



ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

201 E. JUNIATA STREET, ALLENTOWN, PA 18103

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Hospital Code - #300 Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon

God's People: Believing, Caring, Loving, and Serving

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER



FAITH OR HOPE?

That five letter word that starts with an "F" _____ !

How often are you reminded of it on any given Sunday? The adults can usually get it right away. The younger folks have to wait sometimes to hear the adults say it out loud and then at another time they are happy - - even excited to shout it out along with everyone else.

What does faith mean? Webster says: 1. Belief without evidence. 2. Confidence; trust. 3. (in good faith: Honesty) This is a very powerful way to operate in any institution.

- Recently a submarine sank to the bottom of the ocean with those on board, including the designer, with the faith that the construction was safe and they would return to the top at the end of the mission. Faith or hope?
- Recently a rocket was sent to space with the intention of capturing the booster to be used again for another shot. Instead, it misfired. Faith or hope?
- We put off that nagging ache we have for months until it becomes a year or so and finally go to the Dr. After test after test, we are informed it is a serious condition that could have been caught sooner. Faith or hope?

What does Hope mean? **verb:** 1. To have desire with expectation of fulfilment. 2. To wish or to want for **noun** 1. Desire accompanied by expectation 2. The desire or cause of such desire 3. The thing hoped for

- I hope I can get that fast, red car this year.
- You mentioned you want to move to a nicer place in a few months.
- That promotion should be coming soon....

You have heard me ask who is going to heaven? I usually hear a quiet sound that says, "I hope so." from those who did not put up their hands. Are you in the verb or noun category of HOPE?

Let's go back to elementary school for a minute. A noun is a person, place or thing. A verb is an action. My question? Can you have HOPE in heaven without FAITH?

Belief without evidence ← ○ → To have desire **with** expectation of fulfilment

Here is your answer as to why you are going to heaven, folks! Our faith and hope depend on each other. It's a circle..

Because we have (**FAITH**): belief without evidence, we can have (**HOPE**): desire with expectation of fulfilment!

Because we have (**HOPE**): desire with expectation of fulfilment, we have (**FAITH**): belief without evidence
My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus and His blessedness.

Come into the New Year with the expectation of what God has in store for you and the desire to embrace it sight unseen.

HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Pastor Ginny

*"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."
Philippians 4: 13 (NRSV)*

Faith·Hope·Love



A message from your Council President.

As we step into this new year, let us take a moment to reflect on the goodness of God and the journey He has brought us through. The turning of the calendar is a reminder of His faithfulness, His mercies that are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23), and the fresh opportunities He gives us to grow in Him.

The new year is often a time for resolutions and new beginnings. While it is good to set personal goals, let us also commit to deepening our walk with the Lord. This year, let us make time for prayer, immerse ourselves in the Word, and prioritize fellowship with one another. As a church, we are called not only to grow spiritually but also to serve our community and share the hope of Christ with those around us. Isaiah 43:19 says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" As we embrace this new season, let us look with expectation for the "new things" God is preparing for us—both individually and as a congregation. Challenges may come, but we can move forward in faith, knowing that He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion (Philippians 1:6).

May this year be marked by love, unity, and the joy of walking together as the body of Christ. Let us encourage one another, build each other up, and strive to be the light of Christ in our world.

From our church family to yours, may your new year be filled with God's peace, His abundant blessings, and His guiding presence. Together, let's make 2025 a year of growth, service, and unwavering faith in the One who holds our future.

Blessings in Christ,
Thomas F. Rieger
Council President

In the event of cancellation of Sunday School and our worship service due to inclement weather, please tune into WFMZ TV Channel 69, visit wfmz.com, check the St. Mark Facebook page or website.



Thank You to everyone who shared their talents with us on Christmas Eve in the Prelude of Music and the St. Mark Choir.

Thank You to everyone who volunteered to read, light candles and usher on Christmas Eve.

Thank You to parish Life for the wonderful Social after the Christmas Eve service. It was very nice to sit and talk to those who came up after the service.

Christmas Candle Poles will come down December 29th after the service. *Volunteers are needed to help with the take down.*

Sunday, January 5th All council members will be installed during the 10:00am service.

Reminder: The church office will be closed Wednesday, January 1st and Monday, January 20th in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

Pressure Cuff Ministry is on hold for now while our nurse Elisabeth is away visiting with her Family. It will begin again when she returns.



NOTICE: All 2024 Committee Reports for the Congregational Meeting are due in the office by Friday, January 17th, 2025.

The annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 16th immediately following the worship service.

Have some time to volunteer? Perhaps some time during the day? The St. Mark Cemetery Association has some opportunities that may be just the right fit for you and your schedule. Interested? Would you like to hear more? Please call the St. Mark Cemetery at 610-797-4221 or call the church office at 610-797-6440.



The Open Door Food Pantry

The end of the year is almost here, and I would like to thank everyone that helped in any way with the success of the Open Door! We again had a very busy year but were able to help our neighbors in need. In the month of November, we served 80 households which consisted of 175 adults, 94 children and 51 elderly patrons. That is a total of 320 people that we assisted with their basic needs.

For the month of January our requested donations are hot cereal/oatmeal and pop-tarts. As always, all donations (food/monetary) are greatly appreciated. Every item donated goes directly to someone in our neighborhood.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!!

Sandy



WHEN PRAYERS GO UP,
BLESSINGS COME DOWN.

St. Mark Adventurer's

Thank You to the 20 people who went to see White Christmas at the Pines Dinner Theater which was held at Christ Lutheran Church. I hope everyone enjoyed their meal and show.

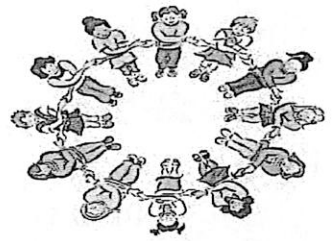
Hopefully the next time we plan on going to Pines Dinner theater they will be at their new location.

