

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

of New Jerusalem Lutheran Church

27 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Ruth F. Doty, Pastor

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Office Phone: 610.682.6064

Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon

Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.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.*



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

With the beginning of Advent we enter a new church year. Our lessons focus on pondering on and preparing for the continuous coming of God into our midst. One of our Advent hymns asks,

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright? (ELW 241)

This church year most of our gospel lessons will be from Matthew. In the first, Matthew 24:36-44, we hear Jesus urge us to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly because he will come unannounced. In chapter 25 Jesus says that when he comes, he will divide people into two groups: those who have seen him and reached out to him in love and service and those who did not. Both groups will ask, “But *when* did we see you?” Jesus will then explain that whenever they encountered those considered the “least,” such as strangers, the hungry, the sick, the naked, those in prison, and all those whom we usually don’t “see,” it was actually him. In other words, Jesus was everywhere – in disguise.

“I was hungry and you gave me food, . . . a stranger and you welcomed me, . . . sick and you took care of me, . . . in prison and you visited me.” Mt. 25:31-40

God comes to us unannounced and in disguise. God certainly came in an unusual disguise when Mary laid the baby Jesus in a manger. It is also hard to recognize God in the man crucified as a criminal. In Matthew 25 Jesus tells us he also comes to us disguised in the other, especially in the other who is outside the circle of folks to whom we normally relate. Jesus comes to us in those “at the far boundaries of our care and concern,” who are “on the periphery of our lives.” (Richard Beck)

In his book, *Stranger God*, Richard Beck says, “People are strange. . . and that makes it hard for us to welcome the God who comes to us in strangers, who comes to us in disguise. Since it is hard to welcome the stranger, Beck writes about *hospitality*, the kindly and generous reception of guests. He goes on to point out, “when we listen to stories of hospitality in the Bible, we often get the characters reversed. Often we see that when we offer hospitality we are being *like* Jesus, and no doubt we are. However, we don’t show hospitality in order to be *like* Jesus. We show hospitality to *welcome* Jesus.

Strange, and *stranger* come from *estrangle*, means foreign, alien, unusual, and unfamiliar. We humans react with caution when we encounter something that is unusual and unfamiliar, especially if it is another person. That reaction is meant to keep us safe. So, when God comes to us in a stranger, God takes us out of our comfort zone and we often feel awkward and anxious. Despite this awkwardness and anxiety, Jesus bids us to expand our circle of caring.

So, how do we become more hospitable to those outside our normal circles? We can do so by first making it a *habit* to *deliberately see* those whom we wouldn’t ordinarily be aware of, like people in the check-out lines, clerks at the stores, “people on the outside edges of our lives” and, second, by *responding in brotherly love*. Just saying “Hello. How are you?” is a sign of hospitality and opens the door to a relationship. All the collections we take at church for outside groups are other ways to expand our awareness of and service to Jesus who comes to us in the other.

In this season of Advent, let us ask “Who are the people at far boundaries of my care and concern, the people I don’t normally “see” or think about? Let us ask God’s Spirit to help us see them and respond in friendliness and brotherly love, to help us see and respond to Jesus.

Help us to search the shadows for your children, God of Advent, so we may take them by the hand, bring them into the light of hope and grace, honor them for their gifts and recognize them for who they are: your beloved children. Amen. – Thom M. Shuman, *Christmas Eve in the Diner*

Pastor Ruth

NEWS & EVENTS

in New Jerusalem and the Synod

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The following items were discussed and decisions made at our council meetings on November 11:

- The Gifts Policy document was approved and will be added to the continuing resolutions of our constitution. This policy guides the congregation on when and how to accept gifts that are offered and how to retire tangible gifts that are no longer of use to the congregation's mission.
- Approval was given to install a new doorbell system which will include three locations for the chimes: the office, the fellowship area and the basement. This will increase our safety when only a few people are in the building.
- The \$910 received from our volunteer involvement at the Oley Fair will be used to repay what was spent to repave the parking lot.
- The annual meeting was scheduled to be February 9th with February 16th as the snow date.
- The \$240, representing 5% of our income from fundraisers, will be split evenly between the Salvation Army, Lyons Fire Company, Brandywine Food Pantry and the Topton Legion Honor Guard.

