

PAUL'S PARISH NEWS



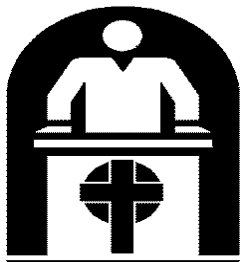
SAINT PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Breinigsville, PA

DECEMBER 2022



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
8227 Hamilton Boulevard
Breinigsville, PA 18031
Telephone: 610-398-7000

PAUL'S PARISH NEWS is published by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church



Dear Members and Friends,

Having three children of my own and becoming a grandfather for the 7th time I can identify somewhat with parents waiting for a child to be born. There are all kinds of questions running through your mind. “What name will we choose? What path will this child follow through life? Will our baby grow up to be successful?” Perhaps

Mary and Joseph had many questions about the holy Child to be born. We don’t know all that they might have asked, but the most important questions were answered for them.

“What name will we choose?” Mary and Joseph did not have to decide on a name for Mary’s firstborn son. The name was given to them. Mary was told, “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.” The name was revealed to Joseph, and with the name, the reason for it: “You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

“What path will this child follow through life?” Jesus’ path through life, his purpose, is revealed in the meaning of his name: “God saves.” Jesus was born – and lived and died and rose again – to “save his people from their sins.” The holy Child of Bethlehem would grow up to follow the way of the cross. Through this Advent season and beyond, we follow him: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” It’s a path that leads all the way from the manger to the cross to the empty tomb!

“Will our baby grow up to be successful?” Successful, yes – but before the glory came the cross: “And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

His holy name, the path of the cross, the triumph of the empty tomb – all that this holy Child, our Savior Jesus, has done – he did for us. Through faith in his name, we have forgiveness for our sins and eternal life. Jesus has promised that he will return to take us to himself forever. So now, through Advent and Christmas and beyond, we are waiting for the Son!

Pastor Miller

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE (or Longest Night service)

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without a loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult.



The constant refrain on the radio and television, in shopping malls and churches, about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation - all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need to know that we are not alone.

Our spirits sink, as the days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us.

For these reasons, St. Paul's offers a special "Longest Night" or "Blue Christmas" service on December 18th at 2:00 p.m.

Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, 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.

PRAYER SHAWLS AVAILABLE



Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you would like a prayer shawl, or know of someone who is struggling and could use a prayer shawl – please see Peggy Kern or Steph Wagaman.

WORSHIP SERVICES

CHRISTMAS EVE

3:00 p.m. Service – Our 3:00 p.m. service will require masks and be socially distanced and there will be no singing. Holy Communion will be self-administered in the pew by using the communion packets.

4:30 p.m. Service – Our 4:30 p.m. service will be the family service with candlelight and involving the children of the congregation. The Joyful Ringers (our bell choir) will be playing at this service.

7:00 p.m. Service – Our 7:00 p.m. service will be a candlelight service. There will be special brass music offered at this service.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES – Sunday, December 25, 2022

We will have Christmas Day services. It will be our regular schedule – 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICES – January 1, 2023

There will only be one service at 10:30 a.m. on New Year's Day. It will be a service of Lessons and Carols. There will be no communion. Pastor Miller will be on vacation. Deacon Bruce Saylor will be conducting the service.

CHURCH OFFICE



The church office will be closed on Monday, December 26th in observance of the Christmas Holiday. The church office will also be closed on Monday, January 2, 2023 in observance of the New Year's Holiday.

CHRISTMAS COOKIE SWAP AND MOVIE

On Sunday, December 11th you are invited to a Christmas cookie swap in our Fellowship Hall at 2:00 p.m. Bring your favorite Christmas cookies and recipes to share. Afterwards we will be showing the movie “Elf.”



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The end of 2022 is almost here. In order to make sure all your contributions are posted on your Year End Giving Statement, it is important to have your 2022 contributions received in the church no later than Thursday, December 29, 2022 (Church Office is closed on Friday) or if mailed, they must be postmarked by December 31, 2022. Any contributions that arrive after that, starting in January, will be posted on your 2023 giving statement.