Happy New Year and Blessings to all.

Pat Golley

Sharing Life

Happenings From the Month of December...



Crafts were led by Terri Harkins. Individuals made Christmas Ornaments to decorate or give as gifts. Knitting and Crocheting continues with individuals crocheting scarfs and hats that were taken to the Warming Shelter.

Our Christmas Celebration was catered by Fourtunato's Catering and paid for by Advocacy Alliance. (a company based in Scranton that supports wellness and recovery in individuals with various diagnosis) they attended one of our events in the fall and were impressed at the amount of people we reach and wanted to do something to support our mission. At this event Santa Brian handed out 125 filled Christmas stockings. While we sang Christmas songs led by John Harkins. Special thanks to John Harkins for providing music, Rick Krasley for keeping the kitchen moving, Sandy Dillaway for keeping us organized with the stockings and all the wonderful selfless volunteers that make this event happen each month. This is our largest event of the year and takes a lot of planning and time.

With all the donations we received we were able to fill stockings for two local Crisis Residents and the 40 men at Victory House.

Looking ahead:

Our craft / knitting and Crocheting will be Jan 8 2025 since the first wed. of Jan is New Year's Day .

Blessings for a Happy and Healthy New Year,
Sue Krasley and the Sharing Life committee.



The Youth:

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



IF YOU BRING THEM, THEY WILL BUILD IT!! Cans that is!! CANS, CANS AND MORE CANS!!

Now until Sunday, February 2nd the youth will be collecting canned food items of all kinds, shapes and sizes. As the cans come in, watch as the Sunday school teachers and the kids begin building. All the cans collected will go to our very own food pantry. You will find a box in the coat room to collect the cans as they come in, the building will begin!!

A good time was had by all caroling to our homebound and ill parishioners. 7 houses were visited, and mini poinsettia's given along with wonderful songs.



January

BIRTHDAYS!!!

We want to wish you a Very, Blessed Happy Birthday!!

Sandra Biery – January 2
George Trively – January 10
Doris Keck – January 15
Leonard E. Wieder – January 20
Rose Marie Fenstermacher – January 24
Nancy Dotter – January 31
Sally Miller – January 31

Share your birthday with us, please call the church office. We would love to see you on our birthday list.

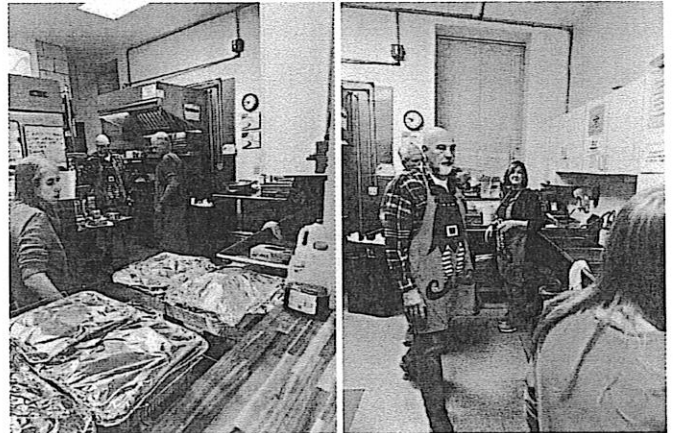


It is with Christian Sympathy we announce the passing of Linda Miller. Linda passed on Tuesday, December 24th. Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers in the weeks ahead.

Christmas Breakfast was cooked and served to the men at Victory House. Followed by Christmas Carols and handing out filled Christmas Stockings.

Thanks to Kathy and Bill Walker, Debbie Green and Rick Krasley for being at the shelter at 5 am to cook.

Victory House supports many veterans as well other individuals. St Mark has been spending Christmas morning at Victory House for over 20 years. This is an amazing organization that gives so much to its members.



fala la la 

NOAH SIGHT & SOUND BUS TRIP!

Saturday, August 2nd, 2025

St. Mark is going to see Noah!!

The bus will pick us up at the church, we will then proceed to lunch at Miller's Smorgasbord, and then onto the show at Sight and Sound Theater. All are welcome invited family, friends. And neighbors. We will play games on the bus, and snacks will be provided. We promise Fun!! We are very excited, we have over 20 reservations!! Get your name on the list before they are gone!! Any questions see Terri Harkins or Linda Gier.

Thank You!

Thank You, to the St. Mark congregation and council for the Christmas cards, and gifts
May God bless you all in this New Year!

John and Terri Harkins



We are streaming "LIVE" during the service via Facebook each Sunday.

You can access the service on Facebook, user or not, at the following web address: www.facebook.com/stmarkallentown
Please be patient while the page loads.

Masks are optional while inside the building.
Masks are available at the entrance.

Altar Guild, Lectors, Ushers, Acolytes and videographers are asked to perform their duties each Sunday. Please find a replacement and notify the church office if you cannot join us on your scheduled Sunday.

January 5th, 2025 – Second Sunday of Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 12th, 2025– Baptism of Our Lord

Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 19th, 2025 – Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

January 26th, 2025 – Third Sunday after Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

February 2nd, 2025 – Presentation of Our Lord

Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 84
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Friday, January 24th is the deadline for the church office to receive all Newsletter Information for February.



2025 Council Members **and Financial Officers**

Council/Financial Officers:

Tom Rieger - President
Dan Christman - Vice President
Linda Raad - Secretary
Roxann Rieger - Treasurer
Anita Vandergrift - Financial Secretary

Council Members:

Cindy Arnold
Sandy Biery
Pat Golley
Carol Hartigan
Gloria Hottenstein
Rick Krasley
DJ Landis
Bill Walker
Josephine Wieder

Welcome NEW MEMBERS and as we turn the page to a new year, may God guide you in keeping St. Mark strong and help you with any obstacles that may come your way. Know that God's love, peace, hope and joy will be with you always.

