



The Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

Parish Visitor

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February 2017

Things we don't know.

There is so much more to being a Christian that I would like to know. Padre Pio, Mt. Sinai Monastery, and Debre Libanos are all people and places that I should know. I happened upon them in a recent Continuing Education Study session. I hope that my Boss led me to them so that I might share their story. I know, however, that there is more. There is always more. I have a wall of books in my office begging for some thinning that I am starting to do (and a seminarian always eager to help by borrowing). Yet, for a theological library it is still quite deficient. I have saved videos and pdfs in my digital storage. I have journals with written down records and those book projects moving along at a snail's pace. There are also prayers and spiritual memories of moments in my own mind and heart that are yet to be recorded anywhere. On this great green earth there are thousands upon millions of Christians that I do not know. Not just classics and giants but personal heroes and Sunday school teachers that are passing along and experiencing the great Good News that we are cherishing and entrusted with. There is so much more to know and share. The kingdom and presence of God is so overwhelmingly huge and massive in our lives.

Each Lent I come up with my own goal for a discipline. I think this will be it this year: to know more of the newness of the church and more of old stories of martyrs and heroes that are totally unknown to me. I am sure that will be more than I can possibly squeeze into Lent, but it will be fun to discover how much I don't know.

My mind connected with a live performance of "Knowing You, Jesus (All I Once Held Dear," written by Graham Kendrick [[YouTube](#)]. I recalled the chorus and the theology of Paul which combined with the heartfelt singing brought me to tears. Knowing and understanding Jesus' life, passion, and death is certainly the key to the meaning of life. The resurrected life of being the hands and feet of Christ is certainly the purpose of our being.

So knowing more is more than just knowing more. It is doing, serving, worshipping and sharing more. Which of us doesn't want more. Yes, we often whine for more of other things. Consider, though, that knowing Jesus more deeply yields more—more of so many things that we have yet to understand and cherish as providence and gifts.

So who are Padre Pio, Mt. Sinai Monastery and Debre Libanos? They are signs, places and people of more—interesting stories of lives of saints and sacred places too rich to share in detail here. I will give the teasers of marks, burning, and tragic. One had special marks. One is a place of a special burning. One is many in a tragic loss. Do you thirst to know more of God and the life that you are called to?

Let me know what you find out.

Peace and prayers for your discoveries!

Yours in the love of Christ,

Pastor Andrew Fitch



*What is the Lutheran message?
Is there a “Lutheran” way to see the cross?
How does the Reformation relate to us
now?*

We live in a world that desperately needs to hear the Good News of Jesus the Christ. Yet, we also are broken and quite in need of being built up and restored in Christ. We might not feel very able and equipped to share or witness to others about Jesus, but in fact, all of us are. We might have lost our way or lost heart. We might be going through challenges that are discouraging us.

What we really need is to be built up in:
Faith formation
Reorientation
Activation

We need our own reformation!

Lent is a great time to begin this process of reflection, study, reorienting and renewal.

You are encouraged to set aside times for prayer and service.

Each Wednesday in Lent we will have two opportunities for you to be lead and facilitated in this process.

You are invited to order the book:
“We Make the Road by Walking: A Year Long Quest for Spiritual Formation, Reorientation, and Activation”
by Brian McLaren
*The Council has already started reading this book together, so council members that are present will be primed with thoughts and inspirations to share.
The chapters are short and the book is set up for a year of reading. We will have monthly get-togethers and there will be blog posts to keep you reading!*

Wednesdays in Lent:

6:00 Soup and Bread Fellowship with
Book Study Discussion of “We Make the Road by Walking”

7:00 Evening Prayer
with Small Catechism focus and
words and prayers by Martin Luther

*Soups and breads prepared by Fitch Kitchen.
Evening Prayer to conclude by 7:30.*

Ash Wednesday is March 1st.

Palm Sunday is April 9.

