



# The Transformer

February 2016

717-866-4910

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

**Dear Friends in Christ,**

The blizzard struck, the melting continues, and the stories will get better with age.

Cheri summed up the snow event for us with this thought, “We had one snowfall during our six years in Charleston, so the Lord provided what we missed all at once!” (Add smiley face emoji.) Cheri also added this encouragement for me, “Besides all the shoveling you did over the weekend provided a boost to your fitness program.” To her “sunny side of life” reflections I would add, we enjoyed reading by the fireplace.

However, we missed gathering with you Sunday morning. We did remember you in our prayers.

**LENT**

**On Wednesday, February 10, we at Friedens will join Christians all over the world to observe a day known as “Ash Wednesday.” We will hold a spoken service at 12:15 pm and a choral service at 7:00 pm. We will observe the imposition of ashes and the celebration of Holy Communion at both services.**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a season known as Lent. Traditionally Lent is a forty-day period beginning on Ash Wednesday and extending through daylight on the Saturday before Easter. Sundays, being a day when Christians gather to confess and celebrate “the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting” is not counted among the days set aside for fasting.

During the first century of the Christian movement, faith gatherings used the weeks prior to Easter Sunday to instruct the adults and youth who now confessed their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Then on the evening prior to Easter, in splendid vigil worship, these new converts renounced their old life and confessed faith in the Triune God. Their baptism and reception of Holy Communion followed.

By the end of the fourth century the now institutional church set a period of days prior to Easter for the entire church to reflect upon the passion of Jesus, the gift of forgiveness, and the promise of the resurrection. Fasting became associated with Lenten observance. This usually meant not eating particular foods and refraining from festivities. Also, associated with Lent were acts of penance whereby persons demonstrated their sorrow for sins committed.

At its best “Lenten observance is marked by renewed vigor for justice through prayer (justice towards God), fasting (justice towards self), and sacrificial giving (justice towards neighbor).” The word justice means putting relationships in their right, God-intended, order.

**AT FRIEDENS**

I bring before you a suggestion for our Lenten observance this year.

Time is a precious commodity. Since becoming your pastor, I have presided at ten funeral services. The Christian message, rehearsed at both the funeral and the Ash Wednesday services, is we are beautiful creatures of God whose physical existence is measured by a period of days we call a lifespan. We are creatures

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made “from dust and to dust we shall return.” In faith we grasp onto the promise of everlasting life. We believe God enters our death and, like with Jesus, raises us from the dead to dwell in God’s love forever.

Time is also precious because many of us try to cram so much into every week. Our passions and desires lead to our being overly committed and constantly on the go.

Lent offers an invitation to do that we know is well for us but rarely stop to do – that is, spend time, quality time, with the Lord and with those who are pilgrims with us as we journey through this life.

So, would you join me the following ways:

ONE – Set aside ten to fifteen minutes each day for bible reading, prayer and reflection. Many of us will be using the same devotional book. This is good. Families, couples, or friends may want to follow this devotional guide together.

TWO – Take part in the midweek worship and study. For Lent we bring together the midweek worship and Life Group study. Each Thursday beginning February 4, we meet from 7 pm to 8:10 for worship and conversation. The book that will serve as our guide is called *The Good and Beautiful God*. The readings and discussion questions are offered as a help to grow in appreciation of who God is and how God loves us.

THREE – Attend special Lenten worship services. Mark your calendar to set aside the days for special worship services that begin and conclude Lent. Ash Wednesday is the first of these services. Then during Holy Week (March 20-26) we will observe worship on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday beginning at 7 pm and concluding at 8 pm. These three gatherings, although occurring on separate days, are in fact one continuous worship whereby the Christian community remembers how Jesus extends to humanity “amazing grace” through his crucifixion.

### WHY?

Suggestions one, two, and three may feel like I am imposing much upon your already busy lives. For most of us to follow a Lenten observance, we have to rearrange our schedules to make room for such reflection. Hence this Lenten discipline is fasting from being always too busy rather than fasting from certain foods.

We fast for the purpose of having our attention, our emotions, our thoughts, drawn to God. The Message paraphrase of the Bible has the apostle Paul advocate such observance this way,

*“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God”* (Romans 12:1-2, MSG).

A brother and fellow pilgrim in Christ,

Pastor Robert





## Food Collection

On Sunday, February 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.



Sending a special thank you to our Friedens family and friends for all your sympathy cards, kind thoughts and especially your prayers. As you know this past month has been very difficult with the losses of our daughter-in-law Wendy Kapp and then our granddaughter Hope Westwick Maldonado. It means so much to us knowing that you understand and care.

