



The Transformer

December 2018

717-866-4910

Friedens Lutheran Church, 301 W. Washington Ave., Myerstown, PA

Dear Friends in Christ,

In two weeks, we gather on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

We will follow the practice of recent years and hold worship at 4:00 in the afternoon and 11:00 in the evening (with special music beginning at 10:30). The worship liturgy at both services include Holy Communion and use of candlelight. Our worship band leads music at the 4:00 service and our youth will take assisting roles. Jim Biever, our church organist, and guest musicians will provide both accompaniment and special music at the evening service.

Christmas worship is when we rehearse the familiar story of Jesus birth as recorded in the gospels of Matthew and Luke chapters. Yet, over the years, song writer and story teller have added further narrative to the gospel accounts. While I appreciate the sweet images of these fables like “little Lord Jesus no crying he makes,” it is important we extract the gospel account from the accouterments added over the years. In fact, gospel writer John did not pen a birth narrative. Instead he gives us this profound summation of what took place:

*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.
We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son,
who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

- John 1:14, NIV

Like most of you, Cheri and I have our Christmas traditions we try to follow each year: empty the stockings before breakfast; sweet roll and dad’s omelets at breakfast; opening gifts one at a time followed by thank you hugs; and later in the afternoon serve Christmas ham. In recent years our routine also includes transcontinental greetings with our children.

At Friedens, we also repeat certain observances. Some of them are shared with most of the Church like singing Silent Night by candle light and some are more parochial. Each are important to us because they help generate “Christmas feelings” in the midst of whatever else is happening in our lives.

This is good.

But let us not confuse our traditions with gospel. A friend and mentor once wrote: “Jesus entered history at a time when hundreds of years of battles, migrations, religious and ethnic oppression, prophesied hopes and warnings had all come to a boiling point and something – something extraordinary – had to happen!” Through the Old Testament centuries, God’s mission had become

obscure. God’s chosen people longed for a Messiah to sort things out. Jesus came. But he was not the Messiah that befit the add-ons that had become attached to their anticipation.

The Word of God embodied in human flesh lived among us to show us “the way, truth, and life” God created us to live. Jesus’ birth, teaching, death and resurrection is the great disruptor in human history and in our lives.

The amazing truth of God’s gracious giving of himself at Christmas is this: God did not give some earthly trinket or splendid home entertainment system, but Himself. Moreover, God did not restrict his giving to select persons. Note the appearance of lowly shepherds and foreigner Magi. God gave himself to us who are at odds with God on account of our sin. And through the God-man Jesus, God continually transforms us into daughters and sons who bear his image and likeness. As John also declared:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*
- John 3:16 (NIV)

That is the greatest gift of all.

Peace+

Pastor W



The Church Council announces a congregational meeting on January 6 at 10:05 A.M. for the purpose of electing members to the church council, delegates to the Synod assembly, and review of the annual report.



FRIENDS OF SPANG CREST

The Friends of Spang Crest organization is looking for volunteers to sell Godshall’s Quality Meats (Lebanon Bologna) at the 2019 PA Farm Show. Both events are held at the PA Farm Show complex in Harrisburg.

Please see below the available time slots and contact Karen Kreiser, activity manager at Spang Crest, 717-274-1495, ext. 3032, if interested.

For the Farm Show, the following spots are open:

- Mornings (9-1): Jan. 5, Jan. 6
- Afternoons (1-5): Jan. 6, Jan. 7 (for 2); Jan. 8 (for 2), Jan. 10
- Evenings: (5-8): Jan. 6, Jan. 7, Jan. 8 and Jan. 9





PASTORAL VISITS - At Friedens we want to provide pastoral support anytime someone is hospitalized. Please inform us if you, a member of your family, or a congregant you know is admitted to the hospital. In keeping with federal law hospitals can no longer inform congregations of members admitted. Even if you indicate on the admitting forms you are a Friedens member, the hospital cannot notify us. In recent months, members have been hospitalized and wondered why they did not receive a visit. If we do not know someone is in the hospital, then we cannot visit.



Can't Think of a Better Christmas Gift!

Salvation Army Kettle Ringers needed for Saturday, December 22nd at Smith's Candies! Grab a friend, spouse, family members (great for children and youth) and select a time slot from openings below.

- *9:00-9:30 am
- *10:30-11:00 am
- *Any hour or half-hour from 2-4 pm still open.

Time slots are determined by volunteers-a half hour, hour, whatever.

Contact Jan DuBois (717-273-3463) to volunteer.



Family Service at 4 P.M.
 Traditional Service at 11 P.M.
 Music begins at 10:30 A.M.



The church offering envelopes

for 2019 are prepared and are on a table in the hall outside the parlor. In case your name has been missed, please contact the church office.