**The Great Three Days
April 13,14, 15**

Easter is April 16

Personal Devotional options:

“Free Indeed: Devotions for Lent 2017: Pocket Edition” This full-color devotional takes you through Lent with daily readings from Martin Luther’s Small Catechism. Each reading is accompanied by a photo, a quote to ponder, reflection, and prayer. Free Indeed invites you to reflect on Martin Luther’s guide to the basics of Christian faith during the Lenten season, and within the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

This is published by Fortress for \$2 and is also available in Kindle edition through Amazon.

“40 Days with Martin Luther” edited by Gracia Grindal— from the vast collection of Luther's sermons and other works, forty inspiring passages that raise profound truths about faith and life. Includes a short introduction to Luther's life, journal-writing exercises and daily prayers. A rich resource for personal meditation or small group discussion. Fortress \$12.99 and Amazon kindle

For paper copies, please contact Pastor Fitch as soon as possible.

We need your hands and feet: A few of our food pantry workers are asking to retire. We need a few more teams of 2 or more (a couple or a family) that could go to Wenger's Grocery Outlet to pick up food. The timing could be at your convenience. A list and check are provided. A larger vehicle makes it easier, but perhaps one could be borrowed if you don't own one. Contact Pastor Fitch or Miriam Milbrand (570) 966-1352.

Food Pantry Stats:

On January 19th, our food pantry served 40 families or 101 people. Thank you to all of the volunteers who give of their time every month.

Please bring **canned fruit and soups for next month** (February 16). If you wish to contribute monetarily, checks may be made to M.E.L.C. Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Of course, you can still donate other food items to the pantry if you find good sales on different items. Thank you for your support of this ministry!

Camp Mount Luther

2017 Summer Camp Brochures are now available on the table downstairs by the coat racks. The brochure and registration information are also available online at www.campmountluther.org. Brochures have been sent to last year's campers.

The 2017 staff is shaping up but there are still openings for qualified workers. In addition, volunteer nurses are needed to give a week of their time. If you know of any good candidate, have them contact Chad Hershberger for an application packet or download one online at www.campmountluther.org.

Camp Mount Luther Sunday is February 26.

Flat sheets needed for Lutheran World Relief Quilts

If you have flat sheets you can donate to the ladies tying these quilts, please bring them in and give them to Miriam Milbrand or Frances Blatchley.

Pill bottle collection, for use in areas where the supply is low or non-existent, is underway again. If you have empty prescription pill bottles, please bring them to the church and place them in the box by the coat racks downstairs. There are only certain bottles that are accepted. Samples of acceptable bottles are fastened to the collection box.

XYZ Luncheon ... Tuesday, February 21st at Applebee's, Hummel's Wharf. Please sign up if you plan to attend. If you need a ride, indicate that on the sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall. These luncheons are open to anyone who wants to join in, regardless of age.

"BY GRACE HOUSE"

Were you aware that there is a homeless shelter in Middleburg for women and their children who have nowhere to live? These women are trying to apply for or get to jobs. They need to look good for an interview, have a phone for an employer to call them back, and gas to get them to work until their first paycheck. This ministry is not funded by any government agency. It relies totally on the generosity of local people. The following is a list of items needed (any brand):

- Antiperspirant
- Body wash
- Razors
- Tampons and feminine napkins
- Old cell phones that work
- Gas cards of any denomination

Won't you please share what you have "by grace" been given?

Thank you, WELCA

SAVE THE DATE: *Lutheran Youth Day, April 22, 2017*
Susquehanna University ***Theme: "Love Your Neighbor"***

Worship Leaders/Assistants

(Please remember ... If you cannot attend worship the day you are scheduled as a helper, please find a replacement and notify the church office of the change. And, if you are not currently on our list of helpers, and would like to be, please contact the church office.

