



# The Transformer

June 2015

717-866-4910

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

## ABOUT BEING A PASTOR

As I thought about what to say to you in this last newsletter article as Interim Pastor here at Friedens, I thought I might take the time to remark about some observations I have about being a Pastor. Shortly you will be welcoming your first full-time Pastor in three years. Many of you are wondering what he will be like or if he will want to change things in worship or in other areas of church life.

It is only natural to be inquisitive about the new Pastor, but it is also fair to remember that no one person is the church. Our expectations of one individual can be totally unreasonable. Once I served a rural parish as an interim Pastor many years ago. The Council described to me what they were looking for in a new Pastor. After listening to this for a while, I mentioned that Billy Graham was not available. They all just looked at me, but I told them that if they were looking for a Pastor who would solve all their problems that person does not exist. Of course, we Pastors sometimes like to give councils the idea that yes we can solve all your problems. Therein lies the source of conflict in the future when expectations are not met.

This happened in another rural parish I worked with several times. The new Pastor was the best thing since sliced bread, but in a year or two when attendance did not skyrocket and the treasury was not overflowing with money the complaining began. Again our expectations of the person filling the Office of Pastor are very often unreasonable. Why do I say that? Well, many problems of the church today have nothing to do with the Pastor. Our society no longer values church attendance or being a Christian. The church must compete with many other attractions or ideas out there. Many people even in the church think worship is just one of many choices on a Sunday. The pressure on one person to be his or her best at a given time on a Sunday so people will want to attend is very great. We like to count numbers which means we are doing well. It is certainly better to have a thriving congregation, but sometimes we forget we have been called as the church to be faithful not successful.

One of my observations over the years about pastors is that people put them on a pedestal and then resent them for being there. We do not want to be treated like a piece of crystal glass you put on a mantel to look at and admire and then the only interaction we have is to dust us once in a while. If you want to know your pastor as a person, then invite him or her to dinner. Interact with the pastor whenever you can. If you do not want to really know your pastor, then do not go around saying he is unfriendly or snobbish or whatever. A Pastor can only do a meaningful job when he or she knows his flock personally. Pastors are human beings with strengths and weaknesses like the rest of us. Some of the most caring, smart, and funny people I have known in my life have been pastors. I also know pastors can be controlling, bossy, and difficult to work with as well. So you see it is quite a mix of personality traits.

While visiting members of Friedens over the last four months, I got the distinct impression some members were disappointed how decisions were made in the past. We all must realize that as a church

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we are also a democracy. If decisions are made in such a way as to not listen to the voice of the people, then members do have a right to feel left out. However, anyone who feels this way must take the time to confront the issue and to talk to the Council and Pastor. If you have a problem go to the source. If you want pastor to listen to you, you need to talk directly about the issue and not gossip behind his back thinking that will get action. If we are really serious about an issue, speak up. You have that right, but if the congregation chooses a different path then so be it. That is how it works. Remember the Church is supposed to be a family and a place where people can disagree and be different and still be loved and forgiven. If we cannot manage that, perhaps the church is not for us.

Well, before I end this article I just wanted to thank the Congregation Council for their cooperation and support as well as their generosity. I also want to thank our Secretary, Janet Moyer, whose invaluable help I will always be grateful for these last four months. Finally, I want to thank the members of Friedens for their kindness, support and generosity these last four months. You remind me of a good parent who knows how to motivate and support someone they love. Thanks to all our shut-ins as well who welcomed me in to their homes and lives. It was a pleasure to serve you, and I wish you God’s blessing as you begin a new ministry with a new Pastor.

Rev. Thomas Light



We hope you are ready to join in with the social time between church services. Again we are asking for help to serve the coffee, drinks and goodies. You are welcome to bring a snack to share, but coffee and snacks are provided, we just need help to prepare and serve. Find a friend and serve together. A sign-up sheet is in the Stauffer hall and we hope you will be able to help continue our social time together. If you have any questions please contact Annette Beamesderfer, Carmella Deck or Susie Harper.



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 need for meals?

Please call Joanne at 717/507-1997 to schedule the meals.



