

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Ruth F. Doty, Pastor

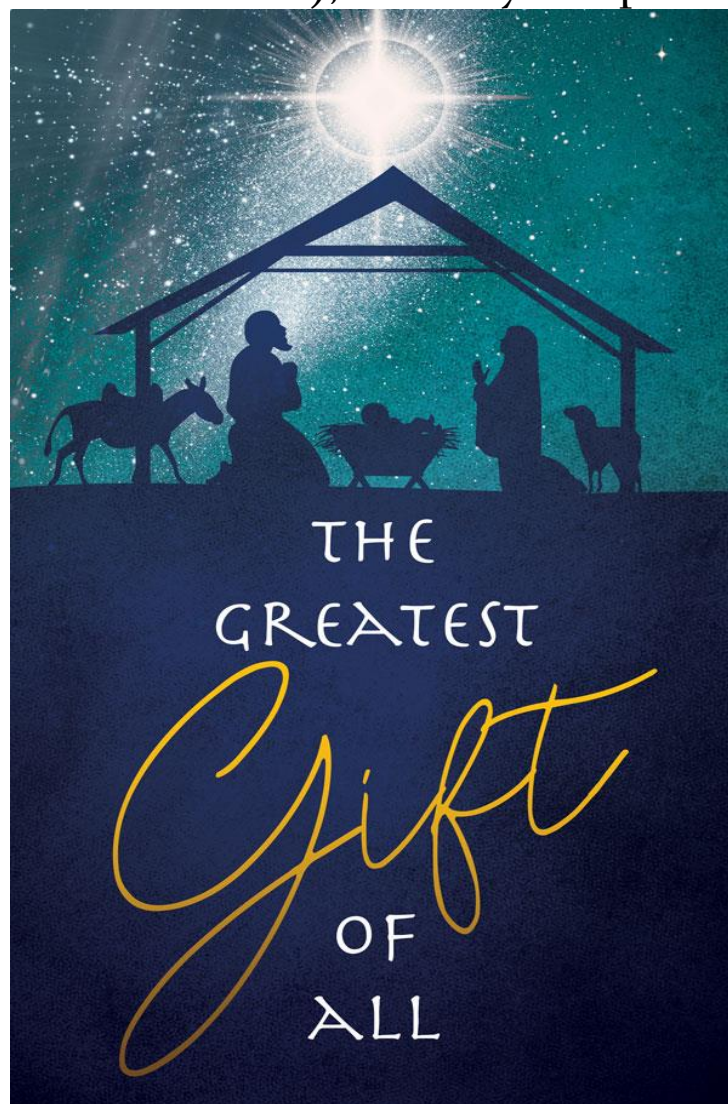
E-MAIL: njelchurch@windstream.net

WEBSITE: <https://NewJerusalemLutheran.weebly.com>

OFFICE PHONE: 610.682.6064

SECRETARY HOURS:

Monday 7:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., Wednesday 7:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. (in-office hours from 8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.), Thursday 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.



THE MISSION OF NEW JERUSALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH:

*We are a group of people who
gather together in friendship and love
to worship God, to spread God's Word,
and to care for God's people.*



Oh, you better watch out, you better not cry,
you better not pout, I'm telling you why,
..... is coming to town.

Dear Fellow Believers,

If the secular world can use our sacred carols to try to sell stuff, we can use its songs to talk about faith. So here goes:

You'd better watch out! This is a perfect Advent theme. We believe that God is not only coming in God's fullness to set everything in right relationship, the way God originally designed it, but we also firmly believe that God is already actively here, though it isn't always obvious to the casual observer. So, it's our job to be on the lookout, to watch out and call attention to the ways God is already active in our world.

You'd better not cry. Two thoughts here: 1) It's perfectly all right to cry over the state of the world around us, to cry over the misuse and abuse of creation, to cry over injustices, to cry whenever we see fellow human beings suffering, to cry when we ourselves are threatened or hurting. In fact, it is our duty to cry out and protest when we witness that life is not the way God intended it. But at the same time, 2) knowing that God is present and is coming in God's fullness, knowing that Christmas is the celebration of God taking on our human form, then, why would we cry, unless it is out of thanksgiving and joy?

You'd better not pout. Agreed, if what we mean is we'd better not act like spoiled brats, bent out of shape when we don't get our way, when we don't have as much of what we *want*, but we still have what we need. We'd better not pout when others get more of what they need.