Head Usher for February: Diane Walter (*March– Kay Trick*)

Acolytes	2/5 Nathan Sauers, Jillian Fee 2/12 Joshua Hauck, Kaylin Foss 2/19 Ryan Sauers, Hannah Fee 2/26 Brayden Keister, Amanda Schlegel 3/1 (<i>Ash Wed. 7p</i>) Collin Sauers 3/5 Garrett Benfer, Katie Benfer	Lectors	2/5 Carole Jacka 2/12 Katie Williard 2/19 Jeff Benfer 2/26 Nate Williard 3/1 (<i>Ash Wed.</i>) Kerry Fitch 3/5 Carl Scholl
Greeters	2/5 Stephanie and Reese Stahl 2/12 Greg and Kim Schlegel 2/19 Carole Jacka 2/26 Kurt and Linda Zimmerman 3/1 (<i>Ash Wed. 7p</i>) John And Betty Hollenbach 3/5 Stephanie and Reese Stahl	Cantors	2/5 Nate Williard 2/12 Tom Milbrand 2/19 Kate Williard 2/26 Miriam Milbrand 3/5 JR Erdley
Altar Guild	2/5 Steve and Linda Resseguie 2/12 Mim Keister 2/19 Bonnie and Chuck Ritter 2/26 Gary and Barb Anderson 3/5 Chris and Stacy Sauers	Fellowship Hosts	2/5 John and Nancy S. 2/12 Dennis and Mary Jo S. 2/19 Nate and Kate W. 2/26 Katie Mitchell 3/5 Janine, Jean, Audrey
Communion Assistants	2/5 Greg Schlegel, Kay Hestor, Deb Wetzel, Frances Blatchley 2/12 Nate Williard, Katie Mitchell, Kate Williard, Stacy Sauers 2/19 Linn Wetzel, Tom Milbrand, Kerry Fitch, Emilee Fitch 2/26 Gary Anderson, Kay Trick, Jean Sauers, Ross Mitchell 3/5 Diane Walter, Greg Schlegel, Patty Wetzel, Deb Wetzel		
Offering Bearers	2/5 Stephanie and Reese Stahl, Shawn and Teresa Danner 2/12 Ginny Engel, Paul Kaler, Carole Jacka, Linn Wetzel 2/19 Brian and Janine Fee family 2/26 Tom and Miriam Milbrand, Ronald and Frances Blatchley 3/1 (<i>Ash Wed. 7p</i>) WELCA 3/5 Loren and Madison Styers, Gene and Mim Keister		
Flower Sponsors	2/5 Bob Frank family 2/12 Kevin and Valerie Fry 2/19 Bonnie and Chuck Ritter 2/26 Gary and Barb Anderson 3/5 Chris and Stacy Sauers		



The deadline for the February Newsletter is Sunday, February 26.



Next Set of "Sky Studies" to be on Lord's Prayer

Each week, a video message will be uploaded to the "cloud" —to the blog on our website: <http://www.newberlinlutherans.com/blog/>

Previous posts on the **Small Catechism** are available there.

An email or Facebook message will remind you that it is available.

Each post is a video message, usually around 5 minutes with a written study to accompany it.

Then you can study and discuss with family or friends as it fits into your schedule. You are encouraged to share further discussions, inspirations, and thoughts.

The first set of Sky Studies focuses on Small Catechism themes and items.



MACY (Mifflinburg Area Christian Youth)

Group Winter News: This is for youth that are in 7th grade to 12th grade. (You are always welcome to bring a friend. This group is growing and it includes 4 area churches that have combined youth to allow for more adventures and spiritual growth.)

February 26th: MACY bowling from 4-7 at Best Bowl, Selinsgrove. Leave Church lot at 3:30. (Mifflinburg Lutheran)

\$40.00 for 1st lane and \$30.00 each additional lane for 2 hour rental. This includes: 1 large pizza and pitcher of soda per lane.

(If you are from New Berlin Messiah Lutheran - the youth fund will waive our fee.)

March 4-5th: Winter Retreat at Wesley Forest!! Leave Church at 8:00 AM. This retreat is for Jr. and Sr. High but only Sr. High will sleep over. (I need to check on the ages for that but I am assuming 16years + or 10th grade and up.) PSU Brandon Smith will be speaking to us Saturday evening!! More details will be shared later. Fun time for all!

April 30th: MACY movie afternoon at the mall. Leave church around noon. Pizza and chatter at Messiah in New Berlin after the movie (more details to come).

This group is also planning to do a Missions trip this year but spots are already filled. Last year this group went to Haiti. Lots of opportunities, so come join the fun!!!