ST MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024
(Subject to Audit)

	MONTH OF NOVEMBER	11TH MONTH BUDGET	11TH MONTH ACTUAL 2024	11TH MONTH ACTUAL 2023
BUDGETED CURRENT INCOME	\$10,333.74	\$67,921.00	\$93,663.11	\$84,857.08
BENEVOLENCE	\$670.00	\$2,970.00	\$2,927.80	\$2,190.00
TOTAL BUDGETED INCOME	\$11,003.74	\$70,891.00	\$96,590.91	\$87,047.08
NON-BUDGETED INCOME	\$3,488.00	\$0.00	\$40,940.65	\$57,765.78
TOTAL INCOME	\$14,491.74	\$70,891.00	\$137,531.56	\$144,812.86
BUDGETED CURRENT EXPENSES	\$10,168.43	\$205,027.83	\$126,572.84	\$131,460.53
BENEVOLENCE	\$1,052.50	\$2,969.50	\$5,033.30	\$4,017.50
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES	\$11,220.93	\$207,997.33	\$131,606.14	\$135,478.03
NON-BUDGETED EXPENSES	\$1,965.00	\$0.00	\$15,151.07	\$11,203.61
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$13,185.93	\$207,997.33	\$146,757.21	\$146,681.64
MONTHLY ACTIVITY SUMMARY	BALANCE 11/1/2024	RECEIPTS	EXPENSES	BALANCE 11/30/2024
CURRENT OPERATING FUND - TRUIST	(\$2,291.42)	\$14,491.74	\$13,185.93	(\$985.61) +
QUAINT OAK BANK	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL OPERATING FUND	(\$2,291.42)	\$14,491.74	\$13,185.93	(\$985.61)

NORTHEASTERN PA SYNOD	PROCEEDS	INTEREST	PAYMENTS	LOAN BALANCE
SYNOD LOAN	2% for 7 yrs	\$260.75 FINAL	(\$730.99)	\$0.00

	STARTING BALANCE	RECEIPTS	EXPENSES	ENDING BALANCE
BENEVOLENCE	(\$1,423.00)	\$670.00	\$1,052.50	(\$1,805.50)
ADVENTURER'S	\$158.67	\$1,400.00	\$1,370.00	\$188.67 +
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	\$34,954.76	\$705.00	\$1,172.50	\$34,487.26 +
COUNCIL FELLOWSHIP FUND	\$120.66	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$120.66 +
DISCRE PASTOR'S FD	\$445.89	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$445.89 +
FUND RAISER	\$421.00	\$0.00	\$421.00	\$0.00 +
INSTRUMENTAL/GUEST MUSICIANS	\$232.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$232.00 +
EASTER FLOWERS- POINSETTIAS-GERANIUMS	\$259.00	\$510.00	\$0.00	\$769.00 +
LYF FUND	\$7,340.39	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,340.39 +
MEMORIAL FUND	\$8,590.00	\$190.00	\$0.00	\$8,780.00 +
LAWN MINISTRY	\$936.84	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$936.84 +
OPEN DOOR - EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY	\$4,705.58	\$125.00	\$50.45	\$4,780.13 +
SHARING LIFE MINISTRY	\$5,593.64	\$0.00	\$237.37	\$5,356.27 +
SPECIAL REQUEST FUND	\$0.00	\$20.00	\$0.00	\$20.00 +
TECHNOLOGY FUND	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 +

RESTRICTED FUNDS:

TRF FRM CUR - BENEVOLENCE	(\$1,805.50)
BENEVOLENCE:	
NEPS	\$0.00
ON EAGLES WINGS	\$0.00
BLANKET	\$0.00
HUNGER	\$0.00
DISASTER/RELIEFS	\$0.00
SOCIAL MINISTRY	\$0.00
OTHER	Water for Life \$0.00
TOTAL BENEVOLENCE:	\$0.00

ASSETS:

SPECIAL ASSETS:	
MUTUAL FUND-VANGUARD #27 - Sep 2024	\$3,999.28
MORGAN STANLEY November 30, 2024	\$36,191.63
MORGAN STANLEY November 30, 2024	\$2,390.32

SALE OF STOCK PENDING
INVESTMENT RESERVES - CONTRIBUTIONS

Current:	
Benevolence:	\$ -
Property:	\$ -
Other:	\$ -

ADVENTURER'S	\$188.67 +	TOTAL OF INVESTMENT RESERVES YEAR	\$ -
BEQUEST	\$0.00	SUB TOTAL SPECIAL ASSETS:	\$42,581.23
BOILER FUND	\$0.00		
CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND	\$0.00		
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	\$34,487.26 +		

LIQUID ASSETS:

COUNCIL FELLOWSHIP FUND	\$120.66 +	CHECKING ACCOUNT-TRUIST	(\$985.61)
DISCRE PSTR'S FD	\$445.89 +	CHECKING ACCOUNT-QUAINT OAK BANK	\$0.00
EASTER FLOWERS-POINSETTIAS	\$769.00 +	TOTAL CHECKING ACCOUNT:	(\$985.61) +
ENDOWMENT FUND	\$0.00		
FUND RAISER	\$0.00 +		

INSTRUMENTAL/GUEST FUND	\$232.00 +	SAVINGS ACCOUNT-TRUIST	\$262.26
LAWN MINISTRY	\$936.84 +	TOTAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT:	\$262.26
LYF FUND	\$7,340.39 +		
MEMORIAL FUND	\$8,780.00 +	VANGUARD MONEY MARKET	\$0.00

