



# The Transformer

April 2014

717-866-4910

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

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark...* -- John 20:1a

Mary was an inadequate disciple. The world judged her as unworthy. We really don't know much about Mary or how she came to be a disciple of Jesus'. One gospel writer says she had been possessed by seven demons before Jesus had healed her; other traditions say she may have been a prostitute. We don't know if Mary Magdalene was the Mary who anointed Jesus' feet, though it does make for a good story.

And yet John describes her as the first to come to the tomb while it was still dark. She stumbled forward in the dark; she did not come with a real purpose or plan. She did not even understand what she saw when she got there. She saw two angels, and yet they were only potential sources of information for her. "She said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.'" She didn't understand what Jesus had been saying; the empty tomb only suggested that the body had been stolen.

God really is a God of surprises. Of all the possible candidates to witness Jesus' resurrection, she was the one God chose as the first witness. This is what grace is all about - she was claimed by faith before she could claim faith for herself. She did not even recognize Jesus when she saw him. To her, he was a stranger, perhaps the gardener. She asked if he had taken the body away. This was not an affirmation of faith but a plea for compassion. But then He called her by name and she was filled with a message of hope.

She ran from the tomb announcing the good news. She was the key witness to the earthquake of faith. Jesus was alive; the reality of death was no match for God. The powerless one became the primary witness of hope for the entire world. We still come in the dark, weeping for what we have lost, without any clear sense of direction and God calls us by name, lifts us up, and fills our lives with new purpose.

He is risen! He is risen indeed. Have a blessed Easter!

I want to take a moment to thank everyone for their prayers – especially for your prayers over these past couple of weeks. By the grace of God, Ann's surgery went amazingly well. The doctor talked to us about some of the complications that could arise – none of them did. She is home getting stronger every day.

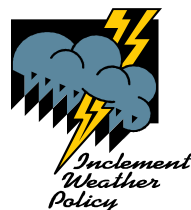
As a pastor, it's difficult being the leader of the flock when your mind is not on the flock. But this is what God's church; this is what prayer; this is what a community of faith is all about. When someone is not able to pray for themselves, God's church, the community of faith intercedes and prays for us. Thank you for all you have done for me and for Ann. I am truly grateful. Ken

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**COFFEE HOUR NEEDS YOUR HELP**

Ever wonder how coffee gets magically made in the morning for you nearly every Sunday? Well, all it takes is a few minutes of someone's time and a desire to help keep our social hour lively. Members of the coffee hour committee are seeking helpers who are willing to volunteer to make it happen...we can't do it all ourselves! Coffee, cookies and munchies are all purchased and waiting for someone each Sunday to pull together. We even have a new coffee pot! **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BAKE OR PURCHASE TREATS BY YOURSELF.** Sign up on the list in Stauffer Hall or talk with Susan Harper, Carmela Deck or Annette Beamesderfer. Your help is appreciated by coffee drinkers everywhere!



**FOUL WEATHER POLICY**  
if worship needs to be cancelled due to foul weather, this info will be shared on:  
-1270 AM WLBR/100.1 FM WQIC  
- WGAL tv & website  
- Friedens Facebook page



The Women of ELCA will meet Monday, April 21.

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**



The church office hours are 9 A.M.—1 P.M. Monday to Friday.

**CALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Searching for a New Pastor**



Tad Achenbach  
John Flesher  
Chris Heft  
Sister Janice Ruch  
John R. Smith  
McKenna Achenbach

**OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS**

**February 2014**

				% of Budget	
Current Budget	Goal	\$26,848.00	Goal to Date	\$ 53,696.00	81%
\$322,179.00	Rec'd	\$23,146.00	Rec'd to Date	43,687.00	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	99.00	Rec'd to Date	148.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	205.00	Rec'd to Date	435.00	



**SHUT-IN BIRTHDAYS**

April 26  
Mrs. Ione Rothenheber  
Juniper Village  
1125 Birch Road  
Lebanon, PA 17042



"SAVE THE DATE: Vacation Bible School is coming to Friedens Sun, July 13th - Wed, July 16th, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Come and join the wild, wacky, one-of-a-kind Jungle Habitat! WEIRD ANIMALS... Where Jesus' Love is One-of-a-Kind! For more info, please see Holly Heft or Kelly Stephenson."



**PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST** will be held in Stauffer Hall on Sunday, April 13, 2014, from 7:00 am to 10:30 am. Janice DuBois and Jim Biever will coordinate breakfast.



Due to Holy Week, next Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 7 pm



On Sunday, April 6, food will be collected for the Lebanon County Food Bank. All gifts are welcomed. There is a need for instant mashed potatoes, 5 oz. canned chicken, canned luncheon meat, jelly, 18 oz & 32 oz., complete pancake mix, hamburger helper, shampoo, bath soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes and toiletries.



