

First News First

Volume 57, Issue 10

December 2023



The Light of Grace

As we prepare our hearts for the season of Christ's coming, we will be experiencing a special Advent Worship series entitled "The Light of Grace." This series is in honor of the 250th anniversary of the hymn "Amazing Grace." We celebrate that Jesus is the Light of the World who shines on us with his amazing grace. Through Scripture, song and reflections, and the lighting of the advent wreath, we are reminded that Jesus makes his grace known through the undeserved gifts of hope, peace, joy and love—gifts revealed in special ways in the lives of Zechariah, Isaiah, Elizabeth and Mary. Join us each Sunday at 10:45 a.m.

December 3 Hope: Zechariah (Psalm 39:7): In his old age, after years of waiting and not giving up hope, Zechariah is blessed with a son, John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the Light of Grace, Jesus. We will celebrate Holy Communion and have a special guest from Homeless Matters.

December 10 Peace: Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6): Isaiah announces to an unsettled people that relief is coming soon through the Prince of Peace, the Son of God, the Light of Grace. This will be the lighting of the second candle on the wreath.

December 17 Joy: Elizabeth (Philippians 4:4): The boy in Elizabeth's womb leaps for joy and so does she when Mary arrives, carrying the little Lord Jesus inside her. The Light of Grace is soon to come. We appreciate the special music of our choirs today.

December 24 10:45 a.m. Love: Mary (Isaiah 54:10): The mother of the Light of Grace sings a love song to the Lord for his undeserved favor toward her and toward all the world. We will celebrate Holy Communion at the morning worship.

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

ADVENT BEGINS ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3. With December 24 falling on Sunday, we will have a very short fourth week of advent since Christmas Eve services are also on Sunday. It is our hope that you will be able to participate in these ministries of preparation. More details can be found in other portions of the newsletter.

THE ADVENT WREATH will be lit at worship each Sunday leading up to Christmas. In our congregation we traditionally use blue candles as that is the color of hope. Our Confirmation Students will be leading this portion of our worship.



ADVENT STUDY AND PRAYER TIME This new group is forming for 3 weeks on Monday afternoons at 1:00 during Advent (December 4, 11, and 18). We will spend about 30 minutes with an advent devotion and scripture reading and then spend 30 minutes in prayer with one another. The weight of the world feels heavy right now as the pressures of life in our world, in our society, in our family, in our friendships, grow heavy. We pray for the Lord Jesus to come into our dark world and give us renewed hope. Join us in the parlor.

FIRST LUTHERAN'S CHRISTMAS PROJECT First Lutheran is collecting financial donations, personal care items, socks, blankets, and healthy snack foods along with bottles of water to help Homeless Matters. An envelope is included in this newsletter if you would like to contribute to this ministry.

CHAMBERBELLFEST You are invited to attend the ChamberBellFest at St. John UCC, 1811 East Lincoln Highway. First Lutheran Bells will be ringing in the season for us on Sunday evening, December 10. The concert begins at 7:00pm.

WELCA CHRISTMAS TEA is taking place on Thursday, December 14 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All women are invited to join us. Please bring a small gift for exchange with one another.

CANTATA A Noel Celebration created by Lloyd Larson will be presented by the Choir and musicians of First Lutheran as our main message at worship on Sunday, December 17. Our bell choir and children's choir will also be providing music. Please invite your neighbors.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH The Ladies' Breakfast Group will be having lunch together this month. We will gather together on Wednesday December 20 at Bob Evans Restaurant at noon. Contact Janet Friend for details and to reserve your seat! This lunch is open to all women.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING Join us on Sunday, December 17 following worship to have a bite to eat in the Fellowship Hall and then go Christmas Caroling to our homebound members. Please be in touch with Mary or Tim Gotwald if you would be willing to brighten people's spirits. Willingness to have fun and bring joy is much more important than musical ability.



ADVENT and CHRISTMAS cont.



POINSETTIAS FOR WORSHIP If you would like to donate a red poinsettia for Christmas worship, please turn in the enclosed form with money to the church office by Sunday, November 26.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP— will be at 7:00 on Sunday, December 24. We will have Holy Communion and Special Music as we come together to hear the story of the Birth of our Lord in a stable and light our candles while singing glorious Christmas Carols of worship and praise. We hope you will be able to join us.



CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP Join us on Christmas morning to celebrate the birth of our Savior. The time of worship is 9:30 a.m. and Holy Communion will be served. Come and praise the Lord!

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE would like to thank the congregation for returning their Anticipated Giving Cards for 2024. This helps in the planning for our 2024 budget. We would also like to thank the members for their faithful giving in 2023. We appreciate your continued support of the programs at First Lutheran Church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Because of the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year holidays, we will not be having Confirmation Class or Sunday School for children or adults on November 26, December 24, and December 31.



ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORTS from the committees and staff are due to the church office by Tuesday, January 2, 2023.



**The Church Office
will be closed
December 25 and January 1
for the Christmas and
New Year holidays.**

Rubens injured his knee in basic training.

Notes of encouragement would be appreciated.

Pastor Nicholson

ADDRESS FOR RUBENS PAUL while in the military:

E1 Paul Rubens

3rd Platoon Spartans Battle Company

4-39 IN REGT, 165th IN BDE

10550 Hampton Pkwy

Fort Jackson SC 29207



JANUARY BIBLE STUDY

The January Bible Study will be held on Thursday January 11 at 1:30 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. We will

continue our study of Max Lucado's book, He Choose the Nails, with Nancy Fricke as leader for the chapter "I Forgive You". All women of the church are welcome.



**The Women's Fellowship
Breakfast will be having a
CHRISTMAS LUNCH on**

December 20

**Bob Evans Restaurant
1131 Wayne Ave. at 12:00**



WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS TEA

All women of First Lutheran are invited to the WELCA Christmas Tea on Thursday, December 14, at 1:30 in Fellowship Hall for an afternoon of fun and fellowship. There will be singing and a silly gift exchange. Bring a friend and a small gift.

We do need a count of those able to attend so please call Janet Friend (717 360-1977) if you are able to attend. All ladies of the church are invited for lunch and fellowship

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Property Committee: 1) Equipment necessary for the sound/video system installation is being acquired. 2) Approved lining a pickleball court in fellowship hall, pending research with Strickler Insurance on acquiring liability waiver for players to sign prior to play.

Neighborhood Task Team: Team is in communication with a social worker at the high school to meet clothing needs for students in need. Little Daisies Closet will also be a source for meeting these needs. The Christmas collection this year will go to "Homeless Matters".

Administration: Gertrude Kampmeyer has resigned as chair of the Stewardship Committee and as WELCA secretary.

Deacon's Report: Handbell festival is December 10. The handbell choirs will also be performing at Menno Haven on December 18. Children's Choir will be singing December 17 & 24.

Inadvertently omitted from the October Minutes:

Social Missions Committee: Approved the distribution of the Benevolence fund \$18,000 and the Stouffer Fund \$10,000 for 2023.

NEIGHBORHOOD TASK TEAM

Sharing God's love in our community



First Lutheran's Christmas Collection Homeless Matters

Please join us in person or online at the December 3, 2023 service to hear an introduction to the **Homeless Matters** organization. Jacqui Wolfe, a board member of Homeless Matters, will share the work that they are doing in our

community. Please help our homeless neighbors through this agency by donating items on their **"Requested Items List"**: **Hygiene products**-shampoo, body wash, washcloths, toothpaste, tooth brush, deodorant, razors, tissues, sunscreen, women's hygiene products. **Snack foods**-small sizes or individual snacks size crackers, cereal bars, granola bars, cups of fruit and applesauce, dried fruit, nuts, peanut butter, tuna fish, gum, mints and nonperishable items that can be easily opened and eaten without a stove or microwave. **Bottled Water** 8-16 oz., plastic utensils, napkins, can openers **sleeping bags and small blankets**; **Socks, hats, scarves, mittens, gloves**; **First Aid Kit items**-bandaids in different sizes, antibiotic cream, alcohol swabs. **Gas/Grocery cards** from Sheetz or Walmart . Donated items can be left in Memorial Hall. You may also make a **donation by cash or check** using the envelope provided in this newsletter. Envelopes are also provided in Memorial Hall. Checks should be made payable to **Homeless Matters**.