OPEN DOOR - EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY	\$4,780.13 +	TOTAL ASSETS:	\$41,857.88
ORGAN FUND	\$0.00		
PARSONAGE FUND	\$0.00	TOTAL LIABILITIES: NE SYNOD LOAN	0.00
PHONE MAINTENANCE FUND	\$0.00		
RENOVATION - ROOF & RUG	\$0.00 +		



SHARING LIFE MINISTRY	\$5,356.27 +	LESS RESTRICTED FUNDS:	\$63,457.11
SPECIAL REQUEST FUND	\$20.00 +		
TECHNOLOGY	\$0.00 +		

RESERVES: YYYY CONTRIBUTION		UNRESTRICTED ASSETS:	(\$21,599.23)
TOTAL OF RESERVES YEAR			
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS:	\$63,457.11 *		

JANUARY 2025

St. Mark Lutheran Church
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 610-797-6440 fax 610-351-6114

www.saintmarkallentown.org
 Watch us on Facebook user or not, at:
www.facebook.com/stmarkallentown
 Hospital Code: 300

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Office Closed 1  Happy New Year!	2	3	4
5 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am 2025 Council Members Installed	6 Worship/Music Meeting 6:00pm	7	8 Sharing Life Craft/Knit Day 1:00pm - 3:00pm Widows Club Luncheon 1:00pm - Perkins Choir 6:00pm	9	10	11
12 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am	13 Open Door 10:00am - 12:00pm	14	15 Sharing Life Luncheon 12:00pm - 3:00pm Council 6:00pm Choir 6:00pm	16	17	18
19 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am	20 Office Closed 	21 Open Door Food Delivery 10:30am	22 Open Door 4:00pm - 6:00pm	23	24	25
26 Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am	27	28	29	30	31	February 1

Serving Our Church January 2024

January 5 th – Second Sunday of Christmas 9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion	Ushers:	Council on Duty:
Assistant: Linda Kline	LuAnn Bresnak Carol Hartigan	Josephine Wieder
Altar Guild: Roxann Rieger and Edie Lindenmuth	Linda Kline Sue Krasley Josephine Wieder	Videographer: Tom Rieger
		Acolyte: Raiden Thakrar
January 12 th – Baptism of Our Lord 9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion	Ushers:	Council on Duty:
Assistant: Brenda Mann-Orben	LuAnn Bresnak Carol Hartigan	Tom Rieger
Altar Guild: Roxann Rieger and Edie Lindenmuth	Linda Kline Sue Krasley Josephine Wieder	Videographer: Terri Harkins
		Acolyte: Zachary Walker
January 19 th – Second Sunday after Epiphany 9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion	Ushers:	Council on Duty:
Assistant: Carol Hartigan	Tom Rieger Roxann Rieger Brenda Covely	Rick Krasley
Altar Guild: Sue Krasley, Makayla Krasley and Josephine Wieder	Kathy Walker Zachary Walker	Videographer: Kathy Walker
		Acolyte: Patrick Merkle

January 26 th – Third Sunday after Epiphany 9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion	Ushers:	Council on Duty:
Assistant: Tammy Walbert	Tom Rieger Roxann Rieger Brenda Covely	DJ Landis
Altar Guild: Sue Krasley, Makayla Krasley and Josephine Wieder	Kathy Walker Zachary Walker	Videographer: Dan Christman
		Acolyte: DJ Landis
February 2 nd – Presentation of Our Lord 9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Lector/Communion	Ushers:	Council on Duty:
Assistant: Linda Kline	Doris Brezan Tammy Walbert	Bill Walker
Altar Guild: Terri Harkins and Linda Gier	Linda Gier Terri Harkins	Videographer: Tom Rieger
		Acolyte: DJ Landis



NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Gaining Strength Together: The Journey of NEPA Synod Cohorts

Following the Bishop's Conference in the fall of 2021 with Rev. Doug Hill (author of "Cultural Architecture"), the Synod launched its first Gaining Strength Cohort. This cohort, while initially similar to the cohorts happening across the country in the ELCA, turned out to be quite different. This cohort was comprised entirely of pastors from the NEPA Synod instead of pastors around the country. This gave the cohort the opportunity to develop deeper relationships that could continue to be supported and built up over time and in a mutual context.



While this 1st cohort was finishing in October 2023, a 2nd cohort was launched. The 2nd cohort was the first cohort to include Deacons as well as Pastors. A 3rd cohort was launched in April 2024. While each cohort has its own character based on the individual participants, there are some key similarities. Cohorts meet for a period of 18 months. They have 4 in-person retreats (fall and spring) with Zoom check-in meetings in between the retreats. Each cohort has about 10-14 Rostered Ministers in it.

They work through many of the key principles of "Cultural Architecture" with Pastor Doug facilitating the retreats. Additionally, they discuss the Enneagram, Clifton's Strength Finders, organizational intelligence, cultural transformation, and the state of the church at present. More than that, the retreats provide intentional time to connect with one another and with God. Each day centers on Scripture and provides time for contemplative action. How can we lead congregations if we are not taking the time to practice waiting on and listening to God ourselves?

A few of the current cohort members shared their gratefulness to have time to think about shared values, contemplative action, and their own God-given strengths. Pr. Inge Williams was "also grateful to do some deeper reflection on who I am, as a child of God, knowing that we glorify God by living into our individual gifts and strengths rather than spending energy trying to 'fix' ourselves."

Pr. Samantha Drennan shared three key take-aways she has experienced through the Gaining Strength cohort:

- 1) Seek to maximize strengths rather than focus on shortcomings - since I have begun to do this, I have experienced significant positive changes in my call as well as in my life in general.
- 2) Embrace contemplative action - as we make decisions for ourselves or for our faith communities, we must integrate contemplation and action. Before acting, make time to discern what the Spirit is already doing in, through, and around us.
- 3) Surrendering all outcomes to God - easier said than done sometimes! And, a vital component of the process.