Many Eager Ambassadors Lending Service...

Do you know anyone coming home from the hospital at Friedens, who will be homebound for one or two weeks and in



**The Praise And Worship Band** is in need of a bass player to play at the 9:00 AM Service during the entire month of April. If you know of anyone who could help us out

please have them contact Gloria Tice @ "[glotice@gmail.com](mailto:glotice@gmail.com)." Or give their information to me and I can contact them. Any leads would be greatly appreciated!

# APRIL 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 6:00 PM –Soup & Bread; 6:30 PM—Lenten Service; 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 8 PM—Adult Choir	3 7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	4	5
6 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth	7	8 7 PM—Property Committee	9 6:00 PM –Soup & Bread; 6:30 PM—Lenten Service 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 8 PM—Adult Choir	10 7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	11	12 1:30 pm—Backwards Egg Hunt
13 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth	14	15 	16 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 8 PM—Adult Choir	17  6 pm— Maundy Thursday	18 <b>TRULY</b>  7:30 PM—Good Friday Service	19
20 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth	21 7 PM—Women of ELCA	22	23 9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7:30 PM—Adult Choir	24 7 pm—Church Council 7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	25	26
27 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth	28 7 PM—Visitation Committee	29	30 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7:30 PM—Adult Choir			

Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA  
Church Council Meeting  
March 20, 2014

Jody Appleby, President, called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

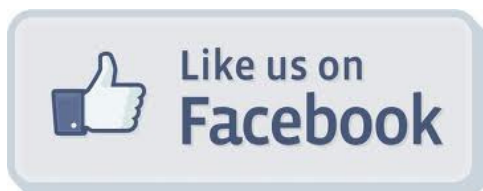
Present: Jody Appleby (President), Frank Armstrong (Vice President), Janice DuBois, Jon Koller, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer) and Ken Osborne (Interim Pastor) Excused: Chris Heft, Jim Kneasel, Sharon Riegel (Secretary)

1. Opening Prayer: Frank Armstrong opened the meeting with prayer. Devotional was based on scripture from Psalm 121. Discussion followed.
2. Minutes/Reports/Communications:
  - a. Frank Armstrong made a motion to accept the February 20, 2014 Church Council Minutes. Janice DuBois seconded. Motion carried.
  - b. Janice DuBois made a motion to accept the February 2014 Financial Secretary's Report. Jon Koller seconded. Motion carried.
  - c. Frank Armstrong made a motion to accept the February 2014 Treasurer's Report. Jon Koller seconded. Motion carried.
  - d. Ken Osborne shared his Pastor's Report for February 2014. Highlights of Pastor's Report include:
    - Pastor Osborne will be taking Continuing Education from May 7 - 9, 2014 (3 days) to attend classes at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. The classes he will attend will focus on Ministry to those with Special Needs. Jon Koller made a motion to approve the February 2014 Pastor's Report. Frank Armstrong seconded. Motion carried.
  - e. A thank you note from the congregation was sent to Woodland Contractors for their recent donation of the renovation of the parlor restroom.
  - f. The request from Lebanon County Christian Ministries for a contribution to their "Annual Financial Contribution" was referred to the Finance Team.
3. Finance Committee did not meet in March. Finance Committee's next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 8 at 6:30 pm. Janice DuBois will be the Council Rep for the April meeting. The Council Rep at Finance Committee future meetings will be rotated.
4. Property Committee met on March 11, 2014. Jim Kneasel provided a written report of the meeting.
5. The Pastoral Call Process is ongoing. Please continue to pray for the Call Committee and Friedens during this process.

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6. At our September 25, 2013 meeting Andy Evenson and Thomas McKee highly recommended we compose a "Parental Leave Policy." At our December meeting Pastor Osborne shared with the group his findings from Synod. At our February 20, 2014 meeting Pastor Osborne shared a sample policy/employee handbook from a local church. This discussion was tabled due to absences. Council will review the sample policy and further discussion will continue at April meeting.
7. At our December 19, 2013 meeting Chris Heft shared an update on Clearances/Background Checks for Liability Purposes. Pastor Blezard of Synod provided Chris with a website for Council to review. Pastor Osborne & Janice DuBois contacted other churches for sample policies. Pastor Osborne provided info on a "Safe Church" program featuring various sessions which will be offered here in Myerstown. At the February 20, 2014 meeting Jim Biever shared his thoughts/insights with the group. It was agreed to form a team of approximately 6 people to work on a "Safe Church Policy" for Friedens. Jim Biever agreed to serve on this team. This discussion was tabled due to absences. Further discussion will continue at April meeting.
8. The group continued to discuss the importance of helping people to be aware of all the various ministry opportunities to serve and use their gifts here at Friedens. Janice DuBois coordinated info sessions with various team leaders. Pastor Osborne will address/announce a reminder at both services on March 23, 2014.
9. Joel Zinn provided a written update on the Capital Fund Appeal. Campaign Goal: \$155,500. Commitments: \$143,219.
10. At the February 9, 2014 Annual Congregational Meeting no names were submitted for the Nominating Committee for Council. This discussion was tabled due to absences. This issue will be addressed by Council at April meeting.
11. The "Funeral Meals Team" no longer exists. Pastor Osborne will advise families to hire a caterer.
12. The Backwards Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2014 at 1:30 pm.
13. Due to Holy Week, next Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 7 pm.
14. Jon Koller made the motion to adjourn. Frank Armstrong seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. Meeting closed with prayer lead by Ken Osborne.

