the other, so if you can only attend one, that this just fine! We will see where the Spirit is leading!

In Christ,
Jennifer Baker-Trinity

Planning is Underway

Members of WELCA (Women of the ELCA) met recently to discuss plans for the Mother/Daughter Banquet. A tentative date is Sunday, May 22. Check out finalized details in future weekly bulletins and on our Facebook page.

Lost & Found

We have unearthed several items throughout the church that might be yours. These include items from the kitchen. Please check the table in the coat lobby entrance. Unclaimed items will become the property of the church or disposed.
We are Looking for Your Graduates

The church will be recognizing our graduates May 22. If you have a loved one who will be graduating from high school or a school of higher learning, please let us know so they also can be blessed and prayed for on Graduation Sunday.

We would also like a senior photo and a bit of information about your graduate for the “Commentary.” Please submit your information, along with a nice color photo to the secretary as soon as possible. Items may be emailed to: secretary.beaverlc@verizon.net.

Academic Loan Applications Available

Applications for Academic Loans are now available on the bulletin board. Please have the applications completed and in to the church office no later than August 1, 2016.

Mother's Day Meal and Plant Sale

The Youth Activities Committee is planning a fundraiser for Saturday, May 7 (the day before Mother's Day!). Come on out and enjoy a meal of chicken and waffles. While you are here, pick up a beautiful potted plant for your mom at their plant sale.

The meal will begin at 4 p.m. Cost is $8 for adults and $5 for children 5-12.

You can help out the youth by not only attending and/or purchasing a planter, but by donating items to prepare the meal. A sign-up board is located in the narthex for some of the following: chickens, flour, milk, eggs, cakes, etc.
April Council Highlights

The church council met on April 13 at 7:30 p.m. Highlights of that meeting include:

● Approved purchase of new desktop and laptop computers for church office which will be funded by the CERF (Capital Equipment and Repair Fund).
● 2015 Financial books will be audited on April 18. Audit Committee members include: Albert Bickhart, Carole Morgan and Dallas Klingler.
● Full minutes of the meeting will be approved at the May 11 meeting and made available outside the church office.
● Discussed 10 Simple Ways to improve our hospitality and outreach.

News from The Closet & Pantry

The Closet and Pantry will be open April 23 from 8 to 11 a.m. However, due to a private party scheduled in May, the May Closet and Pantry will be moved up a week to May 21. Please take note and pass the word along.

A work party to organize the Closet and Pantry is held each Thursday morning before the opening. Volunteers are always welcome to come out and give the Outreach Committee a hand.

Also, if you’d like to help out in the kitchen to prepare or serve the breakfast, please see Joe Feehrer.

Donations are needed to help build up our Pantry. The more we donate, the less we need to purchase. Always in need are canned fruits and vegetables, breakfast items, and personal care items. The Closet is always in need of children’s clothing.

Don’t Throw That Out!

If you have extra grocery bags … or some large cans (#10) lying around, PLEASE bring them to church!

The Closet and Pantry are in need of bags for their patrons.

The cans are needed to put each Sunday’s altar flowers in so they may be taken home.

You may drop your donations off during regular church office hours, or bring them Sunday morning.

Sundays still available for Altar Flowers

It’s not too late to sign up for altar flowers. There are many open Sundays, especially in the fall and winter.

We still have one open Sunday in August -- the 28th. Available in the fall and winter are: September 4, 18 and 25; October 16 and 23; November 13 and 27; and December 11 and 18.

We would like to thank WELCA for purchasing the altar flowers on open weeks.
Congratulations Jennifer!

Our own Jennifer Baker-Trinity is the first-ever recipient of the 2016 Emerging Leader Award by The Institute of Liturgical Studies at Valparaiso University! The award seeks to recognize young leaders who have made or are making significant contributions to the church in the areas of liturgy, congregational song, preaching, music, and/or writing for the whole church.

Designed for someone in the first 10-15 years of their professional career, this award will be given on an annual basis at the Institute of Liturgical Studies Banquet. It is designed to celebrate gifts, sensibilities, and capabilities demonstrated through faithful leadership and outstanding contribution to the liturgical life of the church.

Through a special call by the synod, Jennifer was commissioned last summer by the synod assembly for service to both our congregation and the wider church. We thank you, Jennifer, for your service to our synod and congregation!

Way to Go Thomas & Corinne!

On April 10, Corinne Beaver and Thomas Baker-Trinity sang in the spring concert by the Susquehanna Valley Youth Chorale. The concert, Reflections on the Journey, was one celebrating the tenure of conductor Valerie Flamini Caldwell. This was her final concert with the chorale and the choirs gave a wonderful tribute through song. Thomas sings in the Preparatory Chorus (mid-late elementary) and Corinne sings in the Camerata (middle school). Both members worked very hard in the months preceding and had an excellent performance. Pastor Nathan also sang in an adult quartet with the Camerata. Way to go!

Welcome Little Ones

We are happy to announce the birth of two little girls.