Sandi Wagaman

UPCOMING EVENTS FROM THE EVANGELISM/FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

February 12, 2023 – Annual Congregational meeting (reports from staff and committees). Pot-luck luncheon with a special feature of chocolate desserts. Bring your favorite chocolate desserts to share. Ummm goood!!!

April 1, 2023 – Easter Egg Hunt with Breakfast - We will be having an Easter Egg hunt open to the community. Breakfast will be served at 9:00a.m. and the Egg Hunt will begin at 10:00a.m.

April 30, 2023 – Lehigh Valley Pops Orchestra will be here to entertain us. This is part of our concert series. The concert will take place at 3:00p.m. in the afternoon.

SNOW/CANCELLATION INFORMATION



Winter advisory...Please be sure to check St. Paul's website, www.stpaulsbbv.org or WFMZ storm center to see if any church service or event is cancelled due to snow or ice.

SEAFARER'S CHRISTMAS AT SEA PROJECT COMPLETE!



Thanks to our dedicated knitters and crocheters, we were able to send a total of **47 hat and cowl sets, plus an additional 3 hats**, to Seafarers International House (SIH). And, thanks to the generous contribution of socks and snack items by our congregation, and with the help of a Thrivent Action Team grant, we were able to

send 12 Christmas satchels. Each satchel contained a sweatshirt, t-shirt, 3-pack of socks, hat and cowl set, snack items and a Christmas card. With some financial aid from St. Paul's endowment fund to help offset shipping costs, all items were delivered to SIH on November 14.

SIH is a Lutheran-run hospitality house that serves seafarers and sojourners. The program is called Christmas at Sea – where they collect hats, cowls, scarves – and make care packages for the seafarers. Seafarers are the “unseen essential workers” and are often overworked and away from their families for extended periods of time. The SIH port chaplains deliver the packages to the ships for the holiday.

A great big thank you for those who helped make hats and cowls for the Christmas at Sea project: **Patti Everett, Carole Fiori, Jackie Grove, Peggy Kern, Judy Noll, Daisy Pearson, Sandi Wagaman, and Steph Wagaman.**

SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR BULLETIN & ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORSHIPS FOR 2023 WILL BE UP SOON

We are in need of bulletin sponsorships for 2023. Bulletin sponsorships will be for both inside services. The price is \$20.00. Call the church office to pick a date to sponsor or check the bulletin board for available dates. Fill out the **white** slip with your name, date you are sponsoring and the wording and place it in the folder under the signup sheet.

Altar Flower Sponsorships are: one vase is \$22.00 or both vases are \$44.00. If you are sponsoring both vases, **PLEASE** sign your name to **BOTH LINES**. Fill out the **blue** slip with your name, date you are sponsoring and the wording and place it in the folder under the signup sheet. Call the church office to pick a date to sponsor or check the bulletin board for available dates.

USHERS/WORSHIP ASSISTANTS ARE NEEDED

We are in need of people to help with the 10:30 a.m. worship service. For the service, worship is the same as before Covid 19 – i.e. hymns are sung, offering is collected in the pew, and communion is taken at the altar. You will be handing out the bulletin, helping to collect offering, and directing the congregation to the altar and handing them a communion cup. If you would be willing and interested in helping, please contact Steph Wagaman at 610-395-0355 or stepbillwagaman@rcn.com or call the church office at 610-398-7000.

