



## FROM OUR REGIONAL PASTOR

### LOOKING AHEAD (AND BEHIND)

At your recent annual society meeting, 14 members contributed to a lively discussion about hopes and plans for the future. Among other things, realizing that it could be 2 or even 3 years before a new resident pastor becomes available, a resolution was passed to carry on under lay leadership with confidence and all the mutual support that can be mustered.

That said, planning is under way for Knob services this summer, and special guest speakers for Memorial Day (May 24<sup>th</sup>) and New Church Day (around June 19<sup>th</sup>), not to mention summer camps and other programs for the kids.

All this builds on the strong foundation that has been laid over many years since The Sower's Chapel was first built—especially the recent renovations and maintenance in the building—looking to make the church more welcoming for all existing members and new visitors.

### BUT WHY? WHAT IS IT REALLY ALL ABOUT?

In my personal and professional opinion, the purpose of the church is to support one another in the life and faith taught by the Lord in His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, as predicted in *John* 16, vv. 12-13. In order for this purpose to be fulfilled, it is critical that we understand and do what we can, *not for ourselves, but for one another*, including any new inquirers who may come our way. In fact, we need to lay down aspects of our own lives, including old grievances and concerns, for these others, who may truly need our support in order to feel welcome and get the benefits of this very special spiritual community.

The word “church” actually comes from the Greek meaning “called out;” essentially called out of a merely natural life and “called together” to support one another in a new life of faith AND CHARITY.

SO many things are better at church when the numbers swell: the singing is better, the conversations are more interesting, the co-operation is inspiring, and there's a real feeling of encouragement in the whole atmosphere.

But here's the thing. We're not going to get this feeling instantly or without effort. In a way, the church is like a laboratory where we get to *practice* the teachings we learn in an environment of shared values and convictions, from which we gain the experience we need to help others in our daily lives outside the church.

We are not *naturally* charitable. No one is. We must learn and practice the skills to become so. And what better place could there be than right here at home, with friends and relatives, people who understand our beliefs and share the same challenge to apply them as we do? Ideally, we may even have an opportunity to share some personal experience in working this process that really lifts a fellow member up and empowers him or her to do the same.

There are LOTS of reasons to attend worship services regularly (I have a list of 15, if anyone is interested, all drawn from the doctrines). But the key to the whole concept is to be there for one another as we work the process of regeneration, growing in community as we do.

—Mike Gladish ([mgladish@gmail.com](mailto:mgladish@gmail.com))



## MEMORIAL DAY PLANNING MEETING.

A planning meeting for the Memorial Day Sunday Service will be held on Saturday, May 2, at the church at 10 AM. Those planning to serve with the program, music, advertising, refreshments and greeters are urged to attend.

We need volunteers to fill in for the many ways Ken and Zarah Blair assisted us with the service in the past. Zarah is our honored guest this year, so we want to use her counsel from past years, but we will do the work ourselves! Please come.

## NEW DISCUSSION CLASSES AFTER CHURCH (ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH)

In our recent survey about new classes or discussion groups on weekends and weekday nights, the main clear request was to have discussions on Sunday morning about that morning's service.

The Rev. Lou Synnestvedt is planning a series of sermons about Joseph (in the Book of Genesis) on many of his visits to Sarver through the end of the 2026 year. He is delighted to have more extended discussions of the Joseph story on his visits, after each of his sermons about Joseph, for roughly 30 minutes each time.

So that means at 10:30am sharp we begin worship with a hymn. A brief discussion of the sermon can occur after the Word is closed, the last hymn sung, and the postlude is played. Folks really enjoy the opportunity to then move on to the social hall to visit and enjoy light refreshments. After about 15 minutes, Lou will invite those interested in exploring more about the story of Joseph to gather in the sanctuary for a 30 minute discussion. —*Chris Bown*

## LIFE OF THE LORD BIBLE STUDY

The Kids' Life of the Lord Bible Study will meet on **May 14th at 4 PM** at Trish Lindsay's home. The kids are asked to bring their Bibles and their copy of *The Life of the Lord* to the meeting. Please call if you have any questions. Trish Lindsay (724-584-6515)

## MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE 2026 TO HONOR STAFF SGT. KENNETH B. BLAIR

A Community Memorial Day Service, honoring Staff Sgt. Kenneth B. Blair, will be held on Sunday, May 24, 2026 at The Sower's Chapel at 11 AM. Ken Blair served proudly in the Korean War as an Army Medic in a MASH unit from 1951-1953.