Please let Janine know how many people plan to attend - I should know at least 1 week prior to the event if you are coming so that I can make arrangements with the other leaders so that everything is organized. If you have any questions or ideas please feel free to share with Janine at janine.fee@evanhospital.com or 570-412-9456.

February Birthdays

Feb. 1	Greg Schlegel
Feb. 5	Kelly Roush
Feb. 9	Meadow Brosious
Feb. 10	Kaitlyn Erb
Feb. 14	Rob Sauers
Feb. 16	Justin Laidacker
	Reese Stahl
Feb. 18	Edgar Wagner
	Tiffany Sauder
Feb. 19	Nancy Cody
	Wayne Moyer
Feb. 22	Gary Spangler
Feb. 24	Michael McDonald
Feb. 25	Jennifer Hampshire
	Robert Hummel
Feb. 26	Aaron McMichael
	Miriam Milbrand
Feb. 28	Collin Sauers



February Anniversaries

Feb. 12	Jeffrey and Karla Benfer
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Thank
You

WELCA Ladies,
Thank you so much for the goodie basket and poinsettia for Christmas. I sure do appreciate it and for all the visits. It makes the day go by faster.
Thanks again.

Love,
Edna Propts

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2016

Present: Gary Anderson, Pastor Fitch, Kay Hestor, Katrina Mitchell, Greg Schlegel, Kaylene Trick, Diane Walter, Linn Wetzel, Nate Williard. **Absent:** Ron Blatchley.

Meeting called to order at 7:15 pm by Council President Gary Anderson who led the Council in the reading of the mission verse from Jude. Pastor Fitch then led the group in a brief devotions based on Jude verses 17-25.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the November 15th meeting were accepted with corrections on motion of Hestor/Trick.

Treasurer's Report: Givings for the 4th quarter are already higher than any other quarter with 2 weeks remaining. Hopeful to reimburse borrowed money from Fuel account and benevolence giving around the beginning of next year.

Pastor's Report Highlights:

Vacation planned Dec. 27 – 29
Sky Study videos and blog
Average work week was 47 hours.

Committee Reports:

Stewardship: No report.

Properties: No report.

Christian Ed/Youth and Family Ministries: No report.

Worship and Music:

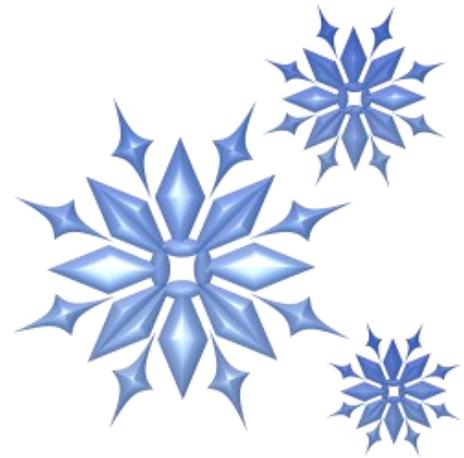
Piano tuning was scheduled
No longer recording services on tapes
Discussion about need of chime repairs in the near future
All forms of updated prayer chain are working wonderfully

Women of the ELCA: No report.

Men in Mission: No report.

Staff Support/ Mutual Ministries: No report.

Mission and Witness: No report.



Unfinished Business:

Pastor mentioned a need for properties committee to receive estimates for replacement of kitchen door in social hall. Currently the door is difficult to shut and is accidentally being left open causing safety concerns and increased heating expenses during the winter

New Business:

Kay Trick thanked all those who volunteered to clean out the banner room. Kay reports the room is much safer now that years worth of files have been purged.
Congregation received a letter from Gettysburg Seminary encouraging members to consider financial support for Ryan Fitch to help cover costs of education
Ron and Fran Blatchley replaced old exterior nativity display and asked for approval from council to accept the new nativity set. On motion of Hestor/Trick the new nativity was accepted by council
Installation of new council members will be held in worship on January 8th

The meeting closed with the Council praying the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be January 12th at 7:00pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:46pm.