ANNUAL REPORT



Committee reports for the 2022 Annual Report are due by December 29, 2022. I know some committees have not met this year, but any information you would like included please submit by that time. Thank you,
Cindy

2022 LEHIGH MISSION DISTRICT CHRISTMAS INGATHERING

St. Paul's is once again participating in the Ingathering. Changes were made last year to accommodate COVID. Instead of a list of items to donate to 10-12 different agencies, each congregation has been assigned two agencies to focus their donations. St. Paul's will be collecting items for Topton Home Children's Services and Daybreak. Our WELCA group will be responsible to take our items directly to Daybreak rather than gathering at a site to sort and pack them. We will do the sorting of your donations right here at St. Paul's. Those of us that have been doing this project over the years really miss gathering with people from different congregations to do the sorting, attend a worship service dedicating the gifts and sharing a meal. Hopefully things will change back to the way they were next year. Let Sandi Wagaman know if you would like to volunteer to be a delivery person.

We will once again also be purchasing gifts for specific individuals for a variety of organizations. We will deliver the wrapped gifts to St. John's Lutheran Church in Emmaus on Wednesday, December 7, 2022 between 9:00-10:30. We also need volunteers to deliver these items to St. John's.

Place all items for Topton Children's Services and Daybreak in the plastic bins marked Ingathering in the Narthex. Wrapped gifts should be placed on top of the coat rack. Please check off your name on the list when bringing the wrapped gifts.

Deadline to bring items for both of these parts of the mission will be Sunday, December 4, 2022.

Contact Sandi Wagaman if you have any questions. 610-203-8085.

WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

Our monthly meeting was on November 9th where we discussed:

- Thankoffering Sunday - November 20th
 - Our change jars will be placed around the baptismal font before the service begins. Daisy will be a greeter and hand out Thankoffering envelopes to those that would like one; Sharon will assist if needed.
- Ingathering
 - Items in bins will be sorted after bible study on Monday, December 5th and delivered to designated charities.

Our monthly bible study was *Jesus and nature: Teachers of faith* Session three, *Creatures*, by Sara Olson-Smith. Jesus compared himself to a hen and honored the value of a sparrow. Job, a teaching story that explores faith in the midst of suffering and looked at humanity's relationship with God. It was also noted that Jesus seldom preached inside.

Calling all women to join us on December 14th at 9:30 a.m. for a business discussion and another interesting, lively Bible Study.

CONTAINER LEFT BEHIND

When we had the basket social someone donated baked goods for the bake sale. They were brought in to the social in a very nice container. I am sure this person would want it back, but no one has claimed it.

If you are missing your container and can describe it, please call the church office at 610-398-7000.

INFORMATION UPDATES

The church keeps a directory of our members' addresses, phone numbers, and emails. If any of that information has changed for you recently, please notify the office at 610-398-7000. We regularly send out emails containing the newsletter so, it is important that we have the correct information.

ST. PAUL'S CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

The St. Paul's Cemetery Association is comprised of six members; three from St. Paul's Lutheran Church and three from St. Paul's United Church of Christ.

Board members are elected for three years and may serve no longer than six consecutive years. A former board member may return to the board after a year of absence after their expired term.

Bob Nickisher has completed his sixth year and we are now in need of another board member from our church.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. approximately four times yearly; unless there are issues that need to be addressed immediately, we will meet more often.

Please see Bob Nickisher, Cal Fetherolf or Sharon Bortz if you have any questions and are interested in becoming a member of the board.

THANK YOU

Dear St. Paul's,

Even though Earl and I have moved far away to Muncy, we still feel the love and support from our family at St. Paul's. Our prayers and love are sent back to you as well.

We miss you all and know we don't need to be there in person to know we are still family. Always in our thought and prayers.

Irene & Earl Wenz

Dear Members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

Our success depends on you! Thank you for your generosity! Thank you for use of the church! We appreciate your support.

Julie

The Sanctuary at Haafsville

THANK YOU

Dear Members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

On behalf of the Food Bank, I would like to thank you for your food donation of 495 pounds of essential items given on 10/18/22. Your donation allows us to keep our shelves stocked with items that we know our clients appreciate. It also allows our budget for purchasing food to be stretched a little further.