God bless you,  
Sincerely,  
Robert & Jeanne Maldonado



## ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Congregational Meeting (with lunch) will be held on Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 11:30 am in Stauffer Hall. Annual Reports from Staff & Team/Committee Leaders are due to Janet Moyer, Church Secretary by no later than Sunday, January 24, 2016. Annual Report packets will be available for review beginning Sunday, February 14, 2016. **One Worship Service will be held on February 21, 2016 at 10:30 am in Sanctuary.**

### SHUT-IN BIRTHDAYS

February 27  
Mrs. Esther Yeakley  
450 Yeagley Road  
Myerstown, PA 17067

February 28  
Mrs. Mary Umberger  
Juniper Village  
1126 Birch Road  
Lebanon, PA 17042

### OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

#### December 2015

				% of Budget	
Current Budget	Goal	\$27,266.00	Goal to Date	\$327,195.00	87%
\$327,195.00	Rec'd	\$29,960.00	Rec'd to Date	285,105.00	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	24.00	Rec'd to Date	\$ 512.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	190.00	Rec'd to Date	\$ 3,290.00	

# FEBRUARY 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	4 7 PM—Midweek Worship and Life Group Study	5	6
7 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth Group	8	9 7 PM—Review of 9 Lessons & Carols Service 7 PM—Property Committee	10 9 AM—Women Sew 7 PM—Ash Wednesday Worship	11 7 PM—Midweek Worship and Life Group Study	12	13
14 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth Group	15  7 PM—Women of the ELCA	16	17 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	18 7 PM—Midweek Worship and Life Group Study 7 PM—Church Council	19	20
21 9 AM—Annual Congregational Meeting 10:30 AM—Worship Service	22	23	24 9 AM—Women Sew 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band 7 PM—Adult Choir	25 7 PM—Midweek Worship and Life Group Study 7 PM—Handbell Choir Rehearsal	26	27
28 9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:30 AM—Traditional Service 10:30 AM—Youth Group	29					



**Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, PA  
Church Council Meeting  
January 21, 2016**

Janice DuBois called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

**Present:** Janice DuBois, , Valarie Herron, Jim Kneasel, Elaine Lasch (Treasurer), Sharon Riegel (Secretary), Rev. Robert W. Wallace, Jr. (Pastor)

**Excused:** Chris Heft, Jon Koller, John Umberger

1. Opening Reading/Prayer: Sharon Riegel opened the meeting by reading Isaiah 6:8. The group viewed a video including the hymn “Here I Am Lord” in remembrance Frank Armstrong (Vice President). Frank passed away on January 17, 2016.
2. Tom Morrissey & Scott Stephenson have agreed to serve on Council beginning in 2016.
3. Due to light attendance appointing of officers for 2016 was tabled until next meeting.
4. Minutes/Reports/Communications:
  - a. **Jim Kneasel made a motion to accept the December 17, 2015 Church Council Minutes. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried.**
  - b. **Janice DuBois made a motion to accept the December 2015 Financial Secretary’s Report. Robert Wallace seconded. Motion carried.**
  - c. **Janice DuBois made a motion to accept the December 2015 Treasurer’s Report. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried.**
  - d. **Pastor Wallace gave a verbal & written Pastor’s Report. Janice DuBois made a motion to accept the January 2016 Pastor’s Report. Valarie Herron seconded. Motion carried. Robert Wallace made a motion to give \$400 from bequeath account to go along with \$100 donation for a total of \$500 to 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Four Chaplains Scholarship Run through Evangelical Seminary of Myerstown on February 6, 2016. Janice DuBois seconded. Motion carried.**
5. Elaine Lasch reported on the Finance Committee meeting of January 11, 2016. A copy of the 2016 Endowment Income Budget was provided to the group for their info.
6. Jim Kneasel reported the Property Committee did not meet in January 2016. The surveillance cameras have been installed. Gene Lessig is in agreement to form an Ad Hoc Committee to address security concerns. Ad Hoc Committee to be comprised of Pastor Wallace, Jon Koller (Council Rep), Property Committee Rep and State Police Rep.
7. Communications:
  - a. Thank you from Lutheran World Relief for recent gift of \$105.

8. A Capital Campaign Report was available. As of December 2015 the Campaign Goal of \$149,000 is short \$391.21.

9. Annual Congregational Meeting (with breakfast) will be held on Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 9:00 am in Stauffer Hall. Annual reports from staff and team/committee leaders are due to Janet Moyer, Church Secretary by no later than Sunday, January 24, 2016. Annual Report packets will be available for review beginning Sunday, February 14, 2016. One Worship Service will be held on February 21, 2016 at 10:30 am in Sanctuary. Janice DuBois will coordinate sign up sheet/announcements for continental breakfast items.

10. At the November meeting Council reviewed the Foul Weather Policy. Elaine Lasch confirmed with Jim Bieber announcements will run on WGAL website, WLBR verbal announcements, Friedens website & Friedens Facebook page.

11. **Next Council Meeting will be held on February 18, 2016 at 7 pm. A person to be determined will provide devotion/opening prayer.**

12. **Jim Kneasel made the motion to adjourn. Valarie Herron seconded.** Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. Meeting closed with the sharing of joys & concerns and Lord’s Prayer led by Pastor Wallace.

Sharon Riegel  
Council Secretary

**LENTEN BOOKLET**

You may pick up the Lenten devotional booklet, Bearing Fruit, provided for you by the church, according to your request.

One booklet per household or residence is appreciated. Large print booklets are for individuals who specifically requested such type.

Booklets are located in the Fellowship Hall and near the church office.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Prior to the February 21st Annual Congregational Meeting at 9 am, a **continental breakfast of fruit, pastries, and beverage** will be available. Members who would like to contribute breakfast items of fruit, pastries, or cold beverages of milk/juice for this breakfast are asked to sign up using the form found on the office bulletin board and/or on the Fellowship Hall table.

Coffee, hot tea and paper products will be provided by church council.



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

