



The Transformer

December 2017

717-866-4910

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

Dear Friends at Friedens,

Like many of you, Cheri and I feel the onrush of Christmas and have wonderment at the pace which 2017 rushed by us. Wasn't it just a month ago we were planning our fortieth wedding anniversary. But now that is a memory.

I have a question to ask you about Christmas memories.

My hunch is most of us already have Christmas plans put in place. So, maybe the question is too late for consideration this year. And maybe, you too have thought about this. Either way, here is the question: What kind of Christmas memories are you building with your family?

Christmas memories most often have to do with when family members gather, routines for gift opening, time for the Christmas meal, what food items get served, and how you connect with those who live far away.

Here is another kind of memory. It was built by parents of my son's soccer teammate. The dad was a successful developer and the mom was a prominent real estate broker. They were a family who lived in a splendid home on a large lot. The children enjoyed opportunities, vacations, and privileges that other children did not have. That father and the mother wanted to teach their children that privilege carries responsibility for the well being of other persons.

Throughout the year, whenever stores had sales for such items as blankets, coats, gloves, socks, underwear, personal care items, the family would make purchases. One room of the house was dedicated to store all the stuff. When the kids started to earn their own money, they too contributed to the purchases.

About ten days before Christmas, the family would put together gift bundles for men and for women. Then for two days prior to Christmas, the entire family made meal packs for their evening distribution. The dad rented a van into which the family put the gift packs and the food. Then for several hours, they drove the streets where the homeless patrolled and slept. Whenever they came across these persons, they greeted them, provided the meal, a hot drink, and gave them the gift package.

Can you imagine how that Christmas tradition shaped the lives of those children? Cheri and I involved our children with Angel Tree gifts and other Christmas expressions of compassion. Looking back, I wish we had done more.

In his often quoted Christmas sermon, Martin Luther addressed what parishioners told him, "Oh, if I had been in Bethlehem that night, I would have given the father and mother a fit place to room; I would have assisted the dear girl with the birth and helped care for the baby." Luther then asked, if that is so, how are you engaged this day showing care for your neighbor who is in need - the hungry, the homeless, the sick (and allow me to include the addict, the working poor, the single mom, the girl victimized by sex trafficking...)

(Continued next page)

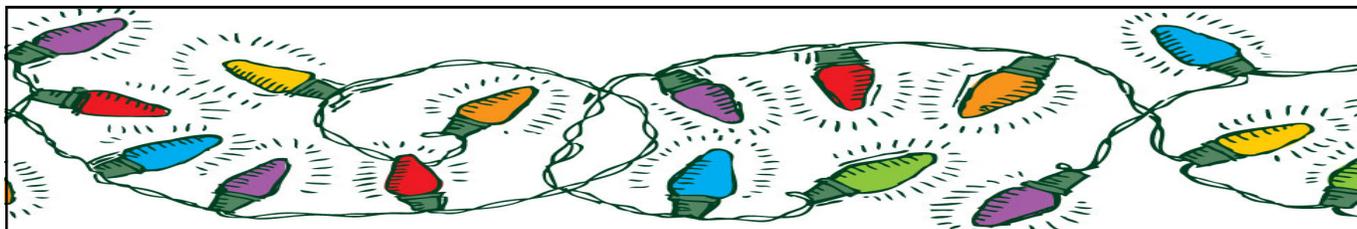
Increasingly for me, in order to sing the beloved songs of Christmas I must renew my commitment to follow the teachings and life practice of Jesus, the child born to Mary, whose Nativity we celebrate. Hence, to enter Christmas worship in all its splendor - sights, sounds, tastes - I also must grow in awareness of the world around me, and the humanity for whom God sent the Son.

Christmas, dear friends, is not a momentary stepping out of our troubled world. Rather, it is joining the incarnate one who steps into our world and towards the persons who feel hopeless. We, who hear the angels sing glad tidings of good news, who live as the privileged people in the world, are beckoned by Jesus to join him in being present with and for the "least of these among us."

God bless you this Christmas. May you have joy in gifts given and received.

