



The Transformer

April 2016

717-866-4910

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is the week after Easter and spring is giving us the usual tease – some days are wonderfully warm and sunny, a handful are blustery, others are cold, and rain (also pollen) showers upon us. Even though our winter was not harsh, I am ready for spring. Riding the bicycle and working at landscape gardening are how I like to play. Spring is a splendid time to do both.

I hope you find these are good days and are able to get outside to take in the sights and smells of nature returning to blossom.

Primary Election

This year our rite of spring includes the opportunity and responsibility to vote. On April 26 Pennsylvania holds its presidential primary election.

With no incumbent seeking reelection, the primary for this election cycle is particularly contentious. It makes great television, digital, and print coverage. Sadly, the name calling and bumper-sticker slogans do little to inform us how a candidate will address the significant issues pressing upon us. What happens is folks line up behind the candidate who gives voice – loud, emphatic, unbending – to your “team’s” opinion. Yes, I use a sports image because most political conversations are like two fans arguing about their team’s attributes and the other team’s deficiencies. Little listening is taking place among the candidates nor the electorate. Also troubling is how we the electorate are seemingly untroubled by “fact-check” revealing patently false statements and so-called half-truths. And when our team’s candidate gets shown saying something not grounded in truth, we the electorate dismiss it as either biased media or the routines of politics.

Yes, I feel troubled by what is happening in our nation that is supposedly a model for democracy.

I want to offer you three thoughts:

The follower of Jesus holds citizenship in two realms.

The follower of Jesus believes in the importance of personal character in public life.

The follower of Jesus engages in politics – the work of the people – in a way that gives witness to our ultimate allegiance to Christ.

Citizenship

Through birth most of us (if not all) at Friedens are citizens of the United States. We have recited the pledge of allegiance and chanted U-S-A in support of a national sports team. Our citizenship gives us both blessings and responsibilities. We pay taxes to fund the work of government to educate, protect, and promote public well-being. Our opinions on how government best serves the populace is wide ranging, therefore, public dialogue and persuasive speech are important. Being a democracy means we elect persons who represent our interests when drafting and enacting legislation.

By our baptism we are also citizens of God’s realm – what Jesus refers to as the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. There are no geographic boundaries or political divides to this realm. Here is the apostle

~~Paul’s synopsis of this citizenship:~~

(Through baptism we have) *have put on the new self. This is the new being which God, its Creator, is constantly renewing in his own image, in order to bring you to a full knowledge of himself. As a result, there is no longer any distinction between Gentiles and Jews, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarians, savages, slaves, and free, but Christ is all, Christ is in all. You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own. So then, you must clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience* (Col. 3:10-12, GNT).

Character

Paul's depiction brings me to the second takeaway – as citizens of God's realm and followers of Jesus we attest to the importance of personal character in public life. Our political sensibilities may range across the spectrum from conservative to progressive. Our political posture may change according to the issue at hand. What we want is to have our vote go for a person who best represents the policies we believe are best for our nation and all its citizens. However, political position must always yield to what we understand "as broadly biblical values." In a blog posting a university teacher and self-identified evangelical Christian put it this way, "... one can 'tell it like it is' without promulgating vulgarity and disrespect." Persons of character are identified on both side of our nation's political divide. Again citing the blog, "... a range of former presidents from Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan to Barack Obama have upheld a general dignity to the office, expressed some degree of wisdom and a humility to learn, and employed a general respect and charitableness toward others."

Friends, the bible makes it clear we are to hold each other accountable. Therefore, character and fitness for public office are criteria I want to consider first and foremost before comparing positions on particular issues. Even when I feel passionate about supposed failures in our nation's governance, I can never sacrifice matters of character for the expediency of political position. History makes clear the horrible consequence for doing that. What are the character qualities the bible identifies? They are called "fruits of the Spirit": *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* (Gal. 5:22-23, NRSV).

Concern

Finally, as followers of Jesus, we get involved in the work of the people – the right and responsibilities that comes with United States citizenship. We listen and pose questions. We engage in spirited debate for the sake of seeking truth rather than defeating opposing points of view. We show respect and the other qualities associated with being a "fruitful" persons. And, most importantly, we pray.

On April 26, I encourage you to act upon your citizenship as a disciple of Jesus and as an American by voting. Within the party that best represents your view of how to do the people's work, vote for the person who demonstrates the character you would want in the person who serves our nation and deserves respect as president.



MY PEOPLE WILL LIVE IN PEACEFUL DWELLING PLACES.

ISAIAH 32:18, NIV



Food Collection

On Sunday, April 3, food will be collected for the Lebanon County Food Bank. All gifts are welcomed. There is a need for frozen hams, bottles of juice, canned meats and stews, canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned soups, peanut butter, towels/wash cloths, paper towels, baby wipes, and diapers.



Print copies of Pastor Robert's recent sermons are available at the counter alongside the bulletin board in the corridor

SHUT-IN BIRTHDAYS

April 7
Mr. Richard Hardy
9 Brookside Circle
Myerstown, PA 17067

April 11
Mr. Edwin Zellers
826 Weavertown Road
Lebanon, PA 17046

April 23
Mrs. Phyllis Rohland
Laurel Place 101
P. O. Box 125
Cornwall, PA 17016

April 26
Mrs. Ione Rothenheber
Traditions
100 N. Larkspur Dr., Apt. 338
Palmyra, PA 17078

April 28
Mr. Ernest Brightbill
Juniper Village
1125 Birch Rd.
Lebanon, PA 17042



OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

February 2016

				% of Budget 78%
Current Budget \$365,409.00	Goal Rec'd	\$30,451.00 \$24, 441.00	Goal to Date Rec'd to Date	\$60,902.00 47,382.00
Spang Crest	Rec'd	49.00	Rec'd to date	104.00
Hunger	Rec'd	205.00	Rec'd to Date	445.00