PASTOR RUTH will be on vacation from Monday, November 25, until Monday, December 2. If you would need pastoral care during this time, please contact Pastor Althea Albright at 484.345.0399.

DECEMBER SIGN-UP SHEETS

We are in need of Flower sponsors for December 1 and 29, Bulletin sponsors for December 8, 24 and 29, a Communion Bread sponsor and Communion Set-up volunteer for December 24, and an Altar Guild volunteer. Greeters are needed for December 1, 22, 24, and 29. Please sign up on the sheets in the narthex if you can help. Thank you!

SCARVES FOR SEAFARERS

Please get any scarves or hats to the office by December 1.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Join us on **Friday, December 6, starting at 6:00 p.m.** to help decorate our church for Christmas. Pizza will be delivered at 6:30 p.m. Please sign up if you are able to help so we know how much pizza to order. Thank you!

FAITH FORMATION EVENT – December 8th beginning at **noon**. Bring a lunch to enjoy as we engage in the story of the birth of Jesus and prepare for our parts on Christmas Eve.

POINSETTIA FLOWER ORDERS

Our sanctuary will be adorned with red poinsettias for our Christmas Eve worship service. An order form is included in this newsletter and is due with your payment to the church office by **Sunday, December 15**. The price is \$10.00 each for a 6-inch pot. Extra order forms are available on the Greeters table.

JANUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the January 2020 newsletter is **Sunday, December 15**. Please have all articles and announcements to the church office by this date.

ADVENT CALENDAR & ADVENT STUDY

Coming to you soon: an Advent Study with readings and prayers to guide you through Advent, and an Advent calendar with pictures you can open up each day.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE

Join us to celebrate the birth of Jesus on **Tuesday, December 24. Pre-service music begins at 6:45. The service begins at 7:00 p.m.**

NO BELL OR ADULT CHOIR REHEARSALS

There will be NO Choir Rehearsals on Tuesday, December 24, or Tuesday, December 31. Rehearsals will resume on Tuesday, January 7. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed **Tuesday December 24, through Thursday, December 26,** for the Christmas holiday.

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

Love to sing Christmas carols? Join us for this special service of Scripture and Christmas hymns on **Sunday, December 29, at 10:00 a.m.**

CHANGE IN LISTING ON OFFERING ENVELOPES

Please be aware that beginning in January 2020, contribution envelopes will have "Benevolence" as the first item listed.

COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS

Reports from the Council President, Worship & Music, Property, Stewardship, Fellowship & Activities, Mutual Ministry, Special Projects, Communion Set-up, and Altar Guild committees are due to the church office by **Sunday, January 5.** Thank you!

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

End-of-year contribution statements for 2019 should arrive in your mailbox by the end of January. Please check them over and notify the church office if there are any discrepancies. Thank you!

LEARNING MINISTRIES DAY 2020

Mark your calendars for Learning Ministries Day on **Saturday, January 25, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.,** at Union Lutheran Church, 5500 PA Route 873, Schnecksville. The workshops will have to do with the ELCA Vision 2025 themes of A Thriving Church, An Equipping Church, A Welcoming Church, A Visible Church, and a Well-governed, Connected, and Sustainable Church. The keynote speaker will be The Rev. Brenda Smith, Program Director, ELCA Faith and Book of Faith. There's something for everyone. Snow date: Saturday, February 1, 2020.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Winter weather delays and closings for our worship services can be found on radio stations WFMZ, WAEB 790 AM, or on Channel 69 news. You may also call the church office at 610.682.6064 and there will be a recorded message on the answering machine on Sunday morning if the service or any events are cancelled.

Did You Know?