Why? Why watch out? Why think about crying? Why not pout? Because this is the season when we celebrate that **Jesus Christ is coming to town.** In fact, as we said before, He's already here, among us. The One whom God promised arrived when the time was just right and promised to be with us always.

The song goes on: **He sees you when you're sleeping.** Yes. **He knows when you're awake.** Yes. **He knows if you've been bad or good.** Yes. **So be good for goodness sake.** Well, let's think about this one. Unlike the point of this song, to encourage children to be good so Santa will bring them lots of toys, we do not do good in order to get things from God. We ask for God's help to do good, to live God's way, because God's already done so much for us. We ask for God's help to do good because it's the right way to live, the God pleasing way to live. We know that on our own we are not good to earn God's favor, though we may do good once in a while. But we cling to God's declaration in baptism that because of Jesus Christ, God will and does forgive us. When God looks at us, God sees the goodness of Jesus instead of the many ways we go wrong.

In this season of preparation for the coming of Christ and celebration of the Father's love, join with me in looking for the ways God is active and present in our world. Join with me in humbly and joyfully coming together to worship and adore the true Lord of all. And join with me in looking for new and varied ways to speak *God's* truth, even by borrowing messages and ways our secular and commercial world uses to try to get something from us.

May God's Spirit open our eyes and hearts to creative and effective ways to communicate God's love to a world that desperately longs for love and peace.

Blessings and joy this Advent and Christmas season!

Pastor Ruth

NEWS & EVENTS

at New Jerusalem and in the community

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were covered at our Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 20:

- Denny Beshore, Finance Committee Chairperson, presented the 2023 Proposed Budget.
- Church Council approved the budget at their October council meeting.
- The 2023 Proposed Budget was approved by the congregation.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were covered at our Council Meeting on Monday, November 21:

- Ideas from the sermon and Congregational Meeting on November 20 were discussed.
- Boy Scout Troop #585 collected 350 lbs. of food for the Scouting for Food program.
- Christmas cards will be available to sign on a table in the narthex. These will then be sent to our shut-in members.
- Our Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, January 29, 2023. Snow date: February 5.
- New Jerusalem council members are inviting council members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown, to meet with them in January as part of a continued effort to get to know leaders of our sister churches and their joys and concerns about their congregations.

Our next council meeting will be held on **Monday, December 12, 7:00 p.m.**

PASTOR RUTH will be out of town from December 27 until January 4. If you would need pastoral care during this time, please contact Pastor Jeremiah Sassaman at 610.657.0269.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will be held on **Mondays, December 5, 12, and 19 at 11:00 a.m.** New participants welcome. Tell Pastor Ruth if you're interested.

COLORING GROUP

The next meeting is **Thursday, December 1, at 10:00 a.m.** Friends are welcome. Contact Phyllis Fenstermacher (610.682.2423) or Diane Keller (610.682.4152) if you would like pages sent to you.



WORSHIP CHRISTMAS EVE, CHRISTMAS DAY AND NEW YEAR'S DAY

Since the holidays are a time for family and friends to get together, invite yours to join us for worship. We will gather at 7:00 p.m. on December 24 for a candlelight and communion service. We'll return at 10:00 a.m. on December 25 for communion and carols, and again on Sunday, January 1 to continue our celebration of the season and think about what the young Jesus experienced in his early days (a visit to the Temple, the visit of the Wise Men, the flight into Egypt).

Since Pastor Ruth will be out of town January 1, communion will not be celebrated that Sunday. However, we will join in God's feast on January 8 when we celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord.

THE COMPASSIONATE CRAFTERS

Want to crochet or knit to God's glory and make the world a better place? If so, you are welcome to join to join with other crafters at Trinity Lutheran Church in Topton. Meetings take place on **Thursday, December 8 and Thursday, December 22 this month from 9:30-11:00 a.m.** in the Sunday School room.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING IN TOPTON

Meet at Trinity Lutheran Church on **Friday, December 16, from 6:00-8:00 p.m.** We will divide into groups and go in different directions. Then we'll return in time to warm us with hot chocolate and fellowship.



DECORATE AN ANGEL—SHARE THE JOY

On **Sunday, December 11,** immediately following worship, youth and adults are invited to help decorate wooden angel ornaments which will be given to those who attend worship on Christmas Eve. Bring a lunch. Drinks provided. Let your creativity loose while having a good time.



JANUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the January newsletter is **Sunday, December 18**. Please have all articles and announcements to the church office by this date.

CHOIR & BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL

There will be no Choir rehearsal on Tuesday, December 27. The last Bell Choir rehearsal will be on Tuesday, December 20.

