



# The Transformer

March 2017

717-866-4910

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

With friends spread across America, I check-into Facebook to find out what's happening in their lives. From time to time I also make a posting. Last Sunday was such an occasion. The message came with a picture showing me garbed in bike-riding gear leaning on the Trek road bike. The caption read: *Climate Change - Not good; Global Warming - Dangerous; Carbon Footprint - Reduce; 68 degrees on February 19 in Mt. Gretna, PA - Sweet! The spirit was wanting to go farther than the flesh was able.*

Yes, I enjoyed the winter respite with my favorite recreation/relaxation pastime - riding the bicycle, either road bike or trail bike.

## LENT

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, March 1 with Ash Wednesday worship at 12:15 and 6 pm. Prior to the evening worship we will gather for a simple meal during the hour prior to worship. We will also observe the same practice of meal beginning at 5 pm and worship at 6 pm during the following five weeks of Lent.

Nicky Snyder is coordinating the meal. We are in need of folks who can donate soup and provide other assistance. If you can help please connect Nicky: [ballet06grad@hotmail.com](mailto:ballet06grad@hotmail.com)

I have a pastoral ask for observing Lent. Would you please arrange your life so we might together observe the following Lenten disciplines:

One - Daily read the Lenten devotion. Books are available on the table outside the church office door.

Two - Attend the midweek meal and worship. We will hear from scripture examples of God's faithful presence, and, through the liturgy for evening worship and prayer, contemplate God's presence with us.

Three - Begin each day by bringing your hands together as your feet touch the floor and committing yourself to following Jesus. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to how you will be neighbor to other persons through your life work, and to inspire you to acts of kindness.

This week I read a splendid essay written by Anne Kennedy about the gift of Lent to Christian persons. Here is a section from the piece entitled, "Ten Reasons to Love Lent":

*Lent is a microcosm of the Christian life. It is the 40 years in the wilderness, the 40 days in the ark, the 40 days of temptation. It is all about facing down the reality that in life it very often feels like there is no food and no water and that I loath this worthless food—that no matter what God provides to the Christian, there is always an aching after something more, a dissatisfaction, a restlessness. It's not just because of all the sin, it's because once you've seen the cross, it's hard to stick it out for the whole distance, you want to just jump to the end and be happy.*

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*This wanting to jump straight past the suffering to the end is a big problem in the west right now. We have no patience any more, no ability to sit and think, no willingness to suffer. Lent only makes sense if you settle down and purpose to endure for a while, to be unhappy without despair, to be hungry without starving, to be so humble that God can yet lift up your head...*

*An inescapable joy creeps in as you go on in lent. In the darkness of the wilderness, in the dust and the details of life, you begin to realize that there is an endpoint, that this too shall pass, that the only constant unchanging reality of the cosmos is God himself. The days build together towards the triumphal entry and then there you are, with a whole week to gaze upon the wonder of the cross, the power of God to overcome the totality of our evil and suffering. You have to be stone cold not to be moved to wonder when beholding the cold, toppled stone on Holy Saturday.*

*Lent is for sinners. And you are a sinner. So this season is specially made for you...*

### BIBLE STUDY

I want to also give you an advanced notice of a Bible Study I will lead after Easter. Called *Divine Drama*, it is a sixteen-week introduction to the bible and offers an overall understanding of the entire Bible and presentation of key themes running through God's Word revealed through scripture.


There are two opportunities to take part in *Divine Drama*. The first is Sunday evenings, 5 pm to 6:15 beginning March 19 and concluding June 11. Then we will resume the study for the final six sessions in September-October.

The second is Wednesdays noon to 1 pm beginning April 26 and concluding June 28. Likewise, the study resumes for the concluding six sessions the first week in September. Whether the study can serve you as introduction or refresher, your participation is desired and welcomed.

Friends, as the hymn reminds us, we are *frail children of dust* and yet we are the beloved of God who are created in God's image.

God bless you during our Lenten journey.

A friend and fellow traveler,  
*Pastor Robert*



If you are interested in ordering lilies to place in the church for Easter, 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 \$6.50 each. **MARCH 19** is the last day to order.





## Food Collection

On Sunday, March 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, reusable plastic containers.