Macy Adalynn Williams was born March 21 to Rick and Kristen (Rigel) Williams of Morgantown, West Virginia. She was welcomed home by her big sister, Madison. Proud grandparents are Dan and Kim Rigel and great-grandparents are Hilma Rigel, and Nelson and Mona Lou Gilbert.

Maycie Kailyn Wray was born March 22 to Jeremy and Serena Wray. Her sister, Madeline, welcomed her home. Proud grandparents are Gary and Crystal Wray, and great-grandparents are Erman and Evelyn Lepley.

Congratulations to both families on their new additions!
Send Kim some cheer!

After 46 days of excellent care at Hershey Medical Center, Kim Rigel is now in rehab at Select Specialty in Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill.

She is doing better and welcomes cards and visits if you are in the area. Her address is: Kim Rigel, Holy Spirit Hospital, Room 513, 503 North 21st Street, Camp Hill, Pa. 17011.

May Birthdays & Anniversaries

The following members of the Beaver Lutheran Church family will be celebrating birthdays this month:
- Jenelle VanHorn, May 6.
- Jill Kline and Morgan Stone, May 7.
- Stacey Keefer and Skyler Sassaman, May 15.
- Jeffrey Markley, May 17.
- Chelsea Krebs, May 22.
- Ty Benner and Maggie Etzler, May 23.
- Thomas Baker-Trinity, May 27.
- Jean Melton, May 31.

Members celebrating wedding anniversaries this month include:
- Craig and Greta Wagner, May 2.
- Glenn Jr. and Jocelyn Royer, May 23.
**This is the Night!**

I was recently asked, why baptize at the Easter Vigil? Why this particular night?

More than any other liturgy of the church year, the Easter Vigil points to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the source of our life in God through the Spirit. Maundy Thursday tells the story of the Last Supper. Good Friday tells the story of the Passion. But the Easter Vigil tells the story of our life with God from its very beginning.

The Vigil tells the whole story, stories as old as 6,000 years, that point to Christ as the climax of our life with God. A full Vigil includes twelve readings, and this year we read five: God made this world good. God takes the side of the slaves and refugees. God's promises are for all people of the earth. We are more than just a collection of dry bones but living, breathing souls. The faith of children can buck the power of rulers and kings.

All these stories point to the work of Christ. But the ultimate work of Christ in our lives is our baptism. The stories of the Vigil are followed immediately by Paul in Romans 6:

> "Do you not know that all of us who have baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3-4)

There are many meanings to baptism. Martin Luther highlights several in the Small Catechism: cleansing from sin, redemption from evil, life with God forever. We might add to this being "born again" as God's child and welcomed into God's family. But the weightiest of them all is this: that the death and resurrection of Christ is our ultimate hope, a reality that marks our daily lives. We are dying, but we are also being made new.

All the Easter stories from the gospels begin with an empty tomb in the dark of night. Mark's gospel, the earliest gospel, says that the women who entered the empty tomb found not Jesus but instead "a young man, dressed in a white robe." (Mark 16:5) Scholars have noted that the white robe likely signifies the young man's baptism into Christ. Indeed, the one thing he says about Jesus is that though he was crucified, he has now been raised.

At Easter Vigil, we enact this same truth: We join ourselves to Christ's death and resurrection, as well as to all the saints who have died with Christ, beginning with that young man in the empty tomb. In the dark of night, we point to the light of Christ. When all seems lost, we are rescued through Christ's baptism.

Baptisms at the Vigil also revive a practice of the early church, before Christianity became the dominant religion of Europe. Most baptisms for the first few hundred years of Christianity were for adults new to the faith. Because most were not familiar with the Christian story, initiation into the faith was usually a year-long process, if not longer. Much of it included an open time of questions and Christ-centered conversation, much like the extended conversations of Jesus in the gospel of John (see especially the third, fourth, and ninth chapters of John).

I would argue that such full immersion is increasingly important as more and more adults and parents of young children who request baptism are not familiar with the Christian story. Nor are they committed to the weekly gathering of God's people or familiar with the daily practice of faith. While we do not yet invite those new or loosely connected to the church to commit to a year-long process of faith formation, I feel very strongly that this is now needed. Folks simply do not know the stories of the faith or feel the significance of a Christ-centered life.

Our response ought not to make the baptism "easy" with a nice water ritual, but to invite them into a full immersion of life among God's people. Having the Easter Vigil in place as the culmination of such a process is a necessary step. While baptisms can certainly occur on other Festival Sundays (Baptism of our Lord in January, Pentecost in late May, All Saints in early November), baptisms at Easter Vigil are especially helpful to those new to or re-discovering the faith.

As I said in my annual report to the congregation, if we want to grow and continue as a worshipping assembly, the time is ripe to welcome and accompany new or returning members to such a process. What these folks need most are not programs or activities and certainly not the "status" that goes with church membership. What they need are Christ-centered relationships that are deep and allow time for informal conversation and prayer around the scriptures. They need to feel connected to the whole body of Christ (and not just the pastor!). What they need, brothers and sisters, is you. Celebrating baptisms at the Easter Vigil could be a beautiful culmination to such a journey.