HELPING HARVEST/TOPTON MOBILE MARKET – Tuesday, December 13, 2022

The Helping Harvest food distribution will take place on **Tuesday, December 13, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Brandywine Heights Intermediate/Middle School.

Since July 1, 2022 (4 distributions), the Tipton Mobile Market has served 190 unique families. In those four months, they have served a total 411 households with 1,056 people (229 children, 402 adults, and 425 seniors) and distributed 19,192 pounds of food. Since the beginning of 2022, (10 distributions), we have served a total of 973 households with 2,463 people (523 children, 980 adults, and 960 seniors) and distributed of total of 48,665 pounds of food. The highest distribution was October 2022 with 119 households and the lowest was 71 households in April 2022.



CHRISTMAS SHARING AT THE LUTHERAN HOME OF TOPTON

Your help is needed at the Christmas Sharing event at the Lutheran Home of Tipton. Below is the schedule:

- December 13 – Transporting a few residents and shopping with them from D3 and D1 / gift wrappers
- December 14 – Transporting residents and shopping with them from D2 and A-wing / gift wrappers
- December 15 – Transporting residents and shopping with them from A- and C-wing / gift wrappers
- December 16 – Transporting Beurhle residents and shopping with them / gift wrappers

Each day will start at 10:00 a.m., lunch from 12:00-1:00 p.m., and finish around 3:00 p.m.

Contact Activities Director, Tanjie Kramer, at KramerT@diakon.org or 610.682.1425 to volunteer.

JAMES MEN'S MINISTRY (JMM)

Breakfast gatherings start at 8:00 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month. Their next meeting will be held **Saturday, December 17**, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Tipton.

LONGEST NIGHT / BLUE CHRISTMAS

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Breinigsville, 8227 Hamilton Boulevard, will host a Longest Night service (also known as Blue Christmas) on **Sunday, December 18, at 2:00 pm**. Come out and join us in sharing and hearing prayer, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle—and that God's word comes to shine light into our darkness. Everyone regardless of church background (or lack of it) is welcome.

A PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH CHRISTMAS



Looking for some family fun? Join Longswamp UCC and the Longswamp Historical Society for a Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas complete with PA Dutch stories and memories, German carols, and a visit from the Belsnickel on **Sunday, December 18, at 2:00 p.m.** in the Longswamp UCC's sanctuary. Reception to follow in Schubert Haus. You're invited for refreshments and to view local holiday historical displays. All are welcome!

OPPORTUNITY HOUSE COLLECTION BIN

There is now a collection bin for the Opportunity House on the parking lot of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 117 East Arch Street, Fleetwood. You can drop off used (but in good shape) clothing, shoes, books, CDs and DVDs at any time.

Upcoming Events

- **Game Night & Potluck Dinner:** Saturday, January 21, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. (alternate date is Saturday, February 4)
- **January 22 Youth Event – Tie Fleece Blankets** for ill children in Lehigh Valley Hospital and for their family members who stay nearby at the Hackerman Patz House. Meet at 2:00 p.m. at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville
- **Souper Bowl Sunday Breakfast & Collection:** Sunday, February 12, 2023

“The good news of great joy changed the course of every silent night to come.” —Alicia Bruxvoort

Rejoicing Spirits

A NEW MINISTRY IN OUR AREA

On **Sunday, December 4, 2022**, St. Paul's UCC, 47 South Whiteoak Street, Kutztown will host the third Rejoicing Spirits of Eastern Berks County worship service. The worship service will begin at 3:00 p.m. and last about one hour.

What is Rejoicing Spirits? It is an opportunity specifically designed for people with intellectual disabilities, their families, friends, and caregivers to hear God's word, participate in a "shush free" worship service, and socialize with friends both old and new.

What does a Rejoicing Spirits worship service look like? Music, singing, brief messages, fellowship and snacks!

For more information, contact Karen Raudenbush at 610.608.8290 or email raudyk@gmail.com or https://webmail.windstream.net/service/home/~/?auth=co&loc=en_US&id=74692&part=3

CELEBRATE RECOVERY (CR BERKS)



continues – Friday nights at 7:00 p.m. at Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church in Topton at the Pioneer Grange Hall, 46 East Keller Street, Topton.