The Synod is grateful that these Rostered Ministers have embraced this opportunity, are willing to be present with one another, and are being bold in leaning into the Spirit in their own lives and places of ministry.

There has been so much interest in participating in these Gaining Strength cohorts that the Synod anticipates launching another 1-2 cohorts in 2025. One of the hopes is that one of the cohorts will bring together congregations who have multiple Rostered Ministers on staff so that they can participate simultaneously. If you are interested in joining one of the upcoming Gaining Strength cohorts, please reach out to DEM Dcn. Kat Tigerman at kat@nepsynod.org.

Submitted by: Deacon Kat Tigerman, NEPA Synod Director of Evangelical Mission

DID YOU KNOW that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's directions of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the values of Loving, Healing, and Engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit godslove.org/missionsupport.

JAN 20, 2025

MARTIN

LUTHER KING JR.

DAY OF PRAYER AND
SERVICE

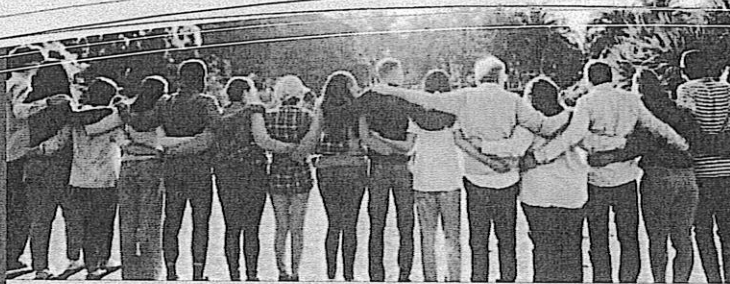
Starting at 10:00am with worship followed by opportunities to participate in various service projects, and conclude with lunch together.

2354 GROVE ROAD ALLENTOWN, PA

For more information, visit:
godslove.org/MLKday



If you are off that day and would like to help at this event, please register to ensure we have an accurate headcount for lunch.



*February 2025 LMD NL news
will be due January 13, 2025.*

*Please email any information to
lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com*

REMINDERS to the Lehigh Mission District Rostered Leaders

*Please keep the following
dates on your calendars:*

January 8, 2025 - Insights
from the Allentown
Collaborative
Group Presentation

February 12, 2025 - State of
Lutheran Social Ministries
The Rev. Dr. Woody Maxon

March 12, 2025 - Topic: Calls
to Ministries
The Rev. Jira Albers, Licensed
Lay Ministry Director

April 9, 2025 - State of
the Synod
Bishop Christopher deForest

May 4, 2025 - LMD Spring
Assembly at 4:00 P.M.
Lutheran Center, Allentown

May 30-31, 2025 - Synod
Assembly "Connect the Dots!"
Christ Hamilton United
Lutheran Church
(419 Bossardsville Road,
Stroudsburg, PA)

June, July, August - OFF

*Event updates will be made
available at meetings and
here, in the LMD Newsletter.*



From our Living Room to a Public Faith

Dear Lehigh Mission District,

Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." *John 13:34-35*

The concerns brought to the December Rostered Ministers' Monthly Zoom Meeting with Bishop Christopher deForest of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod were stressful.

Why were these ministers stressed out and concerned? Because of the possible effects of the recent election.

The tense conversation crept through my zoom screen and into my living room.

People talked about the prospect of mass deportation with the separation of immigrant families and how this will affect the church. Ministers expressed concerns for the emotional mental health for sexual abuse survivors. Others expressed concerns about affordable healthcare.

Our Lutheran churches in the mission district have two positions to take. The first is to do what the church does best in these tense moments and pray. For some, prayers help numb the decisions that led to this outcome. As people of prayer, the second position is for the church to come out of the privacy of our living room and into the public arena.

Jesus calls the church to love their neighbor.

To this end, Bishop deForest presented Eleven Points shared in consultation with other bishops:

- Stay grounded; rest is resistance
- Connect to local networks for bystander training, rapid response, sanctuary
- Reach out to vulnerable populations/members and let them know that they are not alone
- Form networks of solidarity for action
- Help families that anticipate separation (undocumented parents with citizen children) make a plan
- Connect with others throughout the synod
- Activate community organizing networks

(continued on the next page ⇒)

St. John's Lutheran Church

(501 Chestnut Street, Emmaus)

A German Christmas Service

January 5, 2025 at 5:45 PM

A service spoken and sung in German. Guest musicians: Ted & Sarajane Williams on classical guitar and harp.

A German cookie and coffee fellowship to follow.

See the attached flyer for details.

Trinity Memorial Church invites you:

(535 W. Emaus Ave, Allentown)

CLOTHING CLOSET

1st & 3rd Saturday

Hours: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

PANERA BREAD GIVE AWAY

Pick up on Mondays at 10 AM

Questions? Call the church office at 610-797-4774 or email tmfadm@gmail.com

OPERATION SUNSHINE

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

1933 Hanover Ave.
Allentown, PA 18109

Open: Monday 11-3 and
Wednesday 11-3

Phone: 610-435-9155
Email: LMDopsunshine@aol.com
www.LMDopsunshine.com

Paula & Dick Skelly,
Co-Trip Coordinators

Dear Travelers,
Hope this message finds you all well and happy. We are sending you an early Christmas present - our Operation Sunshine Newsletter January through June 2025 (see attached). We look forward to a new season of traveling with you.

Have a wonderful holiday season and we'll see you in the new year.