Your support enables us to provide food assistance to 1,800 + low-income households in the Allentown area every month. Your donation helps us provide vital food resources throughout the year. Due to inflation, we have seen an increase in need, and the Food Bank has served over 47,000 people this year. A recent Penn State University study reports 'over' 12% of PA households were experiencing hunger at the end of 2020'.

Our Food Bank provided food to over 13,000 families this year. We anticipate that number will continue to rise. Each visit provides our clients with enough groceries, including fresh fruits and vegetables, for a short period. It is with the generous donations, such as yours, that allows us to continue to serve those who are food insecure in our community.

There is no way to aptly express our gratitude for your support. The staff and over 150 volunteers at the Food Bank are continually in awe of our community support and generosity as demonstrated through your donation. YOU are helping us make a difference! Your donation is essential to our mission!

With sincere gratitude,

Jennifer Kelley

Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank Volunteer

Dear Prayer Shawl Members,

Your kindness is greatly appreciated. The prayer shawl is beautiful. Thank you.

Elizabeth Bastian

A COLLABORATION ACROSS TIME AND PLACE

For Christmas Day worship, many churches use Psalm 98. It is fitting, then, that Isaac Watts, who interpreted 132 psalms as hymn texts, based a now-beloved carol on it.

Watts (1674-1748) was a student of language, religion and philosophy. He wanted to make Scripture more relevant to lay people and thought hymns could help. Watts composed more than 600 hymn texts, many still in use. But Psalm 98:4-9, “Joy to the World,” needed music to fit its words.

Enter Lowell Mason (1792-1872), an American choir director. He came across Watts’ Psalm 98 hymn text and sought inspiration for a melody from the famous oratorio *Messiah* by George F. Handel (1685-1759). Mason pulled musical phrases from sections of Handel’s work, resulting in the tune we now recognize as “Joy to the World.”

So it is that three men who lived across three centuries and never met — along with the composer of the original psalm more than two millennia earlier — together produced a hymn to the Christ-child, which millions have sung and continue to love.

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 feel 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

PRAYER CHAIN COMMITTEE



A note to let you know that if anyone is in need of additional prayers for someone in your family or someone you know, please call Judy Walker at #610-351-6040 or cell #610-573-7117. She will start the prayer chain by calling the people who serve on that committee. They in turn will keep extra prayers going for that person. All we need is a name of someone in need of prayer; a reason does not have to be given as to why you want the extra prayers.

If you would like to become a member of this committee, just let me know. I am contacting the Prayer Chain Committee electronically using text messages and email from my cell phone. If you do not have a cell phone or computer, we can still contact you by phone. So if you want to be of service to those who need extra prayers, just contact me using the numbers above or see me at Church. This only takes a brief amount of time and there are no meetings to attend! We all need extra prayers and they do not take a lot of time but are of great comfort.

HOSPITALIZED?

Parish Code for hospitalized parishioners is 321. Please give this code when you are admitted to the hospital so the pastor can be made aware that you are a patient and can administer the pastoral care you require while you are hospitalized.

Please take note, that if you are admitted on a Thursday night, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, the pastor will not be aware that you are hospitalized until Monday mid-morning, since the church does not have office hours on Friday, and the hospital pastoral care office is not available on Saturday or Sunday.

This means, if you would like the Pastor to know you are hospitalized on the weekend, please call the church office or the Pastor.



We have opened the church, and we will still be sending cards to the members of the congregation. If you know of someone who is ill or hospitalized, please let the office know. Judy Szukics will be contacted and she will send a card signed from the congregation.



2 Angela Kropf	12 Heather Sedlak
3 Melanie Dimovitz	13 Mark Strauss
6 Amy Mutis	16 Marion Reichard
7 Andrew Bruchak	17 Margaret Stoudt
7 Luke Walters	19 Frank Bennighoff
8 Calvin Fetherolf	19 Diane Kropf
10 Patty Spencer	25 Mary Ann Spengler
11 Betty Marchetti	29 Carol Derr-Breinig
12 David Craig	30 Richard Sicher



11 Jerry & Heather Sedlak
19 Patrick & Sommer Cope

CHRISTMAS CRACKUPS

Enjoy these kid-friendly holiday jokes!