This is a Christ-centered recovery program to help people of the community and beyond find freedom from their hurts, hang-ups, and habits. We all struggle with some kind of hurt, whether it be depression, anxiety, addiction, loneliness, food issues, alcoholism, parents/family members of addicted children, PTSD, codependency, and the list goes on). They use the 12-steps of recovery and biblical comparisons as well as the Celebrate Recovery 8 Principles based on the Beatitudes. This is a safe place to come together to gain freedom and find healing from those struggles, hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Confidentiality and anonymity are taken very seriously.

There are no dues or fees to join, but they do accept a love offering. No registration is necessary. All you have to do is show up!

If you have any questions, please call 484.349.8415. You can also check out their website at www.crberks.org or their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CRBerks>.

CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATIONS: Thanksgiving Boxes



Although many were already premade, thanks to the work of The Brandywine/Topton churches, 79 Thanksgiving boxes will go out to families in need this Thanksgiving.

Twenty-one (21) boxes will go to families in the Brandywine Heights School District who have been identified as ones locally, in our midst, that could use them. Fifty-four (54) boxes will go to Friend, Inc. as a way of assisting regionally with families in need. Thank you to everyone who contributed food, went shopping, got Thrivent Action Grants, as well as those who spent the afternoon putting together boxes, decorating them, and packing them. EVERYONE made this happen!! And to the youth of our churches who volunteered their time, THANK YOU! And, as always, SOLA DEO GLORIA. To God be the glory!



Can you spot New Jerusalem members in the picture below?



CLEAN-UP KITS FOR SURVIVORS OF DISASTER



In this season we think about Mary and Joseph needing a place to stay. Now imagine watching your residence flood to the second floor or be damaged by wind. Think about how thankful you would be if

someone showed up with supplies to help you clean up the mess.

Places which stockpile clean-up kits are critically low, if not empty. Join us in assembling these kits. A Thrivent grant will help us add to our donations.

The following is a list of items for each clean-up kit. Please get them to church by **January 22nd**.

- One five-gallon bucket with resealable lid (if reused, please scrub clean. Do not use a bucket that has held chemicals of any kind. No screw lid. Advertisement on the outside acceptable).
- One 4-8oz. pump spray air freshener.
- Five scouring pads (no stainless steel or pads with soap in them. Remove from packaging).
- Seven sponges, including one large.
- One scrub brush (with or without handle).
- 18 reusable, lightweight multipurpose dry-cleaning towels (no terrycloth, microfiber or paper towels. Remove from packaging).
- One 32-64 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent.
- One 16-34 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap.
- One 12-40 oz. bottle of liquid concentrate household cleaner that can be mixed with water (no spray bottles).
- One package of 36-50 clothespins.
- One 50-100 ft. clothesline (cotton or plastic line).
- Five dust masks (N95 particulate respirator dust masks preferred; no surgical masks).
- Two pairs of heavy-duty, waterproof dishwashing gloves (latex-free, non-surgical, durable for multiple-use. Remove from packaging).
- One pair of work gloves (cotton with leather palm or all leather).
- 20-28 heavy duty or contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll (remove from packaging).
- One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent (pump spray bottles must have protective covers. Packs of 10-20 insect repellent wipes also acceptable).

HELP TURN PLASTIC BAGS INTO SLEEPING MATS FOR THE HOMELESS

St. Peter's UCC has started collecting plastic bags like the ones you receive from the store and volunteers weave them into sleeping mats for the homeless. You can help by collecting bags, any color, and bringing them to church. We'll get them to St. Peter's. If you'd like to help prepare the strips and weave, contact Susan Lishman at 610.413.0907.

HOMELESS AWARENESS BLANKET REMEMBRANCE EVENT

The ELCA Witness in Society office is partnering with several synods, advocates and foundation partners to organize a Homeless Remembrance Blanket awareness event in Washington D.C. on **December 21**, the longest night of the year. The event, which includes invited bishops, members of Congress, Administration officials, dignitaries and nonprofit advocacy organizations, will be gathering hundreds of blankets from across the country in a symbolic art installation on the U.S. Capitol lawn near the Christmas tree. The event will bring greater attention to those of us struggling with homelessness on the coldest nights of the year. Interested advocates are welcome to participate in-person at the U.S. Capitol or join the full-day event virtually. Blankets will be arriving from each state in the country, with letters and invitations to lawmakers to visit an agency or ministry with those experiencing homelessness in their district. Please consider donating a blanket or joining us in the nation's capital on December 21 for the event, or on January 4, to deliver blankets and letters to members of Congress. For more information, contact LAMPa@LutheranAdvocacyPa.org and put "blanket" in the subject.



