



The Transformer

May 2017

717-866-4910

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

My home study is located at the back of the house. Last fall the window in the room got enlarged to cover a seven-foot expanse. Now, seated in the study chair, I can look out and observe the full vista of the emerging backyard landscape - a variety of birds at the feeding station, flowering bushes returning to life, creeping phlox showing off vibrant color, and the eleven by seven mud hole that eventually will become a pond.

For me, landscape gardening mirrors the life we have in Christ. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, God would bring forth from our lives all of the beauty, color and potential the Father's love provides. The poetic language of Genesis one marvelously describes God's creative work drawing the reader into the refrain, "God saw that it was good."

God's good work continues.

The Genesis narrative makes clear God intended that humanity exercise dominion or stewardship over the earth - the environment, plant life, creatures, and one another. God made it possible for this world to be at peace, fruitful, and beautiful.

The choice humans made to rebel against God's design in order to *make a name for ourselves* (Genesis 11:4) despoils creation and affects violence. Hence, God commissions the "Son" to embody human flesh and, through self-emptying love, prevail over human sin, evil forces, and death. Through Jesus, God redeems you and me to live our lives for Jesus' sake - loving God and our neighbor in the same manner the Triune God loves us. Moreover, Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit whom Jesus depicts as friend, companion and comforter. Through the presence and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, we experience God's love, see God's work, and live God's way.

This brief, post Easter, encapsulation of the gospel (good news) serves to open our shared reflection upon how best can we live the way God intends and take up the stewardship God bestowed upon humanity.

We use various words to describe God's good work happening among and through God's people, the Church. When we talk about individuals being formed in the faith as apprentices of Jesus, the good work is called disciple making. When we address how the congregation engages as partners in God's good work to benefit neighbors nearby and far way, we call this mission. When individuals or groups of person build relational bridges into the community and give witness through our actions and our words to God's love, forgiveness, and healing through Jesus, we call this evangelism. When the congregation and congregants consider the assets God provides us - our time, our abilities, our financial resources - and inquire how would God have us manage these assets, we call this stewardship.

Of course disciple making, mission, evangelism, and stewardship are words depicting the ongoing, never-ending good work of God happening through the Church. Yet, there are seasons when it is well for the

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congregation to intentionally engage in community conversation and personal reflection upon how are we engaged in this good work.

At Friedens we now enter such a season - a process that will take place over the coming three years. Our motivation is God’s love. Our goal is to discern God’s preferred and promised future for both our congregation our personal lives. Our desired outcome is to honor God by *doing everything (word or deed) in the name of Jesus Christ* (Col. 3:17).

The components of this process include:

Flourish - a comprehensive training designed to equip the council and others in how to build unity, trust, and the essential skills for mission and ministry.

reForm, reNew, reVision - a six-part Synodical program guiding congregations to recognize how God would have them build relational/missional bridges into their communities.

Disciple-Making - developing multiple ways to engage persons of every age in a process of discovering their unique identity in Christ, place among other apprentices of Jesus Christ, and role in God’s good work in the world today.

Stewardship - receiving teaching and holding conversation on how God would have us manage God-given assets.

Please keep this process in your prayers. And when you pray ask God to show ways for you to get involved.

Presently, I want to identify twenty to thirty folks to take part in the first phase of Flourish. This commitment would involve you in ten once-a-month sessions of about an hour and a half each. At each session we view a brief presentation and then engage in several activities designed to help assimilate the teaching into our life together. The sessions begin in September.

As my garden work around the house, assist the fruitful blossoming God instills in creation, so also our good work at Friedens helps to bring fruitful ministry out of our life together as God’s people.

Your friend, pastor, and fellow gardener,
Robert Wallace



Dear Parishioners & Friends, Thank you all for your prayers and love during my recovery. Your love and support has touched my heart. I hope to pay it forward. I am recovering well and almost back on two feet.

Thank you all,
Bernadette Girello

Congregational Meeting

ADVANCED NOTICE - The congregation’s annual meeting to act upon the spending plan for 2017-2018 will take place on Sunday, June 11.





Food Collection

On Sunday, May 7, food will be collected for the Lebanon County Food Bank. All gifts are welcomed. There is a need for frozen hams, canned meats and stews, canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned soups, peanut butter, towels/wash cloths, paper towels, reusable plastic containers.



CEMETERY WORK NIGHTS will be held Tuesday evenings in May from 6-8 P.M.. Volunteers are needed. Bring shovels and rakes.



Are you or someone you know graduating this year?

This includes all graduates from high school, college, technical School or any higher education. We would like to include information about all our graduates in the June newsletter. Please have all information into the church office by May 15th for inclusion in the newsletter.



GERANIUMS FOR PENTECOST

If you are interested in ordering geraniums for Pentecost, now is the time to do so. To order, please use the envelopes provided on the narthex bulletin board and place it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. The cost is \$5.00 each. The last day to order is **May 8**.






OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

March 2017

				% of Budget
Current Budget	Goal	\$30,451.00	Goal to Date	79%
\$548,114.00	Rec'd	\$20,011.00	Rec'd to Date	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	47.00	Rec'd to date	663.00
Hunger	Rec'd	546.00	Rec'd to Date	3,906.00

MAY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 6 PM—Cemetery Work Night	3 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	4 National Day of PRAYER 7 PM—Chancel Choir	5	6
7 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 5 PM—Bible Study	8	9 6 PM—Cemetery Work Night 7 PM—Property Committee	10 9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	11 6:30 PM—Finance Committee 7 PM—Chancel Choir	12	13
14 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	15  7 PM—Women of ELCA—Library	16 6 PM—Cemetery Work Night	17 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	18 7 PM—Church Council 7 PM—Chancel Choir	19	20 
21 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 5 PM—Bible Study	22	23 6 PM—Cemetery Work Night	24 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	25 7 PM—Chancel Choir	26	27
28 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	29 	30 6 PM—Cemetery Work Night	31 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band			



Mother's Day

May 14

Volleyball League



SUMMER VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE

Are you looking for something fun to do this summer? Do you enjoy playing volleyball? If so, then become a part of the Friedens Summer Volleyball Team! Games are played every Monday and Thursday night at 7pm either here at the sand court or away at near-by churches at their court. Games start early May and continue through the summer until the tournament on a Saturday in August! This year we have a strong need for female players since rules require us to have both men and woman on the team. If we don't have enough woman players, then we may need to forfeit our summer volleyball team! Sign up on the bulletin board outside the office. More information to come when I receive it! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, Laura Umberger, at [\(717\) 679-1979](tel:7176791979)!



VBS 2017 is coming to Friedens on Sun., July 9th through Wed, July 12th from 6-8:00pm! If you are willing to help with this event, please see Kelly Stephenson or Holly Heft. Registration is now open online at www.vbspro.events/p/friedensmyerstown (tool bar, not Google) Open to ages 3 thru 6th grade. Bring a friend!



Friedens is planning its **mission trip** for **June 11-18, 2017 to West Virginia**. This mission field is being compared to Katrina (2005) in devastation and duration. Volunteers ages 15-up are welcome for the full or partial week.

Mission work will take place in Webster County, West Virginia. Anticipated distance/travel time to Webster County is 342 miles/51/2 hours. The main town in the county is Webster Springs. The mission team will live in a church parsonage for the duration of the work week. 21 beds, 5 showers, and a full kitchen.

Mission work will consist of dry walling/finishing, painting, basic construction, plumbing, and electrical work.

Signup sheet is on the bulletin board outside the parlor.

Questions-see Jan DuBois (717) 926-1392 or Jon Koller (717) 228-9265.