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

It's Christmas, Eve!

What does the gingerbread man put on his bed?

Cookie sheets.

What do you sing at a snowman's birthday party?

"Freeze a jolly good fellow!"

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy? *Ornamints.*

What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"? *Santa walking backward.*

Why did Rudolph get a bad report card?

Because he went down in history.

What is an elf's favorite kind of music?

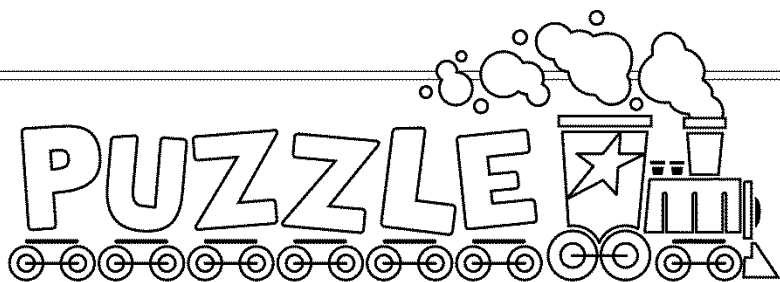
Wrap music!

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?

Nothing. It was on the house!

What kind of photos do Santa's helpers take?

Elfies.



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

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT
NEWSLETTER IS
DECEMBER 11, 2022**

**PLEASE HAVE YOUR
ARTICLES SUBMITTED TO
THE CHURCH OFFICE
BY THIS DATE.**



CHURCH OFFICE: 610-398-7000

HOSPITAL CODE: #321

HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

EMAIL: office@stpaulsbbville.org

Website: www.stpaulsbbville.org

STAFF

Pastor..... The Rev. Carey L. Miller
Organist/Choir Director Ms. Judy Noll
Handbell Director..... Mr. Richard Steltz
Parish Secretary Mrs. Cindy Krasnansky

December 2022 St. Paul's Lutheran Church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																										
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4 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 2:30 p.m.-Haafsville Group	5 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study	6	7 Christmas Ingathering At St. John's Lutheran Church, Emmaus 6:00 p.m.-Girl Scouts	8 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	9	10																																										
11 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 2:00 p.m.-Cookie Swap & Movie NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	12 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study	13	14 9:30 a.m.-W-ELCA 7:00 p.m.-Council	15 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	16	17																																										
18 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 2:00 p.m.-Blue Christmas Worship	19 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study	20 6:30 p.m.-Haafsville Board Meeting	21	22 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES 3:00 p.m.-Masked Worship 4:30 p.m.-Family Worship 7:00 p.m.-Candlelight Worship																																										
25 CHRISTMAS DAY 9:00 a.m.-Worship 10:30 a.m.-Worship <div>  </div>	26	27	28 6:00 p.m.-Girl Scouts	29 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	30	31 <div>  </div>																																										

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

December 2022

If you cannot fulfill an assigned duty, please call the church office at 610-398-7000
or the Council Person of the Month - Sharon Bortz 610-398-0320

Sunday, December 4, 2022

9:00AM

(Masks Required)

No Assistants

10:30AM

(Masks Optional)

Frank Szukics, Judy Szukics

Altar Guild: Janine Ritter

Communion Asst: Rosemary Lehman

Communion Bread: Anita Eisenhard

Lay Asst: Sandi Wagaman

Reader: Nancy Miller

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24, 2022

3:00PM

(Masks Required)

No Assistants

4:30PM

(Masks Optional)

Andrew Bruchak, Bob Bruchak

Altar Guild: Amy Williams

Communion Asst: Peggy Saylor

Communion Bread: Bob Bruchak

Lay Asst: Daisy Pearson

Reader: Lacey Edwards

Sunday, December 11, 2022

9:00AM

(Masks Required)