DECEMBER

WORSHIP SPONSORS & ASSISTANTS

Altar Flower Sponsors:

December 4 – *sponsor needed*
 December 11 – *sponsor needed*
 December 18 – Dale Schwoyer
 December 24 (Christmas Eve) – Poinsettias
 December 25 – Poinsettias

Bulletin Sponsors:

December 4 – Rodney and Diane Keller
 December 11 – *sponsor needed*
 December 18 – *sponsor needed*
 December 24 (Christmas Eve) – *sponsor needed*
 December 25 – *sponsor needed*

Sanctuary Candle Sponsor:

sponsor needed

Altar Guild Volunteer(s):

Cheryl Wiltrout

Communion Bread Sponsor:

December 4 – Gladys Kline
 December 24 – *sponsor needed*

Communion Set-up Volunteer:

December 4 – Gladys Kline
 December 24 (Christmas Eve) – *volunteer needed*

Readers for December:

December 4 – Kenneth Keck
 December 11 – Gladys Kline
 December 18 – Ty Rissmiller
 December 25 – TBD

Councilperson for the Month:

Ted Eshbach



New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Statement of Accounts

October 31, 2022

<u>Asset Accounts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Memorial	\$ 18,496.82
Thrivent	9,214.95
Checking	4,703.99
Youth	408.66
Fidelity	50,264.75
Cash Reserve	24,421.43
Mission Investment Fund	11,659.03
Local Care	<u>2,395.31</u>

Total: \$ 121,564.94

Total Balance of Asset Accounts
from **October 31, 2021** \$140,230.07

October 2022 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’ Income

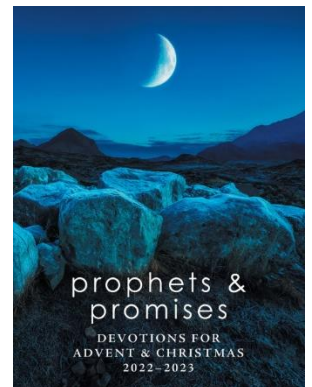
	Income		
Income	Required	Actual	
<u>Used For:</u>	<u>Per Month</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Operating Expenses	\$ 9,891.25	\$ 4,646.00	(\$ 5,245.25)

*Income Required per Month — Based on 2022
Budget Passed by Congregation
Less Budgeted Benevolence Contribution*

**PROPHETS AND PROMISES: Devotions
for Advent and Christmas**

This devotional is now available for pick up on the table in the narthex.

Explore the Advent season and celebrate the joy of the twelve days of Christmas and the day of Epiphany. *Prophets and Promises* includes daily devotions for Sundays and festival days, and Epiphany. In addition to devotions, the book offers household



blessings and prayers to enrich your preparations and celebrations. During these days of Advent and Christmas, may the good news of Jesus’ birth fill our lives and our world with joy and peace. If you would like one sent to you, let us know. This is also available as an e-book for Kindle, Nook, and Google, for \$1.99 on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or Google.

HAVE YOURSELF A HOLY LITTLE CHRISTMAS

The “Christmas season” seems to begin earlier every year. Some stores had Christmas stuff on the shelves weeks before Halloween. What madness! We go dashing through the stores to the beat of *Jingle Bells*; and we go “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree” until we crash from exhaustion.

Revelry and gift-giving are fine and fun, but if we’re not careful they can snowball out of control.

Stewarding a Holy and meaningful Christmas means balancing the commercial with the spiritual. Here are some tips:

Observe Advent: The four weeks *before* Christmas Day comprise the Advent Season, a time to *prepare* for Christmas through prayer, song, worship, and spiritual disciplines. Lean into the spirit of Advent. Advent devotionals can help (I recommend Richard Rohr’s *Preparing for Christmas*).

Observe the Christmas season: The church calendar lists the *season* of Christmas from Dec. 24 to the feast of Epiphany on Jan. 6. Until the 20th century, these 12 Days of Christmas were the time for celebration and partying. Make them special in your life and family.

Cut the consumerism: Limit your shopping and spending by setting a strict budget or gifting the people in your life with homemade presents, favors, or ways to spend time together.

Party hardly: For some, Christmas is an excuse to overeat and drink to excess. Moderate your consumption.

Most importantly, pray: Ask God to help you and your family craft a meaningful and joyful Advent and Christmas. Ask God to send you wisdom, resources, and people who can journey through the spiritual season with you.

By carefully stewarding your faith life, Advent and Christmas can be a time for real spiritual growth.

--Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2016, Rev. Robert Blezard. Reprinted by permission. Rev. Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com.