~Paula & Dick

(continued from previous page)

- Make sure that we are not funding the deportation apparatus and that our investments/retirement/endowments are screened for GeoCorp and other private prison corporations that are ramping up
- Share broadly with others helpful authors, books, essays (Bonhoeffer, etc.)
- Resist Christian nationalism at every level of our church
- Focus on discipleship

In addition, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's website provides a "Supportive Spaces" group that is a confidential support group for faith leaders to engage in conversation in these transitional times.

It is my hope that we can join together in our public faith for our neighbors in the mission district.

The peace of the Lord be with you,

The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, Lehigh Mission District Dean



Lehigh Mission District Christmas InGathering:

Wishing you a Most Blessed Christmas and Healthy New Year!

Thank you for all your support with the Annual Christmas InGathering. It is a blessing to serve and help many people, God's work in action. We are grateful for St. John's Lutheran Church for sponsoring us.

Thanks for Making a Difference for Neighbors in Need!

THANK YOU to all the faithful walkers, community leaders, support crew, sponsors and other donors who participated in the Sunday, October 13, 2024, 45th Annual Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk!

You have raised **OVER \$30,000** to help our food-insecure neighbors in the Allentown area and beyond!

As a result of your generosity, the **LEHIGH CHURCHES' CONFERENCE KITCHEN** and the **ALLENTOWN AREA ECUMENICAL FOOD BANK** will be receiving more than \$3700 each for their vital ministries with neighbors experiencing food insecurity in our area. And **CHURCH WORLD SERVICE** will be able to help many more of our neighbors who are struggling in the aftermath of floods, fires, droughts, and other disasters throughout the United States and the world.

CONGREGATIONS/GROUPS: So that we can celebrate more precise YTD totals, please send your CROP gifts ASAP to Linda Held, Allentown CROP Hunger Walk Treasurer, 3441 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA 18103.

If you or your congregation/group took any **CROP Hunger Walk PHOTOS or VIDEOS**, please **POST THEM** on social media and **SEND THEM** to karehad@gmail.com to include in our follow-up emails to congregations and supporters!

CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAY, or ANNIVERSARY GIFT IDEA:
In honor of loved ones, give the gift of life! **DONATE ANYTIME** to the CROP Hunger Walk at www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa

Alternatively, **CHECKS FOR "CWS/CROP"** may be given through your congregation/group or sent directly to Linda Held, Allentown CROP Hunger Walk Treasurer, 3441 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA 18103.



OPERATION SUNSHINE



1987 2022

Dick & Paula Skelly, Co-Trip Coordinators
1933 Hanover Avenue
Allentown, PA 18109
610-435-9155
Day of Trip Emergency # 610-417-3286



OPERATION SUNSHINE

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

Please join us and invite your friends as we enjoy a variety of venues together.

2025 JAN TO JUNE NEWSLETTER

DAY TRIP CANCELLATION POLICY:

1. If you cancel your reservation prior to the Payment Deadline – Full Refund
2. If you cancel your reservation after the Payment Deadline, but provide a paying replacement traveler - Full Refund
3. If you cancel your reservation after the Payment Deadline, but cancellation is due to a hospitalization – Full Refund
4. If you cancel your reservation after the Payment Deadline and none of the above can be applied – 50% Refund

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1. Website – www.LMDopsunshine.com – Read about all the upcoming trips, register for trips on-line, contact us
2. Office Phone – 610-435-9155 – Register for trips, Call with questions. Office hours are Mon and Wed. 11 AM to 3 PM. You may leave a message and someone will get back to you.
3. E-Mail Address – LMDopsunshine@aol.com – Questions, Make a reservation, Update your personal information
4. Follow up any reservation with a check made payable to Operation Sunshine and mail to the office by the deadline at:

Operation Sunshine
1933 Hanover Ave.
Allentown, PA 18109

5. When making a reservation, please be sure to include your name and phone number (**Cell Phone Preferred**) and the names of your traveling companions so we can be sure to seat you together. Also, include your meal choice should one be required.

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DAY TRIPS

Mar. 5, 2025 (Wed) – Fulton Theatre – JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

High voltage!

A timeless work, the edgy rock opera is set against the backdrop of an extraordinary and universally known series of events but seen, unusually, through the eyes of Judas Iscariot. Music by Andrew Lloyd Weber. Family-style luncheon at Huckleberry's inside the Fulton Steamboat Inn.

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 10:00 AM – Return approx. 6:00 PM

Cost \$130 Payment Deadline: Thurs. Jan. 30

April 2, 2025 (Wed.) – Bristol Riverside Theatre – IN THE HEIGHTS

Winner of the 2008 Tony Award for Best Musical, *In the Heights* tells the story of a vibrant community in New York's Washington Heights neighborhood – a place where the coffee from the corner bodega is light and sweet, the windows are always open, and the breeze carries the rhythm of three generations of music. From the creator of *Hamilton*, this hip musical will win you over with its sweet story and hot tunes. Music by Lin-Manuel Miranda. Lunch at Georgine's. Please choose from the following :

PRIME RIB AU JUS; GRILLED NORWEGIAN SALMON FILET; CHICKEN PARMESAN; BONELESS STUFFED CAPON (CHICKEN)

****Please notify the office of your entrée choice at time of booking.****

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 10 AM – Return approx. 5:45 PM

Cost \$130 Payment Deadline: Thurs. Mar. 6

April 23, 2025 (Wed.)-Dutch Apple – FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

A Tony Award-winning musical. Set in a small Russian village, Tevye, his wife Golde, and their five daughters are led through the wonders of life and have their faith tested. This timeless score includes "If I Were a Rich Man," "Tradition," "Matchmaker, Matchmaker," "To Life (L'Chaim)," and "Sunrise, Sunset." Enjoy the delicious Dutch Apple buffet lunch and outstanding dessert bar before the show.