HOLLY

Holly was first used by pagans to decorate for the festival of Saturnalia. When Christians began celebrating Christmas in honor of Christ, they adapted that decorating practice to reflect Jesus' life and death. Holly's pointed leaves symbolize the crown of thorns and its red berries symbolize Christ's blood shed on the cross. Because holly thrives and its berries retain their brilliance even in harsh winter conditions, non-Christians saw it as a symbol of eternity—which is fitting for Christians as well.



| | |
|----|---------------------|
| 3 | Sheila Gehman |
| 5 | Sarah Bailey |
| 6 | Pastor Ruth Doty |
| 6 | Amanda Herman |
| 6 | Vikie Seyfert |
| 9 | Helen Fair |
| 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 Wartzluft |



| | |
|----|----------------------------------------|
| 2 | Rodney and Diane Keller (47 years) |
| 25 | George and Jeannette DeLong (59 years) |

NEWS & EVENTS

in the Community



MID-WEEK ADVENT MEDITATIONS AND BIBLE STUDY – December 4, 11 and 18 6.p.m
St. Paul's, Mertztown. Followed by **Holden Evening Prayer at 7 p.m.**

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

The Reading Choral Society (RCS) presents "Handel's Messiah" under the direction of Dr. Graham Bier on **Sunday, December 1, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.** at Muhlenberg High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door, and \$10 for students. To purchase tickets contact RCS at 610.898.1939. For more information check out www.readingchoral.org.

HOLIDAY CONCERT

The Kutztown University Alumni Jazz Band will be performing on **Friday, December 6, at 7:00 p.m.** at Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville. Free admission. A free will offering will be taken to benefit the KU Alumni Jazz Band. Refreshments will be served after the concert. Come enjoy the sounds of holiday cheer!

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown, is holding their annual holiday bazaar on **Saturday, December 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** They will have a variety of vendors to help with your holiday shopping. The kitchen will be open to purchase food and drinks. Drop the kids off for children's crafts and activities while you shop. They will also be collecting non-perishable food items for the Brandywine Food Pantry.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT FORUM

The Lutheran Home at Topton will be holding a "Blue Christmas Worship Service" on **Tuesday, December 17, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.** in Deibert Hall, first floor of D-wing. Led by Rev. Dr. Colleen Kristula, Chaplain. Refreshments and a time for sharing will follow the worship service. There is no fee to attend, but please register at 610.682.1334. Weather related cancellations will be recorded at the same number.

PRAYERS FOR AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE for Those with Limited Mobility or in Care Facilities: Anna Angstadt, Bertha Bennecoff, Helen Fair, Verna Guinther, Shirley Hertzog, Leon Moyer, and Irene Noll.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT

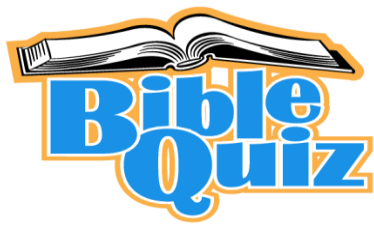
Members: Myles Angstadt, Kathy Bailey, Dallas Bennecoff, Erma Gajewski, Erma Guinther, Virginia Guinther, Amanda Herman, Patricia Keck, Penny Keller, Phillip Litschke, Sheila Long, Forrest Merkel, Roy Merkel, Grace Miller, Linda Moyer, Betty Musser, Joanne Pauley, Joyce Roethermel, Sue Schlenker, and Dawn Wartenluft.

Friends of the congregation: Henry Aulenbach, Carrie Bausch, Adam Bell, Carson Bosma, Bob Bright, Thelma Bright, Earl Derr, Mark Derr, Randy Dreibelbis, Denise Ebelhar, Jennifer Engle, Eric Fox, Ivan Gromling, Mamie Guinther, Shirley Hahn, Corinne Hersh, Johnson-Agiri Family, Sue Keryn, Emily Kershner, Angie Kistler, Kelly Kline, Cayden Kresge, Anh La, Marie Leibensperger, Catherine Lenio, Ella Loose, Joe M., Rodney Muthard, Duane Petersheim, Ruth Ramsey, Leticia Weaver, Diane Whitehead, Althea Young, Pat, and Serita.

OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS: We pray for our nation: our president, congress and judicial system, and leaders of our communities; an end for threats between nations; peace in the world; our military personnel serving around the world; areas enduring disaster; and migrants and refugees.

LONG-TERM PRAYER LIST: Millie Berger, Sandy Burkart, Evelyn Collins Don Gajewski, Lorelai Gold, David Jenkins, Janis Kershner, Michael M., Michelle Meck, Philip and Nancy Meck, Tonya Petersheim, Arlene Reider, Leilani Rodriquez, Andrew S., Joshua S., Donna Schwoyer, Jack Stoudt, Jacqi Wagner, and Leah Wiest.





YOUR PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. – Ephesians 2:8a

True confessions: I've never worn that jaunty Christmas tie my son bought me five years ago. At the end of every December I shake my head and say, well, maybe next year. It's a waste, I know.

Most of us have a few Christmas presents, given in love and received with joy, that are forlornly collecting dust in a drawer or closet. That's not very good stewardship, is it?

More important than that forgotten bottle of perfume or homely sweater, how are you stewarding that most precious of all Christmas gifts—the new life you have through faith in Jesus? Do you cherish it, honor it, make the most of all it has to offer? Because it is truly amazing.

New life. Too many Christians focus exclusively on the AFTERlife that begins when we die. But that's missing out on the joy, peace and fulfillment that Jesus promises us today, what he describes as life abundant. You've doubtless seen evidence of this life in the cheerful eyes and peaceful smiles of holy people you've encountered. Light and love and joy radiates from them.

I want that life. Don't you?

The abundant life is Jesus' free gift, but it doesn't come automatically. It grows with us as we mature in faith through prayer, scripture study, worship, service and generosity – the disciplines of faith. In so doing, we align our hearts and souls with God's purposes and fulfill ever more closely those two holy commandments to love God and neighbor.

This year, don't let your faith end up like a jaunty Christmas tie, hanging unused in the closet. Make the most of it and live into the new, abundant life Jesus promises to us all. It's the number one stewardship lesson.

—Rob Blezard

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Where did the child Jesus and his parents flee for safety?

- A. Ethiopia
- B. Syria
- C. Rome
- D. Egypt



Answer: D (See Matthew 2:13.)

LULLABY FOR THE CHRIST-CHILD

First published in 1539 in Germany, the Christmas hymn “From Heaven Above” recounts the angels’ message to the shepherds and then the spiritual journey of the baptized Christian to Jesus’ manger-bed.

Try singing verses 8, 9 and 13 (translated by Catherine Winkworth) as a tender lullaby of praise, a song of love and a prayer to the newborn Savior. If the original tune is unfamiliar, use “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” or “Just As I Am.”

Welcome to earth, thou noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
Thou com'st to share my misery;
What thanks shall I return to thee?

Ah, Lord, who hast created all,
How weak art thou, how poor and small,
That thou dost choose thine infant bed
Where humble cattle lately fed!

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for thee.

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*



THE BRANDYWINE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS OUR HELP!

With the holidays approaching, the food pantry is in need of a lot more donations. Besides food donations, monetary contributions are also greatly appreciated. You can include your contribution in your regular Sunday offering indicating “Brandywine Food Pantry” on your envelope or you can mail in your donation to New Jerusalem Lutheran Church and we will forward it to them. Or, you can make out a check to “**Brandywine Food Pantry,**” and mail it to **Brandywine Food Pantry, c/o St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, 122 W. Franklin St., Tipton, PA, 19562.**

DONATED ITEMS NEEDED RIGHT NOW:

coffee, fruit juices, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, soups of all kinds, spaghetti sauce, beef stew, canned meat, such as: tuna, chicken breast or Spam, Manwich or sloppy joe mix, chili, Chef Boyardee style-canned items, such as: beefaroni, lasagna, etc., Hamburger Helper, snacks of all kinds, including cookies, chops, pretzels, pudding, etc., flour, sugar, oatmeal, breakfast cereal, pancake syrup and mix, cooking oil. Instant rice, pasta or rice sides, ramen noodles, shampoo, bar soap, or body wash, and laundry detergent.