Laundry Day October 28 we teamed up with Little Daisy's Closet, we greeted our neighbors at Spot Laundromat with a pre purchased card to wash and dry their laundry, detergent and dryer sheets, children's books, religious books for adults, bottles of water, Halloween candy, a table of food from Meals on Wheels and information about Little Daisy's and First Lutheran Church. Most of the folks who were doing their laundry that day only spoke Spanish. We were blessed to have two Spanish speakers with us, Adeline, a high school student and Rachel from Little Daisy's. Once again, we had requests for Spanish Bibles. One of our NTT members has ordered them for us to give out at the laundry. I look forward to seeing their faces light up when they see the Bibles. We received permission from the laundromat to leave children's books to read there or take home. The team will check on supplies every week. We also had the opportunity to pray with a woman who was in dire need of prayer. It is a blessing to have John McCrae teaming with us as he knows so many of the folks who come through Spot's doors when we are there. **THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS OUTREACH!** The team accepts cash/check donations and also donations of laundry detergent and dryer sheets. We will share Christian materials that you are finished with at the laundry events. You may leave these in Memorial Hall. Next scheduled Laundry Events: December 16, 2023 10-noon (candy cane day) and February 10, 2024 11-1pm (Valentine's Day) at Spot in the South Gate Mall. Stop in and visit with First and Little Daisy's volunteers or volunteer for the 2 hour event. We would love for you to join us in this special time with our neighbors.



NEIGHBORHOOD TASK TEAM

Sharing God's love in our community



The Neighborhood Task Team (NTT) will again be hanging hats, scarves and mittens/gloves on the fence in front of First for our neighbors over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend. As you are getting those items out for the season, please donate unwanted items to this outreach. We need items for men, women and children. If you see any seasonal sales, please remember this drive. There is a collection bin in Memorial Hall for your donations. Please share this information with your family, neighbors and friends. Last January our neighbors truly appreciated picking up items to keep them warm. Thank you for your generosity and concern.

SPIRITRUST



Volunteer Opportunities at SpiriTrust Lutheran, The Village at Luther Ridge

Pianists are currently needed to play once a month at the Sunday afternoon chapel service. The service begins at 2:00pm and lasts for approximately a half hour.

Volunteer opportunities are also available in our skilled care center. Come assist residents with simple crafts, bingo, and other games. Assist team members with manicures or transporting residents to and from events. Or simply come and spend time with residents by doing friendly visits.

Please contact Linda Beaver if you are interested in helping at 717.264.0737 or lbeaver@spiritrustlutheran.org



COMMUNITY

MERCERSBURG AREA COMMUNITY CHORUS & ORCHESTRA



December Concerts

Saturday, December 2 at 3:00 pm

Sunday, December 3 at 3:00 pm

Irvine Memorial Chapel
at Mercersburg Academy

Poulenc: *Gloria*

Bach: Christians, Be Joyful from *Christmas Oratorio*

Bradford: Angels We Have Heard on High

Tchaikowsky: Pas de Deux from *Nutcracker Suite*

Biebl: Ave Maria

Vaughan Williams: All Hail the Power

December Soloist —
Kara Goodrich, Soprano

www.mercersburgchorus.org



48th ANNUAL

LIVING CHRISTMAS TREE

Newburg First Church of God

260 Newburg Road, Newburg, PA

November 30/December 1, 2 at 7 p.m.

December 3 at 3:30 p.m.

Bring in the Christmas season
with beautiful lights, true story of Christmas!

Presented by Newburg area community voices.

Please call 717-423-6279 with any questions.

Memorial Lutheran Church in Shippensburg is sponsoring Corey Rotz in
“A Christmas Concert” on Sunday, December 17 at 3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary at
34 E Orange St., Shippensburg. For information please call 717-532-4614.



The local chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present a recital of Advent and Christmas music on Sunday, December 10, 2023, at 3:00 PM in the sanctuary of St. Paul United Methodist Church, 750 Norland Avenue, Chambersburg, PA. There will be no admission charge, but free will donations to the Organ Guild will be gladly accepted. All are invited to come and enjoy an afternoon of beautiful music on St. Paul's spectacular pipe organ!