No Assistants

10:30AM

(Masks Optional)

Frank Bennighoff, Richard Hartley

Altar Guild: Rosemary Lehman

Communion Asst: Sharon Bortz

Communion Bread: Melanie Dimovitz

Lay Asst: Rosemary Lehman

Reader: Tom Kellogg

7:00PM

(Masks Optional)

Zack Dimovitz, Judy Walker

Altar Guild: Janine Ritter

Communion Asst: Anita Eisenhard

Communion Bread: Ken & Janine Ritter

Lay Asst: Sandi Wagaman

Reader: Jennifer Bentsen

Sunday, December 18, 2022

9:00AM

(Masks Required)

No Assistants

10:30AM

(Masks Optional)

Jennifer Bentsen, Peggy Saylor

Altar Guild: Jennifer Bentsen

Communion Asst: Cal Fetherolf

Communion Bread: Bob Nickisher

Lay Asst: Daisy Pearson

Reader: Cal Fetherolf

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25, 2022

9:00AM

(Masks Required)

No Assistants

10:30AM

(Masks Optional)

Melanie Dimovitz, Bruce Wagaman

Altar Guild: Esther Seibert

Communion Asst: Bruce/Sandi Wagaman

Communion Bread: Sandi Wagaman

Lay Asst: Sandi Wagaman

Reader: Sharon Bortz

2:00PM - Blue Christmas Service

(Masks Optional)

No Assistants



Seafarers Hats and
Cowls for Blessing



Packing Christmas at
Sea Satchels



11/6/2022

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!

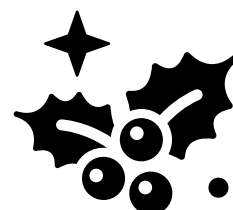
This year the NEPA Synod accomplished a cornucopia of ministry in all corners of the NEPA territory. Your love for God in Christ fed the hungry, built relationships with the downtrodden and outcast, diapered babies, shared the love of God in Christ, and much more...

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

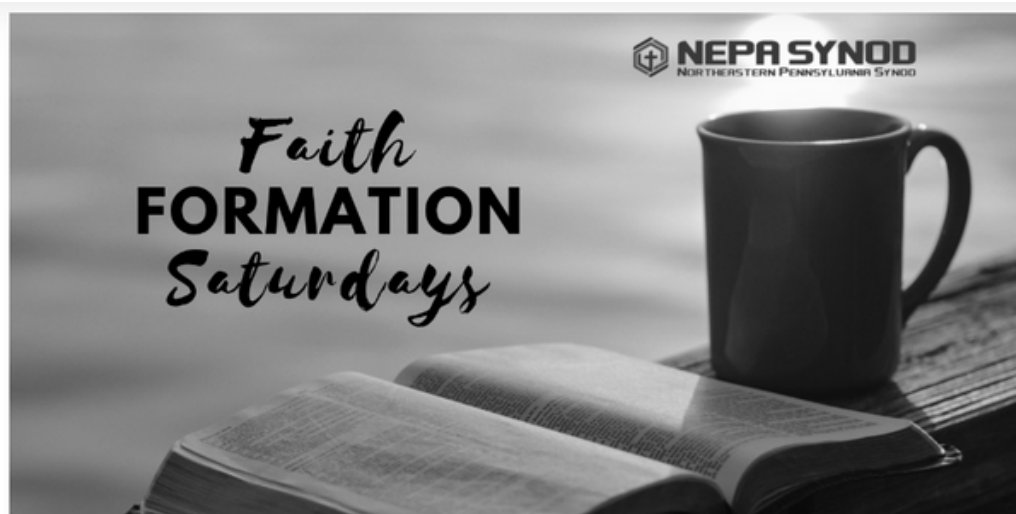
[WWW.GODSLOVE.ORG/
LEARNINGMINISTRIESDAY](http://WWW.GODSLOVE.ORG/LEARNINGMINISTRIESDAY)