THE PANTRY IS ALWAYS IN NEED OF:

Canned Fruits: sliced peaches, pears, mandarin oranges, fruit cup, applesauce, etc.

Canned Vegetables: kidney beans, black beans, green beans, whole kernel corn and creamed corn, pork & beans, sweet peas, carrots, beets, yams

Canned Goods: tomatoes, tomato sauce, spaghetti sauce

Condiments: yellow and brown mustard, pickles, salad dressings, vinegar

Drinks: hot or cold tea, water

Extra: peanut butter, marshmallow fluff, jelly

Dry Goods: stuffing mix, Rice-a-Roni, pasta (rotini, penne, macaroni and cheese)

Baking Items: cake or brownie mix, frosting

Breakfast Food: pop tarts, cereal bars

Paper Products: tissues, toilet paper, paper towels

Personal Care Items: toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs and hairbrushes

Cleaning and Disinfectant Products: dish soap and laundry detergent

Gluten-free and sugar-free food is also greatly appreciated.

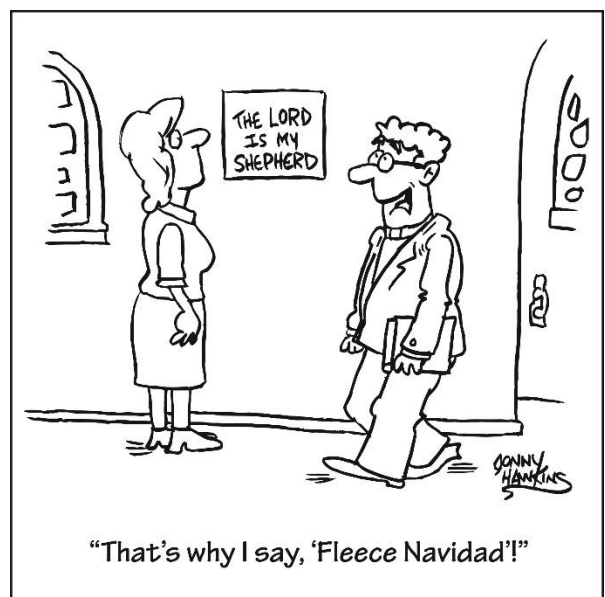
Please check dates on donated food products.

The pantry is open to area residents by appointment on the first three Tuesdays of the month and the third Thursday, from 9:15 a.m. to approximately 1:00 p.m. For appointments, call 610-682-7633 either Tuesday or Thursday or leave a message with your contact information.



These are the items we are requesting for our Backpack Buddies Program. **Generic items may be purchased, but please follow the description of the item.**

- Hormel Beans & Ham, 7.5 oz. microwavable cups
- Campbell’s, microwavable cups, any variety soup
- Rice-a-Roni, microwavable cups, any flavor
- Chicken of the Sea To-Go Cups, Tuna packs, cups or bags
- Chef Boyardee Lasagna, Spaghetti and Meatballs, Ravioli, 7.5 oz. microwavable cups
- Kraft Mac and Cheese, microwavable cups
- Quaker Chewy Granola Bars, any variety
- Otis Spunkmeyer Muffins, any variety, individually wrapped
- Borden Non-refrigerated Milk, 6.75 oz.
- Austin 6 Cracker Packs, any variety
- Pepperidge Farms Goldfish, 1 oz. – 1.5 oz. individual packs
- Kellogg’s Cereal, individual cups or boxes, any variety
- Juice Boxes, any variety
- Popcorn, individual bags



THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE

A nursing home resident who longed for fresh Georgia peaches discovered a pit overlooked in his serving of canned fruit. In an old coffee can, he planted the stone, which sprouted! The man gave the small tree to friends to plant. Years later, the peaches were so abundant the neighbors had to give some away.