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 10:00 AM – Return approx.. 5:30 PM

Cost \$120 Payment Deadline: Thurs., Mar. 27

May 20, 2025 (Tues) – Penn's Peak – SIMON & GARFUNKEL TRIBUTE

1981: THE CONCERT is a stunning recreation of Simon & Garfunkel's 1981 Concert in Central Park that was attended by over 500,000 people, but most of us didn't have the opportunity to attend this iconic show. This tribute recreates this awe-inspiring concert with attention to every detail. This upbeat 90-minute show will take you back in time to Friday, September 19, 1981...that cool September night in New York City when Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel reunited for the concert of a lifetime. Mrs. Robinson, Homeward Bound, Bridge Over Troubled Water, The Boxer, Scarborough Fair, The Sound of Silence...these are just a few of the featured songs that have made Simon & Garfunkel one of the most successful artists of all time. Each Luncheon Show Package comes complete with a delicious family style hot meal including Penn's Peak signature Pot Roast.

Bus Leaves St. Timothy's at 10:15 AM – Return approx. 4:00 PM

Cost \$100 Payment Deadline: Thurs. Apr 17, 2025

June 17, 2025 (Tues.) – Sight & Sound – NOAH

All aboard the ark! With a catastrophic storm on its way, Noah is given a monumental task: build a boat big enough to save his family from a flood that will cover the entire earth. As Noah endeavours to live faithfully in the midst of an increasingly chaotic world, can he trust that God's promises run deeper than the rising waters around him?

Returning for one season only, this landmark production takes you on board one of the world's best-known voyages as live animals fill the stage and aisles. Set sail inside the enormous ark as this extraordinary story comes to life in this special 30th anniversary season! Smorgasbord Lunch at the "New" Hershey Farm Restaurant prior to the show.

Bus Leaves St. Timothy's at 10:45 AM – Return approx. 7:00 PM

Cost \$155 Payment Deadline: Mon. May 5, 2025

****MULTI-DAY TRIPS****

35 Travelers Minimum All Multi-Day Trips

****TRIP INSURANCE AVAILABLE AND SUGGESTED FOR ALL MULTI-DAY TRIPS****

THE GRAND CANYON OF PENNSYLVANIA, WILLIAMSPORT, PA – May 21 – May 23, 2025 (3 Days-2 Nights)

Includes Susquehanna River Cruise, Thomas T. Taber Museum with Model Train Collection, Horse-drawn Covered Wagon Tour of the Upper Gorge, Dinner at the Historic Victorian Mansion (Williamsport) and Dinner in the Quaint Historic Carriage House (Wellsboro) Guided tour of Millionaires Row (Williamsport). (Meals Included – 2 Breakfasts, 1 Box Lunch, 2 Dinners)

\$550 PP BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

\$700 BASED ON SINGLE OCCUPANCY

A \$100 PER PERSON IS DUE AT TIME OF BOOKING

FINAL PAYMENT DUE MARCH 13, 2025

For a flyer with the full itinerary and trip insurance information, please contact the office at 610-435-9155.

VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE – THE HILLS ARE ALIVE – Aug 22 – Aug 26, 2025 (5 DAYS-4 NIGHTS)

Includes Luncheon at the Trapp Family Lodge, Dinner aboard the Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad, Tour of Ben and Jerry's, Tour of Cabot Cheese, Cruise on Squam Lake, Loon Mountain Gondola Ride, Franconia Notch Visitor Center, and Much More! (4 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches, 3 Dinners, 2 Welcome Receptions – one in Vermont, one in New Hampshire).

\$1200 PP BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

\$1450 BASED ON SINGLE OCCUPANCY

A \$100 PER PERSON IS DUE AT TIME OF BOOKING

FINAL PAYMENT DUE JUNE, 19 2025

For a flyer with the full itinerary and trip insurance information, please contact the office at 610-435-9155.

REGISTRATION FORM FOR MULTI-DAY TRIP

Destination: GRAND CANYON OF PA, WILLIAMSPORT

MAY 21 TO 23, 2025 (WED. TO FRI.) – 3 DAYS/2 NIGHTS

Enclosed check for \$ _____

Number of Reservations _____

Name _____

Roommate _____

Address _____

For Office Use Only

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

Church _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Total Paid \$ _____ Date _____

REGISTRATION FORM FOR MULTI-DAY TRIPDestination: VERMONT & NEW HAMPSHIRE
"THE HILLS ARE ALIVE"

AUG 22 TO 26, 2025 (FRI. TO TUE.) – 5 DAYS/4 NIGHTS

Enclosed check for \$ _____

Number of Reservations _____

Name _____

Roommate _____

Address _____

For Office Use Only

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

\$ _____ Date Rcvd. _____ Ck. # _____

Church _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Total Paid \$ _____ Date _____

REGISTRATION FORM FOR ONE (1) DAY EVENTS

Trip _____ Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone# _____

E-mail _____

Church _____

Menu Choice(s) _____

Make check payable to Operation Sunshine

REGISTRATION FORM FOR ONE (1) DAY EVENTS

Trip _____ Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone# _____

E-mail _____

Church _____

Menu Choice(s) _____

Make check payable to Operation Sunshine



A German Christmas Service

The Service Spoken and Sung in German

St. John's Lutheran Church
501 Chestnut St.
Emmaus, PA 18049

Sunday Evening,
January 5, 2025, 5:45 PM

The Service Begins with Prelude Music & Candle Lighting

Guest Musicians, The Williams Duo
Ted & Sarajane Williams on Classical Guitar & Harp

A German Cookie & Coffee Fellowship
Will Follow the Service in the Parish Hall

Everyone is Welcome!