### SHUT-IN BIRTHDAYS

March 13

Mr. David Towers  
41 Arbor Drive  
Myerstown, PA 17067

March 23

Mrs. Betty Steffen  
526 S. Broad St.  
Lebanon, PA 17042



**Homeless Shelter Help Needed:** From **Monday March 27<sup>th</sup>** through **Monday April 10**, members of Friedens will





be hosting the homeless at **Holy Trinity Lutheran Church at Spruce and Lehman St.** We need volunteers to staff two shifts: The greeters work from 8:30 P.M. until 9:45 P.M. (Two needed per night) and the overnight monitors sleep from 9:45 P.M. until 6:30 A.M., departing the facility at 7:15 A.M. (Two needed per shift). There is also an opportunity to sponsor the evening and breakfast snack (\$20 per night). A sign-up sheet is located in the narthex on the bulletin board. I would like to have the shifts filled by 3/1/17. We particularly need overnight monitors. We have needed to rely upon persons from outside of our congregation to fill slots. WE as a congregation are capable of doing this. Please step up and live what you have heard, read and sung in worship. Please contact me at [jbiever5543@comcast.net](mailto:jbiever5543@comcast.net) or 717-821-0130 with any questions. **“At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.” - Mother Teresa**

### OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

January 2017

				% of Budget
Current Budget	Goal	\$30,451.00	Goal to Date	80%
\$548,114.00	Rec'd	\$23,619.00	Rec'd to Date	
Spang Crest	Rec'd	30.00	Rec'd to date	592.00
Hunger	Rec'd	270.00	Rec'd to Date	3,140.00

# MARCH 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<p>1 </p> <p>5 PM—Lenten Meal 6 PM—Ash Wednesday Service 7:05 PM—Praise &amp; Worship Band</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6:45 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Chancel Choir</p>	<p>3 </p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 am—Traditional Service</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:30 PM—Council Spiritual Retreat</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7 PM—Worship Committee</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9 AM—Women Sew 5 PM—Lenten Meal 6 PM—Lenten Service 7:05 PM—Praise &amp; Worship Band</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6:30 PM—Finance Committee 6:45 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Chancel Choir</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 am—Traditional Service</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7 PM—Property Committee</p>	<p>15 </p> <p>5 PM—Lenten Meal 6 PM—Lenten Service 7:05 PM—Praise &amp; Worship Band</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6:45 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Church Council 7 PM—Chancel Choir</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 am—Traditional Service</p>	<p>20 </p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9 AM—Women Sew 5 PM—Lenten Meal 6 PM—Lenten Service 7:05 PM—Praise &amp; Worship Band</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6:45 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Chancel Choir</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>9 AM—Contemporary Service 10:45 am—Traditional Service</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5 PM—Lenten Meal 6 PM—Lenten Service 7:05 PM—Praise &amp; Worship Band</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:45 PM—Life Group 7 PM—Chancel Choir</p>	<p>31</p>	



Are you looking for something fun to do this summer? Do you enjoy playing volleyball? If so, then become a part of the Friedens Summer Volleyball Team! Games are played every Monday and Thursday night at 7pm either here at the sand court or away at nearby churches at their court. Games start early May and continue through the summer until the tournament on a Saturday in August! This year we have a strong need for female players since rules require us to have both men and woman on the team. If we don't have enough woman players, then we may need to forfeit our summer volleyball team! Sign up on the bulletin board outside the office by Sunday, April 16th! More information to come when I receive it! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, Laura Umberger, at (717) 679-1979!



Save the date!! VBS 2017 is coming to Friedens! It will be **Sunday, July 9 through Wednesday, July 12, 6-8:00 pm.** More info to follow!



**Ash Wednesday—April 5**  
**Service—12:15 P.M.**  
 Meal—5 P.M.  
 Evening Prayer—6 P.M.  
 Maundy Thursday—6 P.M.  
 Good Friday—6 P.M.  
 Saturday Vigil—6 P.M.  
 Easter Sunday—9 A.M.—Contemporary



Return to the Lord your God this Lenten season with daily devotions. Lenten booklets may be picked up starting February 26th in the narthex. Several large print booklets are available if needed. Call the church office 866-4910 to have a booklet sent to you.



Calling at Cooks!

Your help is needed in preparing soup for our Lenten dinners. Grab a friend and grab a pot, even your crockpot! Our goal is to have two different soups each week throughout the Lenten season. We are in need of bread and desserts to share. Sign up sheets are at the snack table and in the Narthex. If you have any questions please connect with Nicky Snyder, [ballet06grad@hotmail.com](mailto:ballet06grad@hotmail.com) or 717.644.5188.



Join Us April 8th at 10am for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. This is open to all congregation and community members. Spread the word!

Donations of candy, plastic eggs and other prizes are needed. Donations are due by April 2nd. Anyone willing to help in stuffing eggs please join us in Stauffer Hall, Thursday April 6th at 7:00pm.



#### MISSION OPPORTUNITIES:

The Lower Susquehanna Synod is sponsoring a mission trip to West Virginia April 30-May 6, 2017. If you are interested in traveling with a fine group of Lutherans, please see Jan DuBois for specifics about this trip.

Friedens is planning its own 2017 mission trip for **June 11-18, 2017 to West Virginia**. This mission field is being compared to Katrina (2005) in devastation and duration. Details coming soon in Friedens' bulletins and Transformers. Volunteers ages 15-up are welcome!



#### Hen

The hen represents Jesus' deep care and compassion even for those who killed prophets God had sent to them. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," mourned Jesus shortly before his death. "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37, ESV).