Lila Docken Bauman recounts this story for the *Christian Century*, saying the man who took that gamble “did not live to see [it] grow into the tree that ultimately produced this harvest. But when he looked at that pit years ago he saw the promise of fresh fruit. ... ‘Who despises the day of small things?’” asks the prophet Zechariah. It’s in those small things that the promise of the future rests.



Just so, some 2,000 years ago, in a small baby born in a tiny town – both seemingly inconsequential – rested “the promise of the future” – the salvation of the whole world.

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

“O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM”

In 1865, a young American preacher named Phillips Brooks spent time in an around the fields of Bethlehem. On Christmas Eve, he attended worship in the Church of the Nativity, located on the site where tradition says Jesus was born.

Brooks was so spiritually touched by the experience that he later wrote a hymn for children to sing on Christmas Eve in his Philadelphia church. Lewis Redner, the church organist and Sunday school superintendent, composed the music for the beloved hymn, “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” Today it appears in most denominational hymnals. Brooks, a giant of a man physically (6’6” tall), was known throughout America as an eloquent and dominant force in the pulpit.

There is a large statue of the gifted man of God in front of Boston’s famous Trinity Church, where Brooks last served. His death in 1893 was a major event in Boston. Upon learning of his passing, a 5-year old girl exclaimed, “Oh, Mama, how happy the angels will be.”

Reprinted from *The Newsletter Newsletter*

New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Statement of Accounts

October 31, 2019

| <u>Asset Accounts</u> | <u>Balance</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Memorial | \$ 24,279.40 |
| Thrivent | 7,939.94 |
| Checking | 5,397.98 |
| Youth | 405.24 |
| Fidelity | 116,096.29 |
| Cash Reserve | 20,550.78 |
| Mission Investment | 11,429.58 |
| Local Care | 1,763.75 |
| | Total <u>\$ 187,862.96</u> |

Total Balance of Asset Accounts
from **October 31, 2018** \$ 196,316.39

October 2019 – ‘Actual’ vs. ‘Required’ Income

| | Income | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Income | Required | Actual | |
| <u>Used For:</u> | <u>Per Month</u> | <u>Income</u> | <u>Difference</u> |
| Operating Expenses | \$ 9,077.08 | \$ 5,447.00 * | \$ (3,630.08) |

*Income Required per Month — Based on 2019
Budget Passed by Congregation
Less Budgeted Benevolence Contribution*

** Actual Income Includes: \$775.00 ESTIMATED
INCOME from Shoo-fly Pie Sale*

Parking Lot – Funds received to offset expenses
for Driveway/Parking Lot Repaving

\$ 37,140.00 Total Expenses for Project
\$ 28,296.54 Funds Received to offset expenses



THREE-MONTH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

December

| | | | |
|---|----|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| * | 1 | 10:00 AM | First Sunday in Advent (B) – Holy Communion |
| | 8 | 10:00 AM | Second Sunday in Advent (B) ▪ Faith Formation Event at 12:00 noon |
| * | 15 | 10:00 AM | Third Sunday in Advent (B) |
| | 22 | 10:00 AM | Fourth Sunday in Advent (B) |
| * | 24 | 6:45 PM | Christmas Eve – Preservice Music |
| | | 7:00 PM | Christmas Eve (W) – Holy Communion |
| * | 29 | 10:00 AM | First Sunday of Christmas (W) Service of Lessons and Carols |

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP
SERVICE NEW TIME!**

We will have one worship service
on December 24th at **7:00 p.m.**
Pre-service music begins at **6:45.**

January

| | | | |
|---|----|----------|-------------------------------------------|
| | 5 | 10:00 AM | Epiphany of Our Lord (W) – Holy Communion |
| * | 12 | 10:00 AM | Baptism of Our Lord (W) – Holy Communion |
| | 19 | 10:00 AM | Second Sunday after Epiphany (G) |
| * | 26 | 10:00 AM | Third Sunday after Epiphany (G) |