After returning home, Ken attended Penn State and taught school at Oakmont Junior High. He married Zarah Brown in 1963, started a family, and earned a nursing degree to support his work as an administrator and owner of Fair Winds Manor. Ken was active in many civic organizations, including the Butler Rotary, the Allegheny Valley YMCA, and Slippery Rock University. He served his community in many ways, delivering meals for Meals on Wheels and as a devoted member of his church, The Sower's Chapel. Ken Blair passed into the Spiritual world on November 31, 2025 at the age of 96.

Sgt. Ken Blair and his family will be honored for his military service with a flag ceremony and the slow salute performed by the Vandergrift Veterans.

Please join us to salute all who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Refreshments will be served.

All are welcome.

## SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The Society Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> with 13 members present, as well as Mike Gladish, Regional Pastor. Again this past year (May 2025 – April 2026) we've been busy on many fronts; moving forward as we await a new pastor.

We accepted a gift of about 10 acres from Court Lee and his sister Normandie abutting Buffalo golf course and Todd Sanctuary. We have lovely new curtains in the social area, the manse readied for a new project, and manse driveway improvements. We held special services for Maundy Thursday & Easter, Memorial Day Community Service, June 19<sup>th</sup>, Thanksgiving, Christmas Tableaux and Christmas Eve service. Gifts for the children were

*continued...*

coordinated for both June 19<sup>th</sup> and Christmas. A new Kids' Monthly Bible study was established with enthusiasm, and Sunday school continues. We've also added a nursery rotation!

A new initiative has begun to outfit the downstairs manse apartment to make it available for visiting ministers, speakers, and ministers seeking a quiet space to work on projects. If you'd like to help or have home items/furniture to donate, please talk to Mike Brown (724-272-7155)! This is a project in progress and development.

The proposed slate for the Board of Trustees was unanimously affirmed as follow:

**2026-27 Board of Trustees affirmed as follows:**

- Rev. Mike Gladish (as Regional Pastor, unelected position)
- Miriam Heilman, Chair (2nd year of 1st term)
- Ian Heilman, Secretary (elected annually)
- Bill Kronen Sr., Treasurer (elected annually)
- Trish Lindsay (1<sup>st</sup> year of 2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- Al Lindsay (1<sup>st</sup> year of 2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- Chris Bown (3rd year of 1st term)
- Mike Brown (1<sup>st</sup> year of 1<sup>st</sup> term))
- Glenn Heilman (2nd year of 1st term)



**MAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- Sat, May 2: 10 AM - Memorial Day meeting
- Sun, May 3: Rev. Lou Synnestvedt
- Tue, May 5: 1 PM - Bible Study @ A&M Browns'
- Sun, May 10: Rev. Nathan Cole
- Tue, May 12: 1 PM - Bible Study @ A&M Browns'  
7 PM - Board of Trustees
- Thu, May 14: 4 PM - Kid's Bible Study @ Trish Lindsay's
- Sun, May 17: Rev. Dan Calvo
- Tue, May 19: 1 PM - Bible Study @ A&M Browns'
- Sun, May 24: Memorial Day Service, Rev. Alan Cowley
- Tue, May 26: 1 PM - Bible Study @ A&M Browns'
- Sun, May 31: Rev. Lou Synnestvedt



**THANK YOU! YOU MAKE US POSSIBLE!**

It seems to me that when we bump into each other at church we might quietly extend a heartfelt "thank you" to whomever we greet. Personally, it's not possible to name anyone who hasn't contributed something to our society in the past year; including the children! The following is a (*potentially* complete) list of the many areas/activities requiring participation around The Sower's Chapel:

- Coordination on our end of visiting ministers
- Housing and feeding of visiting ministers
- Mowing
- Music
- Sunday School
- Maintenance at church and manse
- Project coordination at church and manse
- Keeping the books
- Keeping written records
- June 19th gifts for the children
- Christmas gifts for the children
- Christmas Tableaux
- Chancel flowers
- Holy Supper bread
- Country Courier & general emails
- Golf Outing
- Memorial Day Service
- Youth activities, including Kids' Bible Study
- Board of Trustees
- Ushers
- Chancel candle minders
- Nursery

Thank you, one and all, for your contributions large and small to the many moving pieces of The Sower's Chapel. You are all appreciated and very important to the life of our community.