Respectfully Submitted  
Janice DuBois, Acting Council Secretary



## SAVING THE EVANGELISTS

Have you watched any evangelist present on television today? I do not think it necessary to list them or pick one out from the crowd. Then again, it's difficult to differentiate one from the other. They are so homogeneous. Yes, they differ by gender or race, they are dissimilar in voice and tone and they televise from various areas of the country. It seems they coalesce only on a common message of hope out of despair, triumph over adversity and success out of failure. A message eagerly sought by thousands touched by despair, adversity and failure. Come to think of it, who has not been touched by despair, adversity and failure? Is not any or all of these present in the everyday life of everyone? Now, would not a shrewd adventurist capitalize on touting a remedy for these afflictions?

You would be hard put to see one of these purveyors clothed poorly, housed poorly or in need in any material way. Yet, they each at the conclusion of their messages offer their personal salvation to the masses for a gift of any amount large or small. Some reserve a special place called a club, an inner circle or their cadre of angels for those who donate a large amount over a certain figure. It leads one to wonder who is being blessed, the donor or the evangelist?

Most of them do relief work around the globe. Some build schools, hospitals and provide food and water to the needy. The locations of these sites are miles away and difficult for most donors to check on the validity of these philanthropies. The cost of these projects are born from special fund raisings and cause no harm to the "general funds". After the evangelists' trips, they show videos of their brief encounters with the poor to placate the donating viewing audience. They do not, under any circumstances, reveal to anyone the percentage of these sites abandoned and forsaken by them. Eventually these projects are absorbed by governmental agencies which either underwrite them or unite them with the relief missions of established and responsible religious organizations.

I listened recently to one of these evangelists telling his audience of his need of and search for a new car. He spoke of visiting many new car showrooms and awaited approval of his selection from the Holy Spirit. No approval was heard so he abandoned the search. The very next day he was riding with one of his donors in the donor's very nice new car. The donor heard of his plight and asked the preacher for what type of car he was searching? The evangelist answered a car just like the donor's. I bet you can guess what happened. A few days later the evangelist received a check from the donor in the exact amount to purchase the same model car. Well, the evangelist gushed telling his audience how the Holy Spirit blessed him with a new car. I doubt it was the Holy Spirit's work. More than likely it the gullibility of the donor and the unabashed assertiveness of the evangelist. Wouldn't this "interpreter of the word" be more of an evangelist if he returned the check and told the donor to give this amount to the poor?

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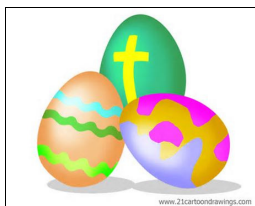
Another evangelist from Houston, Texas, interviewed recently, was asked how he could justify his luxurious life style. He replied that he uses no money from his church. He lives only on the profit from the sales of his books. Perhaps if these books are in no way connected to his church, the income from them should not be tax exempt.

Only if just for a dose of humility, these evangelists would ponder the words of this prayer of St. Francis of Assisi: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sew love;  
 Where there is injury, pardon;  
 Where there is error, truth;  
 Where there is doubt, faith;  
 Where there is despair, hope;  
 Where there is darkness, light;  
 And where there is sadness, joy.

This should reveal to these evangelists the true path to travel and the humility they desperately require.

Humbly,  
 F. A. Armstrong



It's that time of year again! The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **Backwards Easter Egg Hunt** (with a message!) is set for Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30pm. All are welcome to attend!!!! This traditional egg hunt is far from what you may expect. Surprise! All of the eggs are EMPTY, just like the tomb!!!! All participants will get to collect eggs and then fill them with representations of the Passion Story, what a wonderful way to celebrate Christ! Come one, come all, you are welcome here! Anyone interested in helping with this event please contact Nicole Snyder, 717-644-5188.



Our Maundy Thursday service will be a bit different this year; it will be , more along the lines of a Tenebrae Service; a Service of Lights. Instead of the Sanctuary, we will be gathering in Stauffer Hall where we will have a light meal, celebrate Communion around our tables, and remember the last day of our Lord until Easter. The Tenebrae Service will begin at 6 P.M.



Good Friday Service will be at 7:30 P.M.