February

| | | | |
|---|----|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| * | 2 | 10:00 AM | Fourth Sunday after Epiphany (G) – Holy Communion ▪ Souper Bowl Breakfast |
| * | 9 | 10:00 AM | Fifth Sunday after Epiphany (G) |
| * | 16 | 10:00 AM | Sixth Sunday after Epiphany (G) |
| | 23 | 10:00 AM | Transfiguration of Our Lord (W) – Holy Communion |

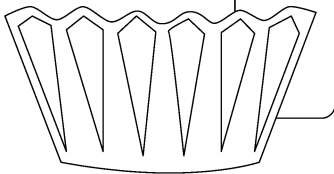
FELLOWSHIP DATES:

- (*) Fellowship after worship
(■) Breakfast before worship



Light the way

Make some Christmas candles to remember Jesus, the Light of the world.



What you need:

- Unlined white notecards
- Hot glue (and adult help)
- Yellow tissue paper
- Mini muffin liners
- Clothespins

What you do:

1. Roll a notecard from side to side into a “candle” tube. Secure with glue.
2. Insert a piece of tissue paper “flame” in one end.
3. Glue the other end to a muffin liner. Then glue the liner to a clothespin.
4. Repeat to make many paper candles. Pin them to the branches of a Christmas tree.



PUZZLE

Symbols of the *season*

Many traditional decorations convey the meaning of Christmas.

Directions: Use the picture clues to the right to complete the words. Then write the boxed letters in order to complete 2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV.



shepherd's staff _ _ _ _ _

tree that keeps its leaves _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

shines to lead the way _ _ _ _

green for eternal life, _ _ _ _ &
red for Jesus' blood _ _ _ _ _ _

sounds to announce _ _ _ _
good news

has no beginning or end _ _ _ _ _

Th ks b to od fo is
indesc ba le gif !

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15, NIV

Answer: candy cane, evergreen, star, holly & berries, bell, wreath; Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV

DECEMBER WORSHIP ASSISTANTS & SPONSORS

| DATE | GREETER | READER | FLOWERS | BULLETINS |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 12/1 | TBA | Gladys Kline | Faye and Larry Dey | Gladys Kline |
| 12/8 | George DeLong | Ty Rissmiller | Amy Hahn | <i>(sponsor needed)</i> |
| 12/15 | Josh Keck | Ken Keck | Dale Schwoyer | Katie Ellen Cleaver |
| 12/22 | TBA | Cindy Rissmiller | George and Jeannette DeLong | Dale Schwoyer |
| 12/24 – Christmas Eve | TBA | TBA | Sara and Olivia Moyer | <i>(sponsor needed)</i> |
| 12/29 | TBA | Sara Jane Beshore | <i>(sponsor needed)</i> | <i>(sponsor needed)</i> |

ALTAR GUILD: *(volunteer needed)*

CHILDREN'S BULLETINS: Dale Schwoyer

SANCTUARY CANDLE: Gladys Kline

COMMUNION BREAD: 12/1 – Gladys Kline; 12/24 – *(sponsor needed)*

COMMUNION SET-UP: 12/1 – Gladys Kline; 12/24 – *(volunteer needed)*

COUNCILPERSONS: Josh Keck

COST: Flowers - \$35.00; Bulletins - \$7.00; Children's Bulletins - \$5.00; Sanctuary Candle - \$15.00