- Pastor Robert Wallace

 A sign for a congregational meeting. On the left, a vertical gold bar contains the text "PLEASE JOIN US" in white. To the right, a dark green square features a white cross with the word "MEETING" in large white letters across it. Above the cross, the word "CONGREGATIONAL" is written in smaller white letters.	<p>CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church holds its annual election meeting on <u>Sunday, January 7 at 10:10</u> in the Social Hall. Members and Guests are invited to attend. The privilege and responsibility to vote is extended to all who are "Continuous Communing & Contribution" members.</p>
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CHRISTMAS CARDS



The Social Ministry Committee will deliver your Christmas cards to the following nursing and retirement homes: Stone Ridge Poplar Run, Manor Care, Linden Village, Lebanon Valley Home, Juniper Village, Cornwall Manor and to shut-ins in their residences (as per the church bulletin list). Postage is not needed. Look for the box in the narthex to deposit cards from December 3 through December 17.



Halie Parker will graduate from Millersville University on December 17 with a degree in Environmental Biology. In January she will attend IUP for a Master degree.



The Financial Books of Friedens will close December 31, 2017. Persons who want their contributions to be credited to 2017 must have their offering in to the Financial Secretary on or before December 31.

Offering Envelopes



The church offering envelopes for 2018 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.



Services

9 AM—Contemporary Service
 10:45 AM—Traditional Service
 4:00 PM— Family Worship
 11:00 PM— Festival Service

OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

October 2017

					% of Budget
Current Budget	Goal	\$33,857.00	Goal to Date	\$135,428.00	64%
\$406,280.00	Rec'd	\$25,852.00	Rec'd to Date	86,740.00	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	55.00	Rec'd to date	133.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	260.00	Rec'd to Date	820.00	

DECEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<p>3</p> <p>9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM - Traditional Service</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">7 PM—Choir</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10</p> <p>9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM - Traditional Service</p>	<p>11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Property Committee</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9 AM— Women Sew 1 PM—Life Group 6 PM—Life Group 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:30 PM—Finance Committee 6:30 PM—Ministry Collaboration 7 PM—Choir</p>	<p>15</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p> <p>9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM - Traditional Service</p>	<p>18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 PM—WELCA</p>	<p>19</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">20</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">21</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">First Day of Winter</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">7 PM—Church Council 7 PM—Choir</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24</p> <p>9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM - Traditional Service</p>	<p>25</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">CHRISTMAS DAY</p> </div>	<p>26</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">27</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 PM—Choir</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31</p> <p>9 AM— Contemporary Service 10:45 AM - Traditional Service</p>						

Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA
Church Council Meeting
November 16, 2017

Chris Heft, President, called the meeting to order at 6:47 pm.

Present: Chris Heft (President), Lynn Appleby, Wendy Gilbert (Secretary), Jim Kneasel, Sharon Riegel, Richard Stoner, Rev. Robert Wallace, Jr. (Pastor), Elaine Lasch.

Absent: Scott Stephenson (Vice President), John Umberger

1. Chris Heft opened the meeting with prayer and scripture.
2. Chris Heft made a motion to accept the September 28, 2017 Council minutes. Lynn Appleby seconded the motion and the motion passed.
3. Chris Heft made a motion to go ahead with the first phase of the Building Utilization Proposal. This would include moving the Pastors office, Secretary office, Staff offices and Support offices. Wendy Gilbert seconded the motion and the motion passed.
4. No communications were reported.
5. March 31, 2018 is the deadline for the Endowment requests for the July 1, 2018—June 30, 2019 fiscal year.
6. “Friends Helping Friends”, sponsored by the ELCO school district, will collect donations to provide identified families with gift cards. Deadline is December 10.
7. Pastor Wallace made a motion to accept the Family & Youth Ministry report. Chris Heft seconded the motion and the motion passed.
8. Jim Kneasel made a motion to accept the Financial Secretary report. Richard Stoner seconded the motion and the motion passed.
9. Chris Heft made a motion to accept the Treasurer report. Sharon Riegel seconded the motion and the motion passed.
10. The Myerstown Rotary Club requested the use of our property for displaying “Flags for Hero’s” over the Memorial Day weekend 2018. Chris Heft made a motion to accept this request. Sharon Riegel seconded the motion and the motion passed.
11. The Council, along with fellow church members, reviewed the Spiritual Vitality Report under the leadership of Pastor Rich Jorgenson, LSS-Mission. The group shared their thoughts regarding the results of the survey.
12. Pastor Wallace made a motion to accept the resignation of John Umberger from Church Council with regret. Chris Heft seconded the motion and the motion passed.
13. Council members viewed the 3rd video from the Flourish Training Series followed with discussion.
14. Pastor Wallace asked each council member to share their “take away” thoughts from the evenings meeting and Spiritual Vitality report.
15. **Next Council meeting will be held on Thursday, December 21, 2017.**
16. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Wendy Gilbert, Council Secretary