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



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**Friedens Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program(CYAPP)**

In accordance with PA House Bill 435, paid staff and adult volunteers(over 18) for youth activities(Youth Group, Children's Church, VBS, Chaperoning, etc.) will be required to complete the PA State Police Request for Criminal Record Check (SP4-164) and the PA Child Abuse History Clearance (CY-113). Cost is \$10.00 each. If you have not lived in PA for the past 10 years, you must also get a Federal Criminal History Background Check (\$28.75 with submission of finger print records). All of these will be reimbursed by Friedens with submission of receipts and confirmation of satisfactory clearances. Questions? Please connect with a Council Person or a Child/Youth Leader. Links to complete the two main background checks may be found at <http://www.lss-elca.org/blog/making-our-congregations-safe-space-for-all/> For those without Internet access hard copies of forms are available in church office.



"VBS 2015 - Registration is now open! Visit [www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/ez/FriedensMyerstown](http://www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/ez/FriedensMyerstown) (put this address on your tool bar, not google) to register, or call the church office. Deadline to register is July 1st. Come on out and embark on an icy expedition where kids overcome obstacles with God's awesome power! Sun., July 12 - Wed, July 15, 6-8:00 pm."

**SHUT-IN BIRTHDAY**

**June 6**  
Doris Towers  
41 Arbor Drive  
Myerstown, PA 17067

**June 28**  
Mrs. Roberta Sitler  
Linden Village  
100 Tuck Court  
Lebanon, PA 17042



College students and students attending other qualified institutions may pick up loan applications at the church office. Applications must be returned by **JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup>**.

**OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS**

**April 2015**

				% of Budget	
Current Budget \$327,195.00	Goal Rec'd	\$27,266.00 \$26,008.00	Goal to Date Rec'd to Date	\$109,064.00 91,296.00	84%
Spang Crest	Rec'd	23.00	Rec'd to Date	\$ 151.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	180.00	Rec'd to Date	\$ 945.00	

# JUNE 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal	4	5	6
7 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	8	9 7 PM—Property Committee	10 9 AM-Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal	11	12	13
14 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	15 Mission Trip  6 PM—Women of ELCA—Picnic Pavilion	16	17 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal	18	19	20
21 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	22	23	24 9 AM-Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal	25 7 PM—Church Council	26	27
28 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service	29	30				



DYLAN ALTHOUSE graduated from ELCO High School. He plans to attend HAAC.

DRESDEN FEITZINGER graduated from ELCO High School. He plans to attend Drexel University for Computer Science.

ALYSSA FELLI graduated from ELCO High School. She plans to attend West Virginia University and is undecided on her major.

RYAN KEMMERLING graduated from ELCO High School. He plans to attend West Chester University for Criminal Justice.

ELIZABETH KLEINFELTER graduated from ELCO High School. She plans to attend Millersville University for Business Finance.

JONNY KOLLER graduated from Cedar Crest High School. He plans to attend Lycoming College and is undecided about his major.

JENA KOPPENHAVER graduated from ELCO High School. She plans to attend Penn College for Occupational Therapy.

ZACHARY SWANGER graduated from ELCO High School. He plans to attend Bloomsburg University for Second Education.

LAURA UMBERGER graduated from ELCO High School. She plans to attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania for Interior Design.

BEN DECK GRADUATED in December from Temple University with a BS in Neuro Science. He is doing research at University of Pennsylvania.

KATELYN UMBERGER graduated from Lebanon Valley College with a BA in Music and a BS in Music Education. She is seeking a job. Would like to teach elementary grades.



On Sunday, June 7, 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.



**What could be better than a trip to the Chesapeake Bay in June?** Join us for our 2015 Summer Mission to Crisfield, Maryland, the week of June 15th. We will work on Hurricane Sandy (2012) Relief recovery. Can't stay the entire week? Join us for part of the week-whatever works for you! Crisfield is not far from Ocean City, Maryland. You must be 16 years old to participate-makes for a great Senior Project! More details coming-plan to be Christ's hands and feet-join this mission team in June!

**Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA  
Special Church Council Meeting  
April 15, 2015**

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

**Church Council Present:**

Jody Appleby (President), Janice DuBois, Chris Heft, Valarie Herron, Jim Kneasel, Jon Koller, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer), Bev Levengood, Sharon Riegel (Secretary), and John Umberger.

Excused: Frank Armstrong (Vice President)

**Pastoral Search Team (Call Committee) Present:**

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

Excused: McKenna Achenbach

Special Guest: Pastoral Candidate, Rev. Robert W. Wallace, Jr.