Submitted,
Nathan Williard, Council member

These are unapproved minutes that are subject to correction and approval at the next meeting.

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, New Berlin
Council Minutes
January 12, 2017

Present: Pastor Fitch, Nate Williard, Diane Walter, Kay Trick, Tom Milbrand, Gary Anderson, Kay Hestor, Katie Mitchell, Greg Schlegel, Linn Wetzel **Absent:** None

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by President Anderson followed by devotions based on an excerpt from “The Old Testament and Neighbor” by R and K Jacobson.

Election of Officers for 2017: The following members were elected to office for 2017: President: Nate Williard, VP: Diane Walter, Treasurer: Kay Trick, Secretary: Tom Milbrand, Bookkeeper: Greg Schlegel
The standing committee chairs and liaisons were appointed as follows: Properties: Linn Wetzel, Mission and Witness: Katie Mitchell, Christian Ed/Youth: Katie, Finance: Gary Anderson, Staff Support/Mutual Ministries: Diane Walter, Men in Mission: Greg Schlegel, Stewardship: Tom Milbrand, Worship and Music: Tom Milbrand.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the December 13 meeting were accepted with a date correction.

Treasurer's Report: The report for December shows income of \$16717.15, and disbursements of \$12626.95 with a remaining balance of \$5,211.89 remaining in the General Account. After outstanding bills are paid, we should still have a balance remaining. It was decided to emphasize to the congregation that this is a good start to 2017, but we must maintain this level of support. Some discussion centered on the prompt payment of charitable contributions. The fuel fund is currently at \$3056.04 so it was decided that Schlegel should investigate topping off the tank. A third auditor is needed, so members will be contacted to volunteer for this important position. The report was accepted, subject to audit.

Pastor's Report Highlights: While there were ups and downs with the revised service schedule for Christmas and New Year's day, overall it seemed to be well received. There will be a lengthy period until Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1. Pastor is working on the Lenten services. There were some small glitches with the start of the new versions of the Urgent Prayer Chain, but most seem to have been ironed out. As part of strategic planning for Mission, Pastor has asked the council to read, “We Make the Road by Walking: A Year-Long Quest for Spiritual Formation, Reorientation, and Activation” by Brian McLaren. We will be discussing a portion each Council Meeting.

Committee Reports:

Stewardship: Milbrand will ask Ron Blatchley to chair Stewardship, and possibly give a reminder of the workings of “Try a Tithe” Sunday coming up this month.

Properties: No Report

Finance: See Treasurer's Report

Christian Ed/Youth and Family: The children and leaders of the Youth Christmas Program were congratulated on a job well done. Council discussed the VBS program, it's cost, impact, and scheduling with an eye to increased involvement and benefit. The discussion will continue next month.

Worship and Music: No report

WELCA: There will be a Super Bowl soup sale on February 4. Orders will be taken at the doors prior to service time, starting January 15.

Men in Mission: No Report

Mission and Witness: No Report

Staff Support/Mutual Ministries: No Report



Unfinished Business

Kitchen door: Wetzel obtained an estimate from Cam Shaffer to replace the kitchen door, including hardware, for \$1,041. It was decided to add a new push-pad lock, as well. Moved by Trick/Hestor to proceed with replacement funded through Capital Improvement Account

No New Business

Closing: Meeting adjourned at 9:30 with all praying the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be on February 9 @ 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted, Thomas R. Milbrand, Secretary

Prayer List

Prayers of healing, wholeness, encouragement—Long Term:

Julia Hauck, Logan Roush, Alicia Saxon, Aimee Erdley, Merrilee Bender, Noah Navickas, Katie Benfer, Bill and Bonnie Pontius, Nancy Pursley, Keith Phelps, Paul Treaster, Melanie Sanders, Bev Fausey, Louise VonNeida, Corinna Englehardt, Garth Miller, Betsy Thompson, Ray Stumpff, Ruth Ann Miller, Kermit Dale Carnahan, Tom and Dana Mitchell, Marie Watts, Cindy Hamilton, Ruthie Miller, Deb Keister, Miriam Kymble, George Hauck, Denise Wetzel, Charlene Vanatta, Becca Sampson, Shirley Brouse