—Miriam

**SPEAKING OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES...**

Do you know how to keep track of money in and out of your accounts? Pay bills? If so, please contact Bill (724-889-5741) or Glenn (724-584-1549) and *volunteer to be the next church treasurer!*

We're getting to be old and cranky and looking to train the next generation. Transition assistance will be offered as long as desired and required.

— Glenn Heilman

## MEMORIAL DAY COMMUNITY PICNIC

*Join friends of the Pittsburgh New Church for a Memorial Day Picnic at North Park.*

The church will provide burgers and dogs—the side dishes and desserts are up to you!

Bring your favorite side, sips\*, or desserts, and join us for a fun-filled day of outdoor activity and relaxation. *\*This is an alcohol-free event.*

- Date:** Memorial Day, May 25, 2026  
**Where:** North Park Gold Star Shelter, Lake Shore Dr, McCandless Township, PA 15101  
**What to bring:** Side dishes, salads, fruit, and desserts, camping chairs, outdoor games  
**When:** 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

North Park offers a covered pavilion with picnic tables and benches. If you prefer more comfortable seating, please bring your favorite camping chair. The area surrounding the pavilion is a grassy open field with large shade trees. Bathroom facilities equipped with running water are within walking distance of the pavilion. There is a playground for younger kids, and plenty of room to set up and play games/sports. Please bring any sports equipment that you would like to share with the group (corn hole, volleyball, badminton, lawn darts, Frisbee, etc.).

If you have questions or would like to help set up or clean up, please give Barry Smith a call or send a text to 412-951-6180.

We hope to see you there!

## ANC SUMMER CAMP 2026

July 6-11, Bryn Athyn, PA

Registration is open for all current 8th & 9th graders.

Go to: [www.ancss.org/summercamp](http://www.ancss.org/summercamp) or follow the QR code:



## FROM [NewChurch.org](http://NewChurch.org): CAMPS & RETREATS

**LAUREL FAMILY CAMP** is a summer church camp with activities, worship, and instruction based on the Lord's Word and the Writings of [Emanuel Swedenborg](http://EmanuelSwedenborg.com). The focus of this camp is to draw people together and build a true sense of spiritual community. Several sessions (one week each) are held in [Laurel Hill State Park](http://Laurel Hill State Park), Pennsylvania, in July and August of each year. Visit [www.laurelcamp.org](http://www.laurelcamp.org) for more information and registration forms.

**JACOB'S CREEK FAMILY RETREAT** is a summer church retreat held in the mountains of Western Pennsylvania. Besides daily worship, the retreat includes instruction and activities revolving around the Lord's Word and the Heavenly Doctrine as revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg. The focus of this retreat is to assist participants in building a strong foundation of doctrinal understanding for spiritual growth. Visit [jacobscreekfamilyretreat.org](http://jacobscreekfamilyretreat.org) for more information.

**MAPLE LEAF ACADEMY** is a teen church camp in Palgrave, Ontario in Canada. The campers are mentored towards spiritual growth in an environment filled with music, worship, prayer, and wholesome fun. There's plenty of social interaction ranging from small group exercises to communal activities. Visit their website at [www.maplecamp.com](http://www.maplecamp.com) or contact [gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com](mailto:gcic.mapleleafcamp@gmail.com) to learn more.

**TOOLS 4 LIFE** is a career and life skills camp held in Bryn Athyn PA designed to help teenagers who have completed grades 10 and 11 develop the tools and confidence needed to make choices about their path after high school. The camp offers 6 days of activities and workshops under the mentorship of skilled counselors. Visit [Tools for Life Summer Camp](http://Tools for Life Summer Camp) or email [tools4life@brynathyn.edu](mailto:tools4life@brynathyn.edu) to learn more.

Check out [NewChurch.org](http://NewChurch.org) for more camps and retreats.