1. Chris Heft, Chairman, Pastoral Search Team, welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Chris Heft made the unanimous recommendation from the Pastoral Search Team of a Pastoral Candidate to Council, Rev. Robert W. Wallace, Jr.
2. The Pastoral Candidate opened the meeting with a prayer.
3. The group held a discussion with the Pastoral Candidate.
4. Bev Levengood made the motion to adjourn. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. Meeting closed with prayer by the Pastoral Candidate.

Sharon Riegel  
Council Secretary



June 21



June 21

**Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA**  
**Special Church Council Meeting**  
**April 16, 2015**

Jody Appleby, President, called the meeting to order at 8:40 pm.

Church Council Present:

Jody Appleby (President), Janice DuBois, Valarie Herron, Jim Kneasel, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer), Bev Levengood, Sharon Riegel (Secretary), and John Umberger

Excused: Frank Armstrong (Vice President), Chris Heft, Jon Koller

1. Jody Appleby opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. Pastoral Search Team unanimously recommends Pastoral Candidate, Rev. Robert W. Wallace, Jr. Congregational Council voted to recommend the Pastoral Candidate to the congregation of Friedens, with a tally of 7 yeas and 0 no.
3. Council President, Chairman of Pastoral Search Team and Treasurer will conference with Pastoral Candidate in the near future to inform the candidate of the results of the vote and to outline the details of the compensatory package.
4. Date of Special Congregational Meeting is May 31, 2015.
5. Bev Levengood made the motion to adjourn. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m. Meeting closed with prayer by Jody Appleby.

Sharon Riegel  
Council Secretary

### **STAYING SPIRITUALLY FIT**

Prayer is like exercise: Neither is an end in itself. Just as exercise is intended to make us physically fit by strengthening our muscles so we can manage more activity, engaging in prayer leads to more prayer. The harder one works at exercise, the greater the results. But if we give up the routine, the results won't hold. The same goes for prayer.

Writes Rev. Kate Braestrup in *Beginner's Grace* (Atria Books), "There will be no moment — in this life, anyway — when I will be able to say, 'That's it! I've prayed, and the prayers have paid off: I'm a fully conscious, totally grateful, and unstintingly generous person. I can just start stuffing myself as soon as the plate hits the table.'"

Rather, she notes, "The more you give, the more you will be able to give; the more you receive, the more you will be willing to receive; and the more you pray, the more you can ... pray."



Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA  
Church Council Meeting  
May 21, 2015

Janice DuBois, Acting Secretary, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Present: Janice DuBois, Valarie Herron, Jim Kneasel, Jon Koller, Bev Levensgood, Pastor Tom Light (Interim Pastor)

Excused: Jody Appleby (President), Frank Armstrong (Vice President), Chris Heft, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer), Sharon Riegel (Secretary), John Umberger

1. Opening Reading/Prayer: Janice DuBois opened the meeting with devotions and prayer.
2. Minutes/Reports/Communications:
  - a. **Jim Kneasel made a motion to accept the April 16, 2015 Church Council Minutes. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried.**
  - b. **Bev Levensgood made a motion to accept the April 15, 2015 Special Church Council Minutes. Jon Koller seconded. Motion carried.**
  - c. **Jon Koller made a motion to accept the April 16, 2015 Special Church Council Minutes. Jim Kneasel seconded. Motion carried.**
  - d. **Bev Levensgood made a motion to accept the April 2015 Financial Secretary's Report. Jon Koller seconded. Motion carried.**
  - e. **Jim Kneasel made a motion to accept the April 2015 Treasurer's Report. Jon Koller seconded. Motion carried.**
  - f. **Jon Koller made a motion to accept the April 2015 Pastor's Report. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried.** Highlights include: Life Group possibility – Pastor Light is agreeable to, and has offered to lead a group on the historical life of the universal church. This comes in response to interest to the Lenten Life Group led by Pastor Light. However, Pastor Light requires that Pastor Wallace, prospective pastoral candidate, be notified and agreeable also.
  - g. Thank you from Janet Moyer for recent gift in honor of Administrative Professionals Day.
3. Elaine Lasch was excused from meeting. Finance Committee met on April 22, 2015. There was no May 2015 meeting.
4. Jim Kneasel reported the highlights from the Property Committee meeting of May 2015.
5. A Capital Campaign Report was available. As of April 2015 the Campaign Goal of \$149,000 is short \$6,246.21.