DECEMBER 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 First Sunday of Advent ▪ Holy Communion ▪ Fellowship after worship 4:00pm -Handel's Messiah, Muhlenberg High School Auditorium | 2 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 3 6:30pm -Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm -Adult Choir Rehearsal Giving Tuesday | 4 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 5 10:00am -Bible Study | 6 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. 6:00pm -Christmas Decorating | 7 |
| 8 Second Sunday of Advent 12:00pm -Faith Formation | 9 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. 7:00pm -Finance Committee Meeting 7:00pm -Council Meeting | 10 6:30pm -Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm -Adult Choir Rehearsal | 11 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 12 10:00am -Bible Study | 13 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 14 9:00am-3:00pm - Holiday Bazaar, St. Paul's, Mertztown |
| 15 Third Sunday of Advent ▪ Fellowship after worship Newsletter Deadline | 16 10:00am -Worship & Music Committee Mtg. 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 17 6:30pm -Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm -Blue Christmas, Topton Home, Deibert Hall 7:30pm -Adult Choir Rehearsal | 18 11:30am -Fellowship Luncheon at Airport Diner 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 19 | 20 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 21 Winter Begins |
| 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent | 23 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 24 7:00pm -Christmas Eve Worship Service ▪ Holy Communion ▪ Fellowship after worship OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Eve | 25 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Day | 26 OFFICE CLOSED | 27 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 28 |
| 29 First Sunday of Christmas ▪ Service of Lessons & Carols ▪ Fellowship after worship | 30 12:45-1:45pm -AA Mtg. | 31 New Year's Eve | | | | |

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

We Love... 2019 A Day of Learning



We Love...because God first loves us. We Love...others because each person is a child of God. We Love...by expanding our understanding of others and allowing people to be truly who God made them to be. We Love...because God is love.

These were just a few of the takeaways from We Love... 2019, a day of learning to help congregations be more opening and welcoming to LGBTQIA+ individuals and their families. For many participants this was uncharted territory, as they are learning what all those letters actually do mean (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic plus many more).

For others, there was still plenty to learn as we explored the intersection between sexuality/gender identity and faith and discussed how the church can be a place where people do not feel they have to hide their sexuality or gender identity in order to feel the love of God and others.



The keynote speaker was Jamie Bruesehoff, a writer and advocate in New Jersey. She is married to an ELCA pastor and is the mother of three children, the oldest of whom is transgender. Workshops included safety basics, welcoming language in worship, what scripture has to say about homosexuality, bisexuality visibility, and parents sharing stories of when their children came out and how the church was both helpful and hurtful.

We Love... is being planned again for the fall of 2020.

Bern, Leesport Supports World Hunger

Bern gets in the Farming Spirit to Raise Funds for ELCA World Hunger



Ministry often surprises us. Our congregations work hard to meet many needs across the United States and around the globe. Feeding the hungry is one of those needs. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me" Matthew 25:35. When we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty and welcome the stranger, we are encountering and caring for Jesus.

This past September Bern Lutheran Church in Leesport set out to raise enough money to buy one farm from ELCA World Hunger (ELCA Good Gifts). Over the course of four weeks, hundreds of dollars began pouring in. The spirit of the project was

evident throughout. Jane Battaglieri, Bern's Music Director, even enjoyed adding some special music in the spirit of the project. During one service, the song sung before announcing the total was "The Farmer in the Dell" and the postlude was "Old MacDonald." The people of Bern came together during their God's Global Barnyard project and their generosity was overwhelming! By the end of the project in October, a total of \$3,000 was raised!

The Rev. Phyllis Wolkenhauer was especially overjoyed at the success of the whole project. She wrote, "I think \$3,000.00 was a complete surprise to all of us. The day the final total was calculated, we received a letter encouraging us to participate in the ELCA World Hunger appeal and take advantage of the matching funds currently available. In the blink of an eye, the Lord increased our offerings to total \$6,000. What a gift!"



***Never underestimate the power of prayerful giving
and of a congregation coming together
to make an impact upon a world in need!***

Learning Ministries Day 2020

Saturday, January 25, 2020 (snow date Saturday, February 1)
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. @ Union Lutheran Church, Schnecksville

Theme: Vision 2020

Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Brenda Smith,
Program Director, ELCA Faith and Book of Faith
(Visit nepasynod.org for more information)

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We are planning to adorn our sanctuary with red poinsettias for our Christmas Eve service. If you would like to order any plants, please return this form with your payment to the church office by **Sunday, December 15th**. Cost is \$10.00 per 6-inch pot. Thank you!

Number of poinsettias at \$10.00 each: _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____



NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

ENVELOPE #: _____

DEDICATIONS (*In Honor of, In Memory of, or To the Glory of God*):