APRIL 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10L30 AM— Traditional Service 5:30 PM—Bible Study/Confirmation	4	5 7 PM—Property Committee 7 PM—Worship Committee	6 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	7	8	9
10 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10L30 AM— Traditional Service 5:30 PM—Bible Study/Confirmation	11	12	13 9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	14	15 	16
17 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10L30 AM— Traditional Service 5:30 PM—Bible Study/Confirmation	18 7 PM—Women of ELCA	19	20 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	21 7 PM—Church Council	22	23
24 9 AM— Contemporary Service 10L30 AM— Traditional Service 5:30 PM—Bible Study/Confirmation	25 7 PM—Visitation Team	26	27 9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	28 7 PM—Handbell Choir Rehearsal	29	30



Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA
Church Council Meeting
March 16, 2016

Chris Heft, President, called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Present: Janice DuBois, Chris Heft (President), Valarie Herron, Jim Kneasel, Jon Koller, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer), Tom Morrissey, Sharon Riegel (Secretary), Scott Stephenson (Vice President), John Umberger, Rev. Robert W. Wallace, Jr. (Pastor)

1. Chris Heft opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Tom Morrissey made a motion to accept the February 17, 2016, Church Council Minutes. Jon Koller seconded. Motion carried.**
3. **Janice DuBois made a motion to accept the February 21, 2016, Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes. Scott Stephenson seconded. Motion carried.**
4. Council viewed a Faith Formation video entitled “Flourish – Part One” by Metanoia Ministries.
5. Council received the book study “Pursuing God’s Will Together – A Discernment Practice For Leadership Groups”.
6. Pastor Wallace provided Council with an update on Ministry Areas including Family and Youth Faith Formation (Home and Congregation Partnership, Children’s Church, Easter Egg Hunt), Youth, Holy Week, Web Site and Sound System.
7. Jim Kneasel reported on the Property Committee meeting of March 2016.
8. **Tom Morrissey made a motion to accept the February 2016 Financial Secretary’s Report. Jim Kneasel seconded. Motion carried.**
9. **Tom Morrissey made a motion to accept the February 2016 Treasurer’s Report. Janice DuBois seconded. Motion carried.**
10. Elaine Lasch reported the Finance Committee did not meet in March 2016.
11. Pastor Wallace gave a verbal & written Pastor’s Report. **Tom Morrissey made a motion to accept the March 2016 Pastor’s Report. Jim Kneasel seconded. Motion carried.**
12. Janet Moyer connected with Life Line Screening agency. The date for Friedens is set for Tuesday, July 19, 2016.
13. The 3-year Capital Campaign is complete. Elaine Lasch will connect with Joel Zinn on sharing this news with the congregation.

- 14. Discussion on camperships was tabled until April meeting. Elaine Lasch to follow up.
- 15. **Next Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 7 pm.**
- 16. **Tom Morrissey made the motion to adjourn. Jon Koller seconded.** Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. Meeting closed with the sharing of joys & concerns and prayer led by Chris Heft.

Sharon Riegel
 Council Secretary

Sunday, April 10

FRIENDS OF SPANG CREST MANOR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Time to join or rejoin!

Spang Crest Manor is Luthercare’s Senior Living Community in Lebanon, PA. The Friends of Spang Crest is an auxiliary organization dedicated to supporting activities and projects that benefit the residents.

In 2015, the Friends donated over \$25,000 for programs, services and purchases including: Resident Christmas Presents, Patio Furniture, Bus Trips, Hearing Devices for Chapel, Halloween Party, Outdoor Band Concerts, Family Entertainment Nights, Picnic Tents, and Benevolent Care.

Your membership does not involve meetings. Your dues, combined with other fundraising events and the Gift Shop proceeds, will allow the Friends to continue with projects in 2016.

Member:	\$2.00	Sustaining:	\$10.00
Contributing:	\$5.00	Patron:	\$25.00

Checks may be made payable to: Friends of Spang Crest Manor.

Thank you for your support!

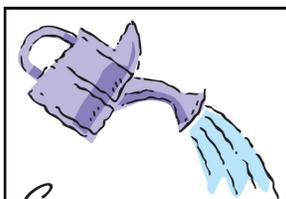




A special thanks to the Friedens Youth Group for the delicious meal they prepared and delivered to me. It was awesome.
 God bless,
 Elsie Berger



A two-session gathering for persons who want to consider becoming a member of Friedens congregation and becoming one with us in discipleship and service is being held Sundays, April 10 and 17, from 4 pm to 5:30 pm.



So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

1 Corinthians 3:7, NIV



Rehearsal schedule for the rest of March and April:

Wednesday, March 23, Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
 Wednesday, March 30, Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
 Sunday, April 3, Handbell Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM
 Wednesday, April 6, Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
 Sunday, April 10, Handbell Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM
 Wednesday, April 13, Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
 Sunday, April 17, **No Handbell Choir Rehearsal**
 Wednesday, April 20, Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
 Sunday, April 24, Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 9:30 AM
 Wednesday, April 27, Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 PM
 Thursday, April 28, Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 PM



FRIENDS OF SPANG CREST SPRING BAR-B-QUE
 By Kauffman's

Date: Friday, April 29, 2016

Time: 2:30—6:00 P.M.

Location: Spang Crest, 945 Duke Street, Lebanon

Cost: \$7.00 includes 1/2 chicken, baked potato, and Applesauce

For tickets see: Barbara Grumbine, 821-6993 or Janet Kehrli, 866-6726

Bar-B-Q can be picked up at church kitchen at 4:30 P.M. on April 29th. See Barbara or Janet to make arrangements.