Prayers of healing, wholeness, encouragement—Short Term:

Frank Fetter, Gene Keister, Deena Eberhart, Robin Zechman, Cyrus Gehringer, Tom Burns, Mary Bowersox, Travis Erb, Fred Hoffman, Ken Moyer

Providence and protection for first responders, military service men and women:

Stanley Miller, Shane Keller, Eric Brosious, Jonathan Ward

Prayers of care and help for our homebound:

Bob Frank, Edna Probst, Erma VanHorn, Jane Solomon, Roberta Hollenbach, Martha Wetzel, Carol McJilton, Ralph Geiswite

Prayers of consolation and comfort for those who are grieving:

Family and friends of Donald Snook
Family and friends of Wanda J. Leitzel



February 8, 2017: Institute for Lifelong Learning

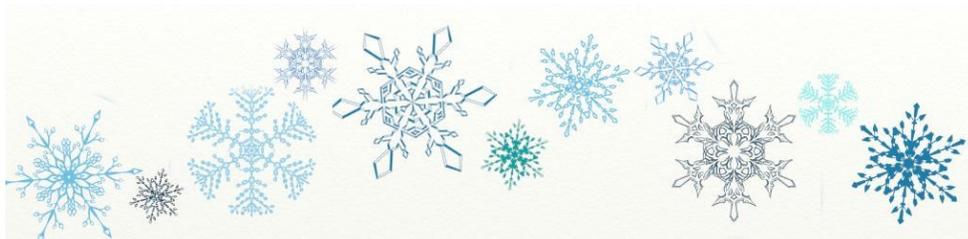
Susquehanna University's Institute for Lifelong Learning is a series of programs designed for senior community members. Members gather in SU's Campus Center on Wednesday to enjoy a social hour, presentation, and lunch, beginning at 10:15 a.m. There are three options for membership in the institute. For further details, please contact Joe Herb at kapajoe@ptd.net or 570-374-9911 or Jayme Long at longj@susqu.edu or 570-372-4354.

Synod Snipits

February 8 Program: The Fitzwilliam String Quartet (tentative)

February 10-11, 2017: GROW in the Snow

This year's synod youth retreat at Camp Mount Luther will be held on February 10-11, 2017. All youth in 6-12th grade and their youth leaders are invited to attend. The theme of this year's retreat is "Our Way of Life," based on Matthew 5: 13-16, and looking at faith practices and living a Christian life. Experience your Creator, play winter games and find refreshment in the peace of camp in winter. The retreat is from Friday night to Saturday afternoon, but there is an option for youth and leaders to come just for the day on Saturday. Cost is \$57 (whole program) or \$40 (Saturday only) if registered by January 31, 2017. A late fee of \$25 added after that date. No refunds will be given after the January 31st deadline. Each registered group should provide one adult (21 or over) for every seven youth and at least one adult for each gender represented. Cabin assignments will be made based on available adults and number of youth attending. Contact Chad Hershberger at chad@campmountluther.org with questions.



USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



January
2017

God's work. Our hands. + Upper Susquehanna Synod + Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

2016 Year in Review

Here is the *USS Ark's* look back at the past year's highlights:

COLLINS ELECTED BISHOP: The Rev. Barbara Jeanne Collins was elected as the third bishop of the synod for a six-year term beginning September 1, 2016. She succeeded Bishop Robert L. Driesen, who retired on August 31, 2016, after nine years in office. Collins was elected with 133 votes to 122 votes for Rev. William Henderson, pastor of Christ's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lewisburg, on the fifth ballot. Collins was Assistant to the Bishop/Director for Evangelical Mission for the synod prior to her election. She was installed by ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton at a service at Zion, Sunbury, in October.