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**SYNOD
ASSEMBLY
2023**

**JUNE
1-3**

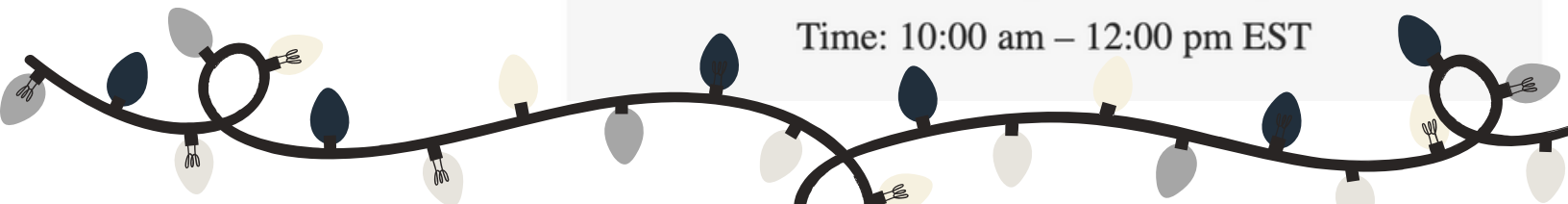


Faith
FORMATION
Saturdays

Faith Formation Saturdays

Date: Monthly (2nd Saturday)

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm EST



The Rev. Nelson Quinones, Dean
The Rev. Jean L. Huber, Assoc. of the Bishop

610-653-5858
610-704-5133

Elizabeth Leibenguth, Mission District Chair
Mrs. Linda Smith, Newsletter Editor

484-550-0057
610-437-9927

January, 2023 LMD NL news will be due Dec. 16, 2022. E-Mail any information to me at lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com.

Muhlenberg College's Candlelight Carols Advent Service will take place this year on **Dec. 3rd at 7:30pm** and **Dec. 4th at 3:30pm and 7:30pm**. We are currently taking reservations and community members can reserve up to 4 tickets on a first come, first serve basis. Please call **484-334-3121** for more information or visit <https://www.muhlenberg.edu/student-life/religiouslife/egnerchapel/candlelightcarolsinformation/> to reserve tickets online.

ADVENT CHRISTMAS INGATHERING: **Wed., Dec. 7, 2022.** St. John's Lutheran Church, 501 Chestnut St, Emmaus, PA 18049. Thank you for all your support in making this Outreach Ministry possible. From our home to yours, Thanksgiving Blessings to All!

Family Game Night: **Fri., Dec. 9, 2022 7-8:30pm**, at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott Street, Allentown, PA. For any questions call the church **610-435-6512** or visit www.sttimothylc.org **Please see attached flyer.**

Community Free Dinners – St. John's Lutheran Church, 1028 Church Street, Fogelsville. Dinners will continue on the **3rd Friday, every other month** (except November, when it will be held on the 2nd Friday) from 5-7 PM. Dinners are served "to-go", while supplies last. All are welcome.

The Clothes Closet is open: We only have one person trying to help a lot of people at one time. **Another person is needed to help people shop.** The hours are **Thursday mornings 9:30-11:30**. We want to keep this vital ministry to the community going. For more information, please contact Leslie Talago, Parish Administrator at St. Luke's Lutheran Church at **610-434-3943** or email LETalago@StLukesLuth.org. Thank you to all who help contribute things!!

Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk News

Inspiring CROP Hunger Walk photos and report from St. John's Lutheran Church-Emmaus!

Faith Drescher, CROP Hunger Walk recruiter for St. John's Lutheran Church-Emmaus, submitted the inspiring report below, along with 2 great photos (attached) that Pastor Jeff Carstens took of their congregation's CROP Hunger Walk

crew that walked on Sunday, Oct. 2, 2022, during the Sunday School hour:

The rains from Hurricane Ian held off; and Pastor Jeff led our CROP Hunger Walk up and down Main Street, Emmaus, from St. John's to 2nd St., around the Triangle to 6th Street, and back to church with our signs made the week before after a combined Sunday School/confirmation hunger awareness activity. We hope our presence raised awareness of food insecurity and the need to help end hunger. Parents, kids, confirmands, and congregants joined together – 40 in all. (The photos captured almost everyone, but I guess we did not squeeze together enough because some were missed.)