 **Merry
Christmas**

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Once again members of New Jerusalem will be decorating the tree in our narthex with pigs and goats, cows and chicks, honeybees, fish, seedlings, mosquito nets and vaccinations. Yes, it’s time to pick things out of the ELCA GOOD GIFTS catalogue and donate items for our siblings around the world. One thing is for certain, whatever you pick out will be just the right gift for the ones who receive it.



Catalogues have been mailed to members and more are available in our fellowship area. Once you’ve chosen an item, choose an ornament representing it, fill out your own name or the name of the person you are honoring on the back and hang it on the tree. You can also call or email us with the information, and we will fill it out for you. Cards are available to send to whomever you want to honor.

Check out the tree. You may *bee* surprised as to what is on it.



- 3 Sheila Gehman
- 5 Sarah Bailey
- 6 Pastor Ruth Doty
- 6 Amanda Herman
- 6 Vikie Seyfert
- 10 Dawn Wengert
- 11 Jennifer Musser
- 15 Randall Cleaver
- 15 Jared Keiser
- 16 Elwood Cleaver, Jr.
- 20 Sheila Long
- 21 Clinton Allen
- 22 David Moyer
- 26 Marleise Matz
- 31 David Wartzenuft



- 2 Rodney and Diane Keller (50 years)

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

PRAYERS FOR AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE for Those with Limited Mobility or in Care Facilities: Anna Angstadt, Myles Angstadt, Shirley Hertzog, and Irene Noll.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT Members: Holly Allen, Erma Guinther, Virginia Guinther, Lucille Jones, Rodney Keller, Sheila Long, Forrest Merkel, Grace Miller, Lloyd and Linda Moyer, Horace Rothermel, Gabriele Sanders, and Dale Schwoyer.

Friends of the congregation: Charlie Ackerman, John Arndt, Steve Beck (PA), Steve Beck (TX), Adam Bell, Darlene Bogert, Bishop Christopher deForest, Earl Derr, Family and friends of Marcia Dey, John Drumheller, Jennifer Engle, Shirley Hahn, Nancy Harnish, Family and friends of Frederick W. Hotzman, Jr., June Jenkins, DeeDee K., Debra Kenny, Taz Kershner, Angie Kistler, Kelly Kline, The Koontz Family, Cayden Kresge, Catherine Lenio, Julia Lombardo, Joe M., Rodney Miller, Harry Naugle, Johnathan Naugle, Vivian Reist, Randy Schlegel, Patricia Sigfried, Cleon and Jean Smith, Shawn Spatz, Robert Taylor, Leticia Weaver, Linda Wegman, Richard Weller, Althea Young, Becky, Dawn, Jason, Lynn, Pat, Sam, Tim, and Vivian.

OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS: We pray for: peace in the world, and particularly in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; all seeking to respond responsibly to COVID-19, especially healthcare workers; those recovering from and responding to disasters, especially those in Puerto Rico; migrants and refugees; for our nation, including our president, congress, judicial system, and leaders of our communities; an end to the many ways prejudice and racism maintain inequality between people and injustice; an end to threats between nations; peace in the world; our military personnel serving around the world.

LONG-TERM PRAYER LIST: Carrie Bausch, Nancy Bennecoff, Gary DeWees, Katie Didyoung, Don Gajewski, Erma Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, Peg H., Denise Haage, Amanda Herman, Johnson-Agiri Family, Mary Kring, Ella Loose, Michelle Meck, Leilani Rodriquez, Andrew S., Tierney Schmeer, Donna Schwoyer, Lesley Wegman, Leah Wiest, Gabby, and Meaghan.

BRANDYWINE



With the help of a Thrivent Grant our busy shoppers were able to obtain 156 items to donate to the Food Pantry last month. These were supplemented by additional items as well as fresh fruits and vegetables from our members. At present more than 30 family units and over 70 individuals are relying on the food bank for assistance.

Help, of course, is an ongoing need.

Donated items most helpful right now: coffee (regular), instant coffee, fruit juices (all kinds), sugar, flour, cooking oil, evaporated milk, Spam, canned chicken and dumplings, beef stew, scalloped /other potato products, pasta and rice sides, Chef Boyardee-style canned foods, soups (ready- to-serve, vegetable beef, New England clam chowder), spaghetti sauce (plain and with meat), Hamburger and Tuna Helper, pancake mix and syrup, canned fruit, salad dressings, ketchup, mayonnaise, snacks of all kinds (including pretzels, chips, pudding, cookies, etc.)