TRANSITION TEAM COMPLETES WORK: The synod's transition team, appointed by Vice President Karla Bohmbach, created a profile of the synod and the leader we sought to highlight directions for those discerning a call to the Office of Bishop. Those profiles were shared broadly before the election.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY: The Annual Synod Assembly was held at Susquehanna University in June. The theme was "Freed and Renewed in Christ." The Camp Mount Luther Staff was installed for their summer work and two people were ordained into the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. A memorial was passed in "Support for Peacemaking with Justice in Israel and Palestine." A memorial was also sent to Churchwide Assembly asking for action on advocacy efforts to end gun violence. Actions taken at Churchwide Assembly, where nine USS members including Bishop Collins attended, are here: <http://www.elca.org/en/CWA-2016?qa=1.176299053.961077637.1481815160/>

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT SIGNED: The synod signed a new five-year agreement with their companion synod in Bavaria. Pfr. Dr. Philipp Hauenstein, the Regional Bishop of the Kirchenkreis Ansbach-Würzburg, Gisela Bornowski, along with USS Bishop Robert L. Driesen and Rev. Lois Martin signed the covenant. This is the fourth signing of five-year partnership agreements with the last one being done in 2011 in Germany.

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION: Friends, family, and colleagues gathered at Messiah, South Williamsport, on Saturday, July 16, 2016, to honor and celebrate the ministry of Bishop Robert L. Driesen. The event included a worship service and dinner meal. ELCA Secretary Wm. Chris Boerger was the preacher at the service. A program was held as part of the meal, where the synod gave Bishop Driesen a gift certificate for a local bike shop, a gift in his honor to the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg's scholarship fund, and an artistic fraktur that is traditionally given to synod guests. *Continued on next page*

LAMPa Welcomes Terry Brown to Policy Council



Terry Brown, a member of St. John's, Potts Grove (*Pastor Tom Glasoe*), has been appointed to represent Upper Susquehanna Synod on the Policy Council of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania. Recently retired from a Fortune 50 pharmaceutical manufacturer, where he served as Chief of Emergency Services, Terry has served his local communities since the age of 16 as a firefighter, E.M.T. and as a volunteer fire chief. He also instructs in the fire and hazardous materials fields. He has been married to Linda Sue Brown for 31 years, and enjoys "travelling the world, old cars and trucks, making and selling wine, mowing grass, spending time with friends and meeting new people."

When asked to serve on LAMPa's policy council by Bishop Collins, Terry said, "I was honored." Since attending his first meetings, he said, "I now realize many of my life experiences lend very well to come to the aid of others. Recently things became very clear to me in the verse from John 15: 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.' I look forward to serving the greater church and making the world a better place."

2016 Highlights Continued

NEW TREASURER APPOINTED: Pastor Jeffrey Bohan, synod treasurer, resigned as synod treasurer effective July 1, 2016, due to relocation to Upstate New York. Pastor Chad Hebrink, pastor of Grace, Berwick, took over for Bohan in July.

ECUMENICAL UNDERSTANDING URGED: Roman Catholics and Lutherans of Central Pennsylvania were urged by their bishops to study, discuss and preach about how the two traditions are moving toward greater understanding and fellowship. Three bishops, Bishop Driesen of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, Bishop James S. Dunlop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, and the Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg, together released a pastoral letter calling on Roman Catholic and Lutheran clergy and laity to explore the joint statement *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist* "in their preaching, teaching, and parish planning."

"GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS" DAY OF SERVICE: As part of a national observance of the ELCA, several synod congregations participated this year in "God's work. Our hands" Day of Service in September. Volunteers took time to offer service to others in their community.

NEW ASSISTANT BEGINS WORK: Rev. Craig A. Miller began his work in October as Assistant to Bishop Barbara J. Collins and Director of Evangelical Mission. Pastor Miller comes to our synod from Brooklyn, New York, where he served at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church for 20 years. Miller, along with other members of the synod staff, were installed at a service at Christ's, Lewisburg, in early November.

STRIKE OUT HUNGER: Bishop Collins made a challenge before the World Series to raise funds for ELCA World Hunger. The Strike Out Work Hunger Challenge asked synod members to give a dollar amount per strike out for their favorite team.