Following the CROP Hunger Walk, Pastor Jeff and I spent a few minutes with the confirmands debriefing the experience. And that afternoon I dropped off at St. Timothy Lutheran Church the food that we collected for Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank.

A few weeks prior to Oct. 2, I had the opportunity to promote the walk from the lectern. We also had 2 fellowship opportunities to approach congregants, and any students attending worship were recognized as walkers. In addition, there were 3 donation containers in strategic spots throughout the church, as well as posters advertising the event.

Thank you, St. John's Lutheran Church-Emmaus, for your life-giving ministry and for sharing some great ideas about how to increase awareness and enthusiasm for the CROP Hunger Walk and the AAE Food Bank to help our food insecure neighbors near and far!

Do you or your congregation/group have **CROP PHOTOS, VIDEOS, EXPERIENCES**, or **IDEAS** to share? Please **POST THEM** on social media and **SEND THEM** to karehad@gmail.com to include in our CROP follow-up emails to congregations and other CROP supporters!

Also, there's still time to **GIVE ONLINE** at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa>

Alternatively, **CHECKS FOR "CWS/CROP"** may be given to congregation/group leaders for delivery ASAP to Linda Held, Allentown CROP Hunger Walk Treasurer, 3441 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA 18103.

Compounded by COVID-19 and its variants, as well as the war in Ukraine, hunger and malnutrition are life-threatening problems in our community, nation, and world.
THANK YOU for making a difference and helping our neighbors in need!

Dear Lehigh Mission District,

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us...”
John 1.14

Ding! “I have a question for you in regards to my linguistic class. What do you think of the Bible verse in Genesis 11.9?”

That text came from my son in college.

The Genesis text in question reads, “Therefore it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.”

The Babel story can be picked up from Genesis 11.1-9. Basically, the people on all the earth spoke one language. They wanted to make a name for themselves. So, they decided to build a tower to reach the heavens. God did not like their plan and confused their language.

Ding! “I am talking about the implications this statement has with language being a divine source rather than a physically learned trait of the human race.”

He is a preacher’s kid. You gotta love him.

Certainly, the Babel story can be viewed from both an origin of multiple languages and an evolutionary process of language by the human race.

My son’s points of view enlightened me to take a look at how we Christians use language in worship. (In another article we can discuss the social, political, and theological ramifications of language.)

Take, for example, after each biblical reading, we conclude with the phrase The word of the Lord. Then again, after the reading of the Gospel, we conclude The Gospel of the Lord. Another liturgical church respond during worship is Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

In Scripture from John’s Gospel we read, “And the word became flesh and lived among us.” Jn. 1.14. Here is an evolutionarily human process that echoes a divine source in the language.

God’s language found in God’s Word, Jesus. The Word that became flesh. This divine source forms part of the written language and embodies the essence of God’s presences in the world.

Through Advent to Christmas Seasons, we seek Love. Joy. Hope. Peace. These words echo the divine. In these words, are the embodiment of The Word that became flesh.

Jesus as the embodiment of God is the divine source of the word of God. The Emmanuel, God is with us. Matthew 1.23

Feliz Navidad,

The Rev. Nelson Quiñones,
Lehigh Mission District Dean

OPERATION SUNSHINE

1933 Hanover Ave.

Allentown, PA 18109

Phone: 610-435-9155

Open: Mon 11-3 and Wed. 11-3

E-mail: LMDopsunshine@aol.com

Web site: www.LMDopsunshine.com

Paula & Dick Skelly Co-Trip Coordinators

Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers.

2023 Trips coming January 2023. They are in the Works!