THANK YOU

Dear First Lutheran Members,

Thank you so much for your tremendous support of our first fundraiser for the National Youth Gathering (New Orleans, July 2024). Kate Nienstedt will be attending along with four other youth and adult chaperones from Trinity Lutheran Church. She sold over \$300 in Sweet Rollers products and received another \$150 in donations. Your generosity made Kate the top seller!

The group will be conducting additional fundraisers in the months to come. Your continued support is appreciated!

With gratitude,
The Nienstedt Family



First Lutheran Church,

Thanks so much for your continued support of Meal on Wheels through your generous food donations.

You are appreciated!

Melissa, Cheryl, Kalisha & Renee

Pastor Jane and Christina (from Salvation Army),

I wanted to let you know that I received the \$175 check from First Evangelical Lutheran, and wanted to express my appreciation again for you guys going out of your way to help (tenant's name.)

Regards, Malcolm
(Landlord)

We pray you have a wonderful Thanksgiving and a Joyous Christmas Season, thank you for supporting Little Daisy's Closet.

John & Kathy McCrae



From: Brenda Runshaw, Trinity's Trunk or Treat Coordinator

The candy donations were much appreciated as was the help from volunteers Mary, Tim and Doris. It's hard to tell how many children came through, but we gave away about 85 pumpkins and had 96 votes for the "best" trunk, so it would be safe to say we had at least 100 kiddos. We had excellent weather and 14 decorated cars. If any First members would care to decorate a car and join us next year, we'd love that!

Thanks again.

HELPING HANDS

Council

President: Tim Gotwald
 Vice President: Joyce Ray
 Secretary: Rose Wilson
 Treasurer: Sally Herritt
 Pastor: Jane Nicholson
 Deacon: Freda Dorand
 Jeff Dorand
 Barb Evans
 Marlin Maclay
 Mary Beth McGraw-Warne
 Gerry Wilson
 Financial Secretary:
 Carol McCoy



David Burkholder	12/06	Loren Wenger	12/21
Freda Dorand	12/07	Cindy Frost	12/22
Kayla Rotz	12/07	Dan Rowan	12/22
Michael Ross	12/09	Danica Beaudry	12/22
Lisa Shupp	12/09	Janice Holbrook	12/23
Warren Heintzelman	12/11	Jane Nicholson	12/26
Beth Yaukey	12/12	Marcia Hunt	12/30
Brett Boock	12/12	Scott Carbaugh	12/30
Marlin Maclay	12/14	Emma McCoy	12/31
Connie Wilkins	12/15	Joan Shoop	12/31
Doris Burdick	12/20	Sullivan Wenger	12/31

PRAYER CHAIN

May we include you in our
 prayers? Do you have a prayer
 need that we can help you
 with? If so, please call our
 prayer chain group leader:

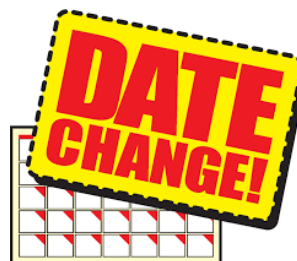
Marcia Hunt @
 717-263-0781

Names are kept on the prayer
 chain for 1 month. After that
 month, please contact the
 office again if you would like
 to have a name on for another
 month.

TRANSPORTATION

Need a Ride?

Our church provides
 transportation to
 church on Sundays!
 Please call if you need a
 ride.



**Deadline for
 The January
 Newsletter
 will be
 December 6**

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

43 W. Washington Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
E-mail: felccoffice@gmail.com
Website: www.felcc.org

 @FirstEvangelicalLutheranChurch
 @felccyouth

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Church Office Hours
Monday-Thursday
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

CHURCH OFFICE	717-264-2015
Parish Administrator	ext. 1
Director of Music	ext. 3
Pastor	ext. 4

DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

NON-PROFIT
ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

CHAMBERSBURG, PA.
PERMIT NO. 137



Christmas Eve Worship
December 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Includes Special Music, Holy Communion,
and Candlelight

Christmas Day Worship
December 25 at 9:30 a.m.

A Service of Glorious Praise with Holy Communion