SEAFARERS COLLECTION CONTINUES: Members in 42 synod congregations and two individuals filled a total of 551 Christmas At Sea gift bags for the ministry of Seafarers' International House. The bags are given to merchant seamen who come into port to off-load their cargoes during the Christmas season. This is a ministry of the ELCA whose port chaplains go aboard ships to distribute the gift bags, conduct worship services, and to offer other forms of assistance and hospitality to the crews.

CAMP MOUNT LUTHER: Campers to our synod camp this past summer learned about border places as they studied under the theme, "La Frontera." The camp enjoyed increase use during the non-summer months and by year's end was poised to pay off their Evergreen Center debt in the new year.

Up and Down the Valleys

Clergy Notes: Rev. Matt Schuster is now the interim pastor for Christ (Brick) and Christ (White), Middleburg. Rev. Vicky Schaffner has resigned her call at St. John, Leck Kill, and Rev. Peter Bergstresser is interim. Rev. Timothy Bingman has retired as pastor of the Freeburg Parish (Zion/Grubbs/St. Peters). United in Christ Lutheran Parish voted on December 4 to call the Rev. Lisa Barnes to serve as the pastor of the parish. Her official start date will be January 23, 2017.

The Buffalo Valley Lutheran Parish (First, Mifflinburg, and Christ's United, Millmont) voted on October 9 to form a parish with the official start date of January 1, 2017. On December 11, the congregations officially voted to call Pastor John Yost to serve as the pastor of the parish.

Rev. Robert L. Driesen (retired) was bestowed the title of Bishop Emeritus of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA, at the Synod Council meeting on November 18.

Both companion synods of the Upper Susquehanna Synod sent holiday greetings to us at Christmastime. You can read their greetings here: <https://www.uss-elca.org/companion-synods-send-greetings/>

The American Camp Association (ACA) has announced that **Camp Mount Luther**, has received ACA Accredited Camp Status following their site visit this summer. The Keystone Regional Local Council of Leaders of ACA voted to re-accredit the camp this fall. Mount Luther has been accredited by ACA since 1989.

Camp Mount Luther and Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village in Lewisburg held a "Breakfast with Santa" in December at The Village Common. Children and their parents enjoyed pancakes, craft tables, cookie decorating, and pictures with Santa!

USS ARK is a publication of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. Permission is granted for congregations to reproduce this newsletter. Send mission stories and ministry ideas by the first of the month to Chad Hershberger, Director of Communications, at news@uss-elca.org.



Upper Susquehanna Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Rev. Barbara J. Collins, Bishop

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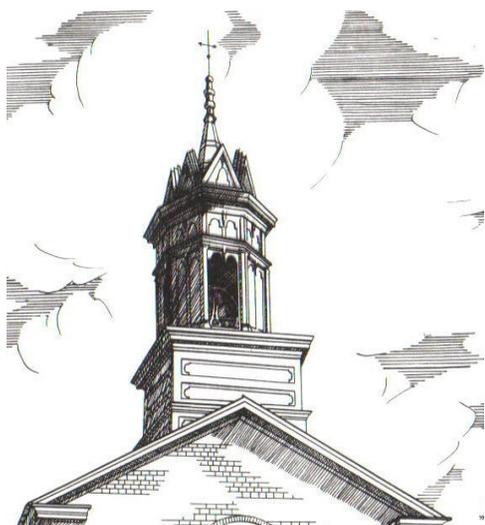
February 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:30p Choir Rehearsal 8:30p Worship and Music Committee	2	3	4 Soup Sale Pick up 11a-12:30p
5	6	7	8 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	9 7:00p Council Meeting	10	11
12	13 7:00p WELCA	14 	15 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	16 10-11a Food Pantry Food Distribu- tion	17	18
19	20	21 11:30a XYZ Lunch at Applebee's, Hummel's Wharf	22 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	23	24	25
26 Camp Mount Luther Sunday	27	28	March 1 7pm Ash Wednesday Worship LENT BEGINS			

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
PO Box 246
New Berlin, PA 17855

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Parish Visitor
February 2017

Visit our website at www.newberlinlutherans.com

Live God's Grace. Share Christ's Love. Serve the Lord.