Personal Care Items: toothbrushes, combs, brushes, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner

Cleaning and Disinfectant Products: including dish soap and laundry detergent.

A CHRISTMAS HARVEST

Christmas is the harvest time of love. Souls are drawn to other souls. All that we have read and thought and hoped comes to fruition at this happy time. Our spirits are astir. We fell within us a strong desire to serve. A strange, subtle force, a new kindness, animates man and child. A new spirit is growing in us. No longer are we content to relieve pain, to sweeten sorrow, to give the crust of charity. We dare to give friendship, service, the equal loaf of bread and love.



—Helen Keller

Story stones



Share the good news of Jesus' birth in a creative way.



What you need:

- Newspaper
- Bible
- Smooth, clean stones
- Pencil
- Oil paint pens
- Adult help



What you do:

1. In a well-ventilated area, cover a work surface with newspaper.
2. Read Luke 2:1-20 and choose key people and places to draw.
3. In pencil, sketch one drawing on each stone.
4. Follow directions on paint pens to fill drawings with color. Let dry.
5. Hide stones for younger siblings to find, set out a new stone each day or order them in a row and tell the Nativity story.

PUZZLE



Seeking the story

Angels joyfully announced a special arrival in Bethlehem at Christmas.

Directions: Find the words listed below. Then unscramble the intersecting letters to complete Luke 2:11, NIV.



WORD BANK

Shepherds
Child
Nazareth
Census
Baby
David
Mary
Travel
Town
Register
Born
Night

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

"Today in the town of David a _____
has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

LUKE 2:11, NIV

Answer: Savior



Christmas Caroling Community Youth Event

Hosted by

Trinity Lutheran Church of Topton

Friday, December 16, 2022

at 6pm - 8pm

Come and join us as we spread some holiday joy singing Christmas carols throughout Topton. We will start and end at Trinity Lutheran Church.

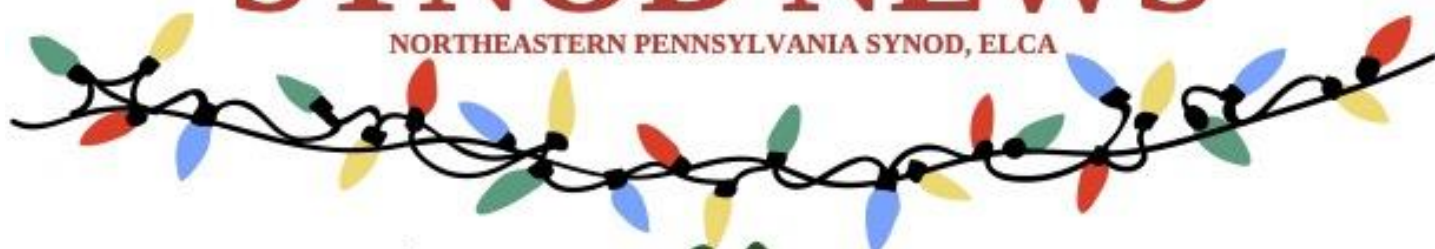
Refreshments to follow



Merry Christmas!

SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA



Merry Christmas

Dear Friends and Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Creator and from Jesus Christ! On behalf of the Northeastern PA Synod Staff and Bishop Christopher deForest we wish you the merriest Christmas and a blessed and fruitful new year!

This year the NEPA Synod accomplished a cornucopia of ministry in all corners of the NEPA territory. Your love for God in Christ fed the hungry, built relationships with the downtrodden and outcast, diapered babies, shared the love of God in Christ, and much more...

Christmas reminds us of the length God goes to build relationships with us. God comes all the way down to a dirty stable in Bethlehem... an unexpected, messy beginning for the Messiah. Jesus is exactly the Messiah we needed without understanding why we needed him.

Christmas is an opportunity to reflect on the ways God comes to us unexpectedly -- It's an opportunity to meditate on the reality that Christ comes to us as an infant, totally reliant on his parents... Christ comes in the most usual way, and yet he's the one foretold in the prophets of old, he saves the people from sin and death, and he keeps coming to us. Jesus comes to us in bread and wine, in baptism, through prayer and thanksgiving, and when we gather together around God's Word.

Continue to be the Body of Christ in the world. Keep serving, preaching, proclaiming, worshipping, and sharing the good news of what God has done for us!

Yours in Christ,
NEPA Synod Staff



Register Now!

Join us!

