



# The Transformer

January 2014

717-866-4910

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

## A New Year's Reflection from Psalm 8

There once was a man who lived a quiet life doing things that were neither noteworthy nor important. He was not a great man who changed the course of history or a terrible one that people reviled. No one looked at him as a role model or an example; no one hated or despised him either. Most people actually never noticed him. He was not overly attractive or particularly ugly. He was simply a plain, ordinary man living a plain, ordinary life.

One day he was coming home from work thinking thoughts that were neither important nor unimportant when he saw a woman he had never seen before sitting on his front step. She stood as he came closer, gave him a dazzling smile, and said, "You are special and loved by God." She then walked passed him around the corner.

The man stared after her for a moment. Then he shrugged his shoulders and dug into his pocket for his keys. He went into his apartment; made himself an unremarkable meal; turned on the television and began to watch as he always did after work. Yet he couldn't concentrate on the programs because he kept thinking about the woman and what she had said. Why did she say that to him? What was it that made him special?

He finally concluded that she must be one of those people who have trouble with reality because the more he considered himself, his abilities, and his life he could not imagine why God would consider him special much less why God would bother loving such an unremarkable person as him. He was just an ordinary man who lived an ordinary, unremarkable life. So he decided to think nothing more of it.

Except he couldn't; the next morning he was still thinking of what those words might mean. He began to wonder if it was true that God loved him and thought that he was special. That is when he began to notice things he had never noticed before.

As he walked from his house he saw how beautiful the sky was and remarkable the flowers and trees were. He listened to the birds singing and felt the gentle breeze. He took a deep breath and felt pleasure in the day before him. As he waited for the bus there were people who nodded to him when he nodded at them. An older man sitting next to him wished him a good day when they arrived at his stop.

At work things were even more unusual. He found himself paying attention to what he was doing and amazed at how much he accomplished. He knew he didn't do anything earth shattering or life changing but he did his work well. The tasks he finished allowed other people to do their work and helped create something larger. The most remarkable thought entered his head unexpectedly. Maybe he wasn't as ordinary as he thought. Maybe God did in fact love him and find him special. He could feel his heart race; his step was bouncier.

He was smiling when he took the bus home. That's when he noticed other people were smiling at him. The man felt happy for the first time in a long time. He didn't know why God loved him and why God might think he was special but he realized the reasons didn't matter. All that mattered was that he knew God cared about him.

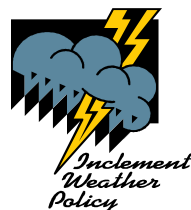
My prayer for all of us this New Year is that we might come to know God loves us, just as we are. Praise be to God.

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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



Janet Seibert and Violet Schaeffer will lead Listening to God's Hopes for Us on Monday, January 20.

**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**

**November 2013**

				% of Budget	
Current Budget	Goal	\$26,802.00	Goal to Date	\$294,822.00	85%
\$321,625.00	Rec'd	\$24,750.00	Rec'd to Date	252,310.00	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	75.00	Rec'd to Date	592.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	220.00	Rec'd to Date	2,815.00	



When you see these people give them a great big Thank You for helping to put up the Christmas trees and decorating the church on Saturday morning!!! Jim Biever, Keith & Janice DuBois,

Jim Kneasel, Barb & Gene Lessig, Sylvia Pohronezny, Chris & Sharon Riegel, Jake & Judy Werner and Joel Zinn.

Plus a big "Thank You" to our anonymous donors for the beautiful Christmas wreaths decorating the outside of the church again this year and Stracks Tree Farm for the Christmas trees beautifying our altar area.

Thank you for the beautiful prayer shawl you gave me. That was so kind and thoughtful and very much appreciated. Thanks for thinking of me.

In Christian Love,  
Jacqueline M. Wolfe

Thank you to Friedens for the lovely poinsettia. That was very thoughtful, as were all the Christmas greetings we received here at Phoebe Berks Village. It's nice to be remembered.

Yours in Christ,  
Darlene & Jan Wise

Thank you for your concern, prayers, phone calls, cards and flowers following my recent surgery. Your kindness was appreciated and helped me recover quickly.

Thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,  
Janet Seibert



## Food Collection

On Sunday, January 5, 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.

## Congregational Meeting



Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 9, 2014 at 11:30 am in Stauffer Hall.

Annual Reports from Staff & Team/Committee Leaders are due to Janet Moyer no

later than Wednesday, January 22, 2014.


During this meeting we will review these reports as well as the Endowment Budget. Elaine Lasch will coordinate a team to serve soup & bread at the meeting.



## COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 23, 2014 at 7 pm (please note date/time change).

# JANUARY 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1  New Year's Day	2  7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	3	4
5 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	6	7	8 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7:30 PM—Adult Choir	9  7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	10	11
12 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	13	14  7 PM—Property Committee	15 Deadline for Newsletter articles 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7:30 PM—Adult Choir	16  7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	17	18
19 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	20  7 PM—Women of ELCA	21	22 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7:30 PM—Adult Choir	23 7: PM—Church Council Meeting 7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	24	25
26 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	27	28	29 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7:30 PM—Adult Choir	30  7 PM—Heavenly Metal Handbell Ensemble	31	



Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA  
Church Council Meeting  
December 19, 2013

Jeff Gumpert, President, called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

Present: Jody Appleby (Vice President), Frank Armstrong, Jeff Gumpert (President), Chris Heft, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer), Denise Noll, Ken Osborne (Interim Pastor) and Sharon Riegel (Secretary). Excused: Joanne Maurer

Guests: Janice DuBois, Jim Kneasel

1. Opening Prayer: Ken Osborne opened the meeting with prayer. Scripture: Luke 1:26-33. Discussion followed.
2. Minutes/Reports/Communications:
  - a. Frank Armstrong made a motion to accept the November 14, 2013 Church Council Minutes. Denise Noll seconded. Motion carried.
  - b. Jody Appleby made a motion to accept the November 24, 2013 Congregational Meeting Minutes. Frank Armstrong seconded. Motion carried.
  - c. Denise Noll made a motion to accept the December 8, 2013 Congregational Meeting Minutes. Jody Appleby seconded. Motion carried.
  - d. Denise Noll made the motion to accept the November Financial Secretary's Report. Chris Heft seconded. Motion carried.
  - e. Denise Noll made a motion to accept November Treasurer's Report. Sharon Riegel seconded. Motion carried.
  - f. Ken Osborne shared a copy of his Pastor's Report for November 2013. Frank Armstrong made a motion to accept the November 2013 Pastor's Report. Denise Noll seconded. Motion carried. Highlights of Pastor's Report include:
    - Pastor Osborne will be off January 27, 2014 through February 2, 2014. Pastor Sharron Blezard, Lower Susquehanna Synod will be our Supply Pastor on February 2, 2014.
    - Pastor Osborne will not be traveling to Argentina on a Mission Trip.
  - g. Thank you letter from LutherCare for recent gift of \$55 to Spang Crest.
3. Jeff Gumpert reported Finance Committee did not meet in December.
4. Property Committee met on December 10, 2013. Council reviewed a copy of the minutes. Jim Kneasel also gave a verbal report. Beginning in 2014 Jim Kneasel will be the Council Rep on Property Committee.

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5. Chris Heft, Chairperson of Call Committee shared an update on the Pastoral Call Process. The Lower Susquehanna Synod has received all the required paperwork from Friedens. The Bishop is working on reviewing potential candidates to refer to the Call Committee. Our new Call Process Contact Person at the Synod is Pastor Robert Blezard, Assistant to the Bishop.
6. At our September 25, 2013 meeting Andy Evenson and Thomas McKee highly recommended we compose a "Parental Leave Policy." Pastor Osborne shared with the group his findings from Synod. Further discussion will continue at January meeting.
7. Council discussed the use of the Youth Room by local girl scouts. Pastor Osborne will connect with Gene Lessig. Further discussion will continue at January meeting.
8. Chris Heft shared an update on Clearances/Background Checks for Liability Purposes. Pastor Blezard of Synod has provided a website for Council to review. Pastor Osborne will work on getting a copy of a policy from another church. Council will seek thoughts/insights from Jim Biever and Jon Zinn. Further discussion will continue at January meeting.
9. Sharon Riegel motioned to accept with regret the resignation from Council of Jeff Gumpert effective when a new President/Officers are appointed at January meeting. Chris Heft seconded. Motion carried.
10. Installation of Council Persons will take place at worship on either Sunday, December 29, 2013 or Sunday, January 5, 2014. Pastor Osborne will coordinate.
11. Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 9, 2014 at 11:30 am in Stauffer Hall. Annual Reports from Staff and Team/Committee Leaders are due to Janet Moyer, Church Secretary by no later than Wednesday, January 22, 2014. During this meeting we will review these reports as well as the Endowment Budget. Elaine Lasch will coordinate a team to serve soup and bread at the meeting.
12. The group discussed at length a "foul weather policy" for the church primarily for Sunday morning worship. Jim Biever has volunteered to be our Team Leader. If Sunday worship is cancelled it will be reported to local radio at AM 1270/FM 100.1 and local tv station WGAL. WGAL lists cancellations both on the TV and their website. Cancellations will also be listed on church Facebook page.
13. Next Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 23, 2014 at 7:00 pm (please note date/time change).
14. Denise Noll made the motion to adjourn. Sharon Riegel seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Meeting closed with prayer lead by Jeff Gumpert.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sharon Riegel, Council Secretary