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6. Pastoral Search Update – Meet & Greet for Pastor Wallace is scheduled for Saturday, May 30 from 1 to 4 pm, light refreshments will be served. Plans for this reception were made and absent members of said committees will be notified. Trial Sermons/Congregational Meetings are scheduled for Sunday, May 31 at 9:00 am and 10:30 am.
7. Jody Appleby via email reported the resignation of Katelyn Umberger, Handbell Choir Director, effective June 30, 2015. **Council recommends search for a replacement for this choir.**
8. Janice DuBois and Elaine Lasch will not be attending the June 2015 Synod Assembly.
9. Concerns regarding Services for May 31, 2015 were discussed. Pastor Wallace should be notified ASAP of intended Setting for the Traditional Service. Jim Biever could advise on this matter. Janet Moyer needs to be notified for bulletin accuracy. Chris Heft should make Pastor Wallace aware of format and detail for both services.
10. The Mission Trip to be held June 14 to 19, 2015, was briefly discussed. Paperwork will be distributed soon.
11. “God’s work. Our Hands” Sunday, September 13, 2015, encouraged by ELCA will be planned and advertised for congregation participation.
12. A farewell gift for Pastor Light was discussed. Jim Kneasel made a motion for this gift. Bev Leven-good seconded the motion. Motion carried.
13. **Next Council Meeting will be held on June 25, 2015 at 7 pm.** This date was chosen to include Pastor Wallace, if congregational vote on May 31, 2015 is affirmative. A person to be determined will prepare opening prayer/devotional.
14. **Jon Koller made the motion to adjourn. Jim Kneasel seconded.** Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Meeting closed with the sharing of joys & concerns and prayer led by Janice DuBois.

Janice DuBois  
Acting Council Secretary



## JUST A BUILDING

There is a tendency today for church leaders and many followers to denigrate the actual building we call church. They are concerned there is too much allegiance to, too much comfort, and too much worship of something that is “Just a Building.” This concern has fostered a movement away from the establishment—the religious center—toward a more “casual” and “free” approach to generating faith. By fostering the casual and free approach and empowering independence and neglecting interdependence, clergy just might be committing vocational suicide. This approach is omnipresent in Europe. A continent studded with great cathedrals now regarded only as great architecture or great art. On any given Sunday most of these cathedrals are virtually empty. In Norway, a Lutheran country, their church buildings are existing in a vacuum. The people confess they do not need these buildings. They practice a more modern contemporary and free form of their religion. Free to meet in various small groups at more modern home surroundings. Contemporary and up to date vernacular and music generates for them a connection to this world as it is and a religion of the present. Yet when trouble or tragedy strikes, you will find them in those very buildings they say they don’t need. They are on their knees in front of a beautiful altar built years ago and a glorious cross. Both are as relevant now as they were yesterday. Makes one think about those church buildings...are they “Just a Building?”

Is the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. just a building to you? Or does it hold greater significance and importance? I’m sure you will agree it is an old building with historic significance, yet relevant and an important part of our present day life. It exists because meeting in small groups wasn’t compatible with governance of our country. The elected congressmen do meet in small groups for various purposes but convene together to accomplish their mission in accordance to the Constitution of the United States. The Capitol Building—”Just a Building?” I don’t think so!

Quite frankly there is something ethereal and awe inspiring generated by a church building. We can never have too much allegiance, too much comfort, too much worship in such a significant and important structure as our church. It is the outward and physical manifestation of our faith, hope and love. A structural reality to anyone desperately seeking any or all of those attributes.

Yes we are disciples. Yes we go and proclaim God’s love for all. But, just like the original disciples, we require the constant infusion of God’s word and His abundant graces. We can find some of this in small group meetings. We can find some of this in individualistic contemporary practices. Yet “some” is not enough! We Christians are divinely wired and must “plug in” to a central power source. There we will receive not just “some” but the full charge of our faith, our hope and His love. We can’t find this source of power with the present day PPL or MetEd. We will find this full charge whenever we convene together in one place. And that place is God’s house...a structural edifice erected by faith, hope and love. Our church—”Just a Building?” I think not!

Respectfully,  
F. A. Armstrong