



The Transformer

November 2017

717-866-4910

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

At the beginning of every month, the Wallace checking account predictably dips as it releases automatic payments and withdrawals.

We all understand how the billing / payment process works. We make a purchase or register for a service and each month make a payment to cover all or portion of the cost. With a home mortgage or automobile loan, we commit ourselves to several years of payments. With utility services - electric, water, television/ internet, telephone, the expectation is full payment upon receipt of the invoice.

Some of you make these monthly payments by sitting at your desk with the stack of bills, writing checks, placing invoice and check in the envelope, and affixing postage. Others of us use a variety of electronic services like automatic withdrawal from the checking account or electronic bill pay services connected to your account. I prefer the later because it makes record keeping and year-end accounting much easier. Also, my skills at balancing the checkbook proved minimal.

I speak of monthly bill paying in which we all engage, because there is another financial commitment that receives regular attention in the Wallace home.

Last month I wrote about my Uncle Charles and the financial instruction he provided Cheri and me prior to our marriage. His conviction joined other formative influences to compel our making the commitment to tithe all income sources through contributions to the congregation and other Christian endeavors. At the time of our marriage we lived in a two-room upstairs apartment in a house located in an inner-city neighborhood, near the church I served. I worked full-time as neighborhood minister and attended seminary part-time. Cheri worked part-time as a seamstress and attended college. We had enough to meet our need. The dreams would wait.

Nine years later, when we purchased our first home, I backed away from the tithe. At that time mortgage rates were in the range of 15%. When tax reporting time came, Cheri did the math and saw our contributions fell below the 10% mark. Her admonition was simple, "If we cannot afford to maintain our commitment to tithe and cover mortgage payments, then we cannot afford to own a home."

That is how Cheri and I heard God speaking to us about being stewards of the income we receive. Through **Friedens' 52/10 emphasis**, we want you to hear God, review your story, and make a commitment.

The "52" challenges each of us to make regular contributions whatever number of Sundays we attend worship. Being a member of any faith community is being a stake holder and investor in that congregation's ministry. We have a responsibility to act according to this commitment in the same way we meet other financial promises. Hence, on the first Friday of every month, the electronic bill paying service attached to the Wallace checking account "cuts a check" to Friedens.

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The “10” challenges each of us to determine the percent of income we commit to “God’s good work” through Friedens and other Christian organizations. Please consider doing this: first, determine at what level you currently give - that is your baseline; next, ask yourself before God, “what is my/our growth in giving target”; and finally, implement the plan.

We suggest you consider increasing your giving 10% a year until you are contributing a tenth of your income to God’s good work. Maybe right now you cannot imagine that ever occurring. That’s okay. Simply determine the number that fits your current financial situation (like you do with a car purchase or internet data usage) and commit yourself to regular contributions. “Regular” might mean every week, or once a month, but it is a per cent of income commitment rather than whatever is available when I attend. Then, as you sense God leading you, grow that gift.

Every year at the annual meeting, Friedens presents a vision for ministry and attaches a spending plan to show how we will fund this good work. When we the congregation approve the spending plan, it is the same as when any of us sign papers for a mortgage or an automobile payment. We make a commitment. That commitment is shared among us all. So friends, it is well for us to realize that right now our level of contributions does not match the commitments we made.

I entrust these thoughts to you as we journey together, following Jesus who is “the way, the truth, and the life.” We are apprentices and life travelers together.

Peace+
Pastor Robert



THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY AND CAROL SING

will be held on the Square at Main and Locust Streets, Myerstown, on Saturday, November 25, 2017, at 6:30 P.M. The instrumental music will begin at 6:15 P.M. Featuring..ELCO High School Concert Choir.

In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the sanctuary of the Myerstown United Church of Christ.

Following the ceremony, there will be refreshments by candlelight at the Isaac Meier House on South College Street.





Food Collection

On Sunday, November 5, 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, toilet paper, and reusable plastic containers.



If you are interested in ordering a poinsettia to place in the church for Christmas, 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 \$6.75 each. You have a choice of red, white, pink or marble. The last day to order is **NOVEMBER 27.**

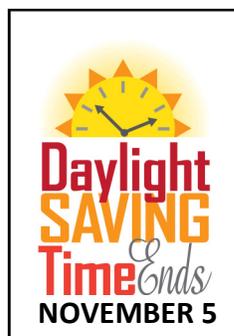


CALLING ALL PEOPLE interested in expressing their artistic abilities: Christmas Decorating on December 2nd at 9 A.M. We are looking for people (either individually or a group) to decorate one or more of the 12 windows in

church for the Christmas Holiday season. There is a sign up sheet outside Janet's office. Pick your theme and sign your name or names under the window you would like to transform into the meaning of the 12 days of Christmas.

Come and give it a try and lets see how we can make the windows bring the spirit of Christmas alive over the Holidays.

You may come the week from November 27 up to and including December 2nd to decorate at your convenience.



OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

September 2017

					% of Budget
Current Budget	Goal	\$33,857.00	Goal to Date	\$101,571.00	60%
\$406,280.00	Rec'd	\$17,979.00	Rec'd to Date	60,888.00	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	25.00	Rec'd to date	78.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	235.00	Rec'd to Date	560.00	

NOVEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	2 7 PM—Choir	3	4
5 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 AM—Traditional Service	6	7  ELECTION DAY	8 9AM—Women Sew 1 PM—Life Group—Parlor 6 PM—Life Group—Parlor 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	9 6:30 PM—Finance Committee 7 PM—Choir	10	11  VETERANS DAY
12 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 AM—Traditional Service	13	14 7 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Property Committee	15  6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	16 7 PM—Choir 7 PM—Church Council	17	18
19 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 AM—Traditional Service	20	21 7 PM—WELCA	22 9AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	23  <i>Thanksgiving Day</i>	24	25
26 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 AM—Traditional Service	27	28	29 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band	30 7 PM—Choir		



Thanks to all of those people who contributed with their time, money and prayers for the recently concluded two week stint at the HOPES Homeless Shelter at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. We had between 20-35 guests on any given night. About half of the guests were children under the age of 10. While Friedens was at the shelter, one of the guests, an Army veteran, was able to get her own apartment and members of Friedens provided her with furniture and household furnishings. This is the system at work. Our future participation in this mission is totally dependent upon whether or not more people step-up to man the overnight shifts. There will be an announcement forthcoming about this issue.



I need 10 people to provide between 3-4 dozen of cookies for the reception following the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday December 3. Please contact me at 717-821-0130 or jbiever5543@comcast.net if you are willing to do so. Please contact me as well if you are willing to assist in serving at the reception – Jim Biever



Much appreciation for the efforts that made our 2017 Lutheran World Relief campaign worthwhile. To the Sewing Group-**58 quilts**. To the Children’s Church-**78 personal care kits AND 12 school kits**. To WELCA-**15 fabric kits**. To Smith’s Candies-packing boxes. To Jake and Judy Werner and Keith DuBois-transport of our boxes of quilts and kits to the drop off site. To our congregation-donations for shipping to places yet unknown.





C O M M U N I T Y

Thanksgiving

W O R S H I P S E R V I C E

A community Thanksgiving service will be held at the StoneRidge Theater on Sunday, November 19th at 7 P.M. You are asked to bring a nonperishable food item as an offering for the evening. Father Bill Richardson from Mary Gate of Heaven Church will bring the message. A community choir will provide the evening anthem. Rev. Rod Shearer will serve as pianist.