LEARNING MINISTRIES DAY

January 28, 2023

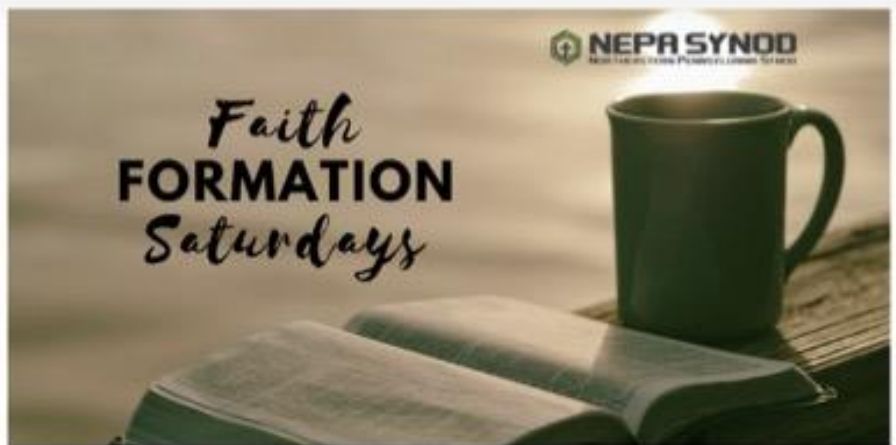
[WWW.GODSLOVE.ORG/
LEARNINGMINISTRIESDAY](http://WWW.GODSLOVE.ORG/LEARNINGMINISTRIESDAY)



SAVE THE DATE

**SYNOD
ASSEMBLY
2023**

**JUNE
1-3**



*Faith
FORMATION
Saturdays*


Faith Formation Saturdays

Date: Monthly (2nd Saturday)

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm EST



DECEMBER 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10:00am-Coloring Group Glenn & Holly Allen	2 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Anna Angstadt	3 7:00am-Boy Scout Christmas Meal (basement usage)
4 <u>2nd Sunday of Advent</u> 10:00am-Worship with Holy Communion -Fellowship	5 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 6:00pm-Congerational Conversations, St. Paul's, Mertztown Myles Angstadt	6 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm-Bell Choir Rehearsal Dan & Kathy Bailey and family	7 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Tara Basta	8 9:30-11:00am-Compassionate Crafters, Trinity Lutheran, Topton Richard Bausher	9 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Randy & Luann Bennecoff	10 10:00-12:00pm-Faith Formation Session 10:00-12:00pm-AA Meeting (basement usage)
11 <u>3rd Sunday of Advent</u> 10:00am-Worship	12 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Council Mtg. Denny & Sara Jane Beshore	13 11:00am-1:00pm-Helping Harvest Food Distribution at Brandywine Heights Intermediate/Middle Sch. 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm-Bell Choir Rehearsal 10:00-3:00pm-Christmas Sharing, Topton Lutheran Home Keith Boyer	14 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Richard Boyer	15 Alan & Sherrie Carl	16 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 6:00-8:00pm-Christmas Caroling, Trinity, Topton 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Richard Carl	17 8:00am-James Men's Ministry Breakfast, Trinity Lutheran, Topton
18 <u>4th Sunday of Advent</u> 10:00am-Worship -Fellowship -Decorate Tree for Christmas 2:00pm-Longest Night/Blue Christmas, St. Paul's, Breinigsville 2:00pm-PA Dutch Christmas, Longswamp UCC NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	19 11:00am-Bible Study 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Elwood & Katie Ellen Cleaver	20 5:30pm-Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm-Bell Choir Rehearsal Randy Cleaver and family	21 12:00pm-Fellowship Luncheon at Airport Diner 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Norma Conrad	22 9:30-11:00am-Compassionate Crafters, Trinity Lutheran, Topton Larry & Faye Dey	23 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton Carolyn Dise	24 7:00pm-Christmas Eve worship Service with Holy Communion -Fellowship CHRISTMAS EVE
25 <u>Christmas Day</u> 10:00am-Worship with Holy Communion  CHRISTMAS DAY	26 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. Pastor Ruth & Rick Doty	27 NO CHOIR REHEARSAL PASTOR – Vacation Ted & Betty Eshbach	28 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. PASTOR – Vacation Phyllis Fenstermacher	29 PASTOR – Vacation Steve Fox	30 12:45pm-1:45pm-AA Mtg. 7:00pm-Celebrate Recovery, Redeemer BFC, Topton PASTOR – Vacation Don & Erma Gajewski	31 PASTOR – Vacation NEW YEAR'S EVE