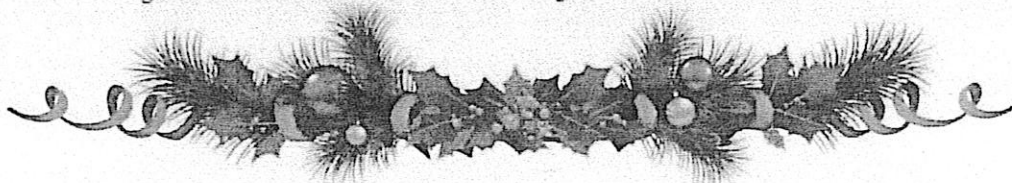
Rev. Woody Maxon, Pastor
Timothy Ginder, Organist & Director of Music Ministries



st john's is a handicap facility

*Weihnachtsgottesdienst in
deutscher Sprache*

German Christmas Service of Lessons & Carols



An interesting Article to share talks about St. Mark and the cemetery.

REGIONAL NEWS

STORIES BEHIND THE STARS

World War II's Malmedy Massacre claimed Lehigh County soldier

By Kathy Harmon

Special to The Morning Call

One of the most heinous war crimes to occur in Europe during World War II was the mass execution of American prisoners of war by the Nazis' Waffen SS troops of the 1st Panzer Division on Dec. 17, 1944. The atrocity came to be called the Malmedy Massacre after its location at crossroads near the Belgian town. Its victims mostly were from Battery B, 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. Thirty-one of the murdered POWs were from Pennsylvania. Volunteers with the nonprofit Stories Behind the Stars have written memorials honoring the sacrifice of the fallen at Malmedy from Pennsylvania. Lehigh County was home to one of the victims of the massacre: PFC Howard C. Desch. This is his story.

Howard Charles Desch was born on July 25, 1923 in Allentown, the fourth child and second son of Sadie Acker and Howard F. Desch. He had one older brother, Calvin, two older sisters, Pauline and Irene, four younger sisters, Betty, Arlene, Geraldine and Madeline, and three younger brothers, James, Robert and Thomas.

Desch's father was a machinist/auto mechanic for a garage and, later, worked for Bethlehem Steel Corp. Desch attended Allentown public schools. His family worshipped at St. Mark Lutheran Church, Allentown. Before joining the military, Desch worked for the heat treating department of Mack Manufacturing Corp. in Allentown.

Desch enlisted in the Army on Jan. 12, 1943, in Allentown and received basic training at Camp Gruber in Oklahoma. He was then stationed in Louisiana and, finally, at Fort Sill in Oklahoma before beginning his foreign service in August 1944. Desch served with Battery B of the 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion.

At 6 a.m. on Dec. 17, 1944, Battery B of the 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion departed Schevenhutte, Germany en route to the VII Corps sector to join the 7th Armored Division at the Battle of the Bulge.



NATO Supreme Allied Cmdr. for Europe U.S. Gen. James L. Jones, left, lays a wreath to commemorate the Malmedy Massacre, at which 86 U.S. prisoners were executed by German SS troops in Malmedy, Belgium. At right is PFC Howard C. Desch of Allentown, who was among those killed. **YVES LOGGHE/AP**

The battery of seven officers and 141 enlisted men was joined by five others from battalion headquarters, headquarters battery and a medical detachment for a total of 153 men. The Americans were travelling in a convoy of 30 vehicles on a main mission to identify the location of enemy artillery using sound ranging and flash spotting.

Between noon and 1 p.m., the German advance guard of the 1st SS Leibstandarte "Adolf Hitler" Division under SS Lt. Col. Joachim Peiper intercepted the American convoy at the Baugnez crossroads south of Malmedy, Belgium. There were 111 of the convoy's troops present who were outnumbered and outgunned by the Germans, forcing the Americans to surrender. The prisoners of war were taken to a nearby field, lined up in rows, and riddled by machine guns. Anyone who survived the initial shooting was shot point blank in the head.

Over a dozen escaped the initial massacre and were aided by local citizens until forced to surrender. The Germans marched the POWs to a cow pasture where they were tortured and bayoneted to death. Some initial escapees hid in a café that the Nazis set on fire. They killed every POW who attempted to flee from the burning building.

Eighty-four soldiers were massacred on Dec. 17, 1944. Of the victims, 69 were from Battery B and 15 were from other units at Baugnez.

According to historian Hugh Marshall Cole, the Malmedy Massacre was not the first execution of unarmed prisoners chargeable to Lt. Col. Peiper that day. Nineteen unarmed Americans were shot down at Honsfeld and

50 at Büllingen. By Dec. 20, Peiper's command had murdered approximately 350 American prisoners of war and at least 100 unarmed Belgian civilians, across 12 different locations along Peiper's line of march. The Malmedy Massacre was treated as a war crime and was part of the Dachau Trials of 1946.

American soldiers with the 11th Armored Division exacted revenge for the Malmedy Massacre. On Jan. 1, 1945, 80 German prisoners of war were summarily executed at Chenogne, Belgium. None of the perpetrators were ever punished.

Desch was killed in action on Dec. 17, 1944 outside of Malmedy, Belgium during a mass execution of prisoners of war by the Nazis. He was initially buried at Henri Chapelle Cemetery, Eupen, Belgium. Desch was repatriated to the United States aboard USAT Robert Burns in November 1947 and was laid to rest at St. Mark Cemetery in Allentown.

Desch posthumously received the Purple Heart. Desch's older brother was killed in action on Jan. 19, 1945 while serving with the Army in Belgium. He also was interred at St. Mark Cemetery.

Stories Behind the Stars memorials are accessible for free on the internet and via smart phone app at gravesites and cenotaphs. The nonprofit organization is dedicated to honoring all 421,000 fallen Americans from World War II, including 31,000 from Pennsylvania. To volunteer or to get more information, contact Kathy Harmon at harmon@storiesbehindthestars.org or visit www.storiesbehindthestars.org.