CHRISTMAS CARDS



CHRISTMAS CARDS – The Social Ministry Committee will deliver your Christmas cards to the following nursing and retirement homes: StoneRidge Poplar Run, StoneRidge Towne Centre, Manor Care, Linden Village, Juniper Village, Cornwall Manor, Lebanon Valley Home, and to shut-ins in their residences (as Church bulletin list). Postage not needed. Look for the box in the narthex to deposit your cards. Last day to deposit cards for Christmas delivery is **DECEMBER 16.**

THE FINANCIAL BOOKS of Friedens will close December 31, 2018. Persons who want their contributions to be credited to 2018 must have their offering in to the Financial Secretary on or before December 31.



DECEMBER 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM— Traditional Service	3 5:45 PM—Women's Yoga Class	4 7 PM—10:45 Worship Group	5 5:45 PM—Co-Ed Yoga Class 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	6	7	8
9 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM— Traditional Service	10 5:45 PM—Women's Yoga Class 6 PM—WELCA Christmas Holiday Dinner	11 7 PM—Cemetery Board 7 PM—Property Committee	12 9 AM—Women Sew 5:45 PM—Co-Ed Yoga Class 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	13 6:30 pm—3 B Gathering—Franklin House	14	15 
16 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM— Traditional Service	17 5:45 PM—Women's Yoga Class 6:30 PM—Finance Committee	18 7 PM— Vision to Mission	19 5:45 PM—Co-Ed Yoga Class 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	20 7 PM—Church Council	21 	22
23 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM— Traditional Service	24 4 PM—Family Christmas Eve Worship 11 PM— Traditional Christmas Eve Worship	25 	26 9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	27	28	29
30 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM— Traditional Service	31 					

Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA
Church Council Meeting
November 29, 2018

Scott Stephenson called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm

Present: Lynn Appleby, Kim Garhart, Brian Kleinfelter, Wendy Gilbert (Secretary), Amanda Klopp (Vice President), Jim Kneasel, Scott Stephenson (President), Richard Stoner, Rev. Robert Wallace, Jr. (Pastor), Elaine Lasch

1. Kim Garhart opened the meeting with prayer and scripture.
2. Brian Kleinfelter made a motion to accept the October 25, 2018 Council Minutes. Amanda Klopp seconded the motion and the motion passed.
3. Video #11 from the Flourish study guide was viewed and discussion took place. We will continue with video #12 at the December Council Meeting.
4. Church Council discussed a matter with regards to the Child Protection Policy.
5. Nominations for the 2019 Church Council committee was reviewed. At this time all current members are serving or eligible for additional terms. Scott Stephenson, Wendy Gilbert, Lynn Appleby, and Richard Stoner will be up for re-election along with any new nominations from the congregation at the January 6, 2019 Congregational Meeting.
6. The Council received a report from Brian Kleinfelter regarding the cemetery practices and expenses being conducted by the finance committee. With great appreciation for 45 years of dedication, we want to thank Roger Kauffman for chairing the Cemetery committee.
7. Pastor Wallace made a motion to Council for the purchase of the Lasting Hope Lenten Booklet and the motion passed. Once again, the congregation will use this resource for the Lenten season. Donations will be accepted to help cover the expenses.
8. Richard Stoner made a motion to accept Sunday, January 6, 2019 for our Congregational meeting. Amanda Klopp seconded the motion and the motion passed.
On the agenda: Endowment Fund Improvement update.
Council Election
Annual Report
Synod Representative Election
9. Pastor Wallace made a motion to elect Richard and Nancy Stoner to represent Friedens Lutheran Church to the Synod, 2019. Jim Kneasel seconded the motion and the motion passed.
10. Council reviewed the following reports: Discipleship, Endowment, Family-Youth and Children, Fellowship, Missions, Property, Vision for Missions, Worship and Pastor's report.
11. Elaine Lasch requested permission to purchase an Automated External Defibrillator, "AED" from the Memorial fund. Pastor Wallace made a motion to accept the proposal from Elaine. Jim Kneasel seconded the motion and the motion passed.
12. Brian Kleinfelter made a motion to accept the October 2018 Financial report. Lynn Appleby seconded the motion and the motion passed.
13. Brian Kleinfelter closed with prayer.
14. **Next Council Meeting will be Thursday, December 20, 2018 at 7 P.M.**
15. Meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm.

Wendy Gilbert, Council Secretary

OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

October, 2018

	October	YTD <u>10/30/2018</u>
<u>Current Giving</u>		
Goal	\$32,815.92	\$131,263.67
Received	\$23,013.50	\$ 96,972.51
Percent of Plan	70%	74%
<u>Spang Crest</u>		
Received	\$ 20.00	\$ 140.00
<u>Hunger</u>		
Received	\$ 45.00	\$ 465.00

OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

November 30, 2018

	November	YTD <u>11/30/2018</u>
<u>Current Giving</u>		
Goal	\$32,815.92	\$164,079.58
Received	\$23,814.75	\$ 120,787.26
Percent of Plan	73%	74%
<u>Spang Crest</u>		
Received	\$ 50.00	\$ 190.00
<u>Hunger</u>		
Received	\$ 100.00	\$ 565.00

