

## ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Hospital Code - #300 Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon

God's People: Believing, Caring, Loving, and Serving

## DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



### The Pastor's Corner.....

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is hard to believe that it's already Advent. Our internal clocks, our sense of the church calendar, centers on the fact that the preparatory season before Christmas is supposed to take place in December. Just days after Thanksgiving we are already in advent. We thank the alter guild for changing over our worship paraments from green to blue, and transitioning us from harvest to this season of expectation so we can be properly in tune to know God is among us in Christ.

It is truly an Advent theme to see light in the darkness, to know that Christ is near us, even when, or especially when, we feel otherwise. God in Christ chose to become part of our lives, and in Christ's death and resurrection has promised to give us new life.

Advent is to prepare us for the Nativity of our Lord at Christmas. The lives of faith exemplify that our souls are to magnify God and our spirits are to rejoice in God, our Savior.

Wishing all of you faith and hope and wishing you a time of prayer and preparation in this season as well as a peaceful time of Christmas and a hopeful New Year.

Blessings,  
Pastor Lynn



**ALL ARE WELCOME!!** Join us this Holiday season to celebrate the birth of Jesus!

**Blue Christmas, Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**4:00pm**

**Christmas Eve Worship**  
**Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

Prelude of Music 6:30pm followed by

Candlelight Service: 7:00pm

Followed by The Christmas Eve Social in Luther Hall, hosted by the Women of St. Mark





## A message from your Council President

As we enter this sacred season of Advent and Christmas, we are reminded once again of the incredible kindness of our God. In Jesus Christ, God came near—gentle, humble, and full of compassion. His life was marked not by grand gestures, but by simple, daily acts of mercy: a word of hope, a healing touch, a shared meal, a moment of listening.

In that same spirit, we are invited to practice random acts of kindness throughout this season. These small, often unnoticed gestures carry the light of Christ into places where it's needed most. A handwritten note. A phone call to someone who is lonely. Paying for someone's coffee. Shoveling a neighbor's sidewalk. Offering forgiveness. Sharing a smile. These moments may seem small, but God has a way of multiplying them in the hearts of others.

Kindness doesn't require wealth, time, or talent—it simply requires a willing heart. Scripture tells us, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted" (Ephesians 4:32). When we choose kindness, we echo the love God has already shown to us.

This year, let's challenge ourselves as a congregation:

Do one intentional act of kindness each day.

Pray that God will place someone on your heart.

Look for opportunities.

Let Christ's love overflow through you.

May we become known as a church where God's love is not only preached, but practiced—quietly, joyfully, generously.

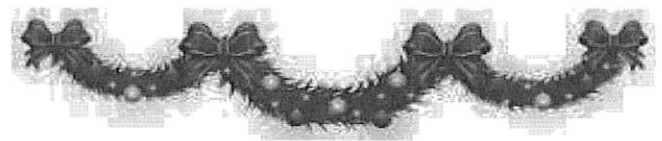
May the kindness of Christ shine through us this season and always.

In Christian Service,  
Thomas F. Rieger  
Council President

# CHURCH COUNCIL

## HIGHLIGHTS.....

- December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – Congregational Meeting (snow date December 21<sup>st</sup>) for vote on Budget, and Council Nominations.
- Thank You to property and everyone who stayed to put up the Christmas Trees and Advent wreath!
- We are waiting on the authorization to return the old copier back to Toshiba and Topps Business Solutions will be bringing the new printer on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>
- We need to replace Don Zimmerman from the St. Mark Cemetery Board. If interested, please see Tom Rieger.
- Adventures have 2 events planned for December (*information can be found on page 4 of this newsletter*)
- Christmas Candle Poles will be put up on December 21<sup>st</sup> after the service. *Volunteers are needed to help with the set-up. Property will let us know when they will take the poles down and then volunteers will be needed for that as well.*
- A new committee for "Fundraisers" has been created and the chair will be Tammy Walbert. Their first meeting is Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup> after the worship service.
- **Reminder:**  
No Sunday School on December 28<sup>th</sup>



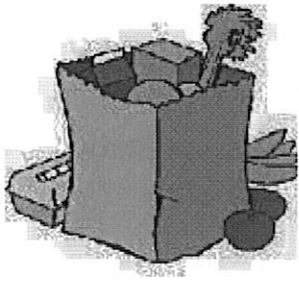
Wishing you a Merry Christmas

&

A Joyful New Year!

St. Mark Council





## The Open Door Food Pantry

In the month of October we served 76 households. These households consisted of 172 adults, 82 youth and 45 elderly.

Since last month's newsletter, the state and federal budgets have been passed! The food stamps that were paused were reinstated and things are looking much better at Second Harvest. We hope to see many more items for us to order in the month of December.

I want to thank everyone that has been so generous in our time of need. We are always very thankful for all of your donations but during this difficult time the generosity was huge! Thank you!!

For the month of December our suggested donations are hot chocolate mix and canned fruit.

Wishing everyone a blessed December!

*Sandy*

## Sunday School and Youth

Sunday, December the Sunday School will be performing a Christmas skit during worship.

Our Sunday School Children, Teachers and Families will be Caroling Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>

A light lunch will be served in Luther Hall before caroling and then leaving approximately 12:00pm (noon) to Sing for our shut-ins.

All are Welcome to join us!

Thank You to everyone who volunteered, baked or made soup and chili for the November fundraiser. It was awesome, we sold out again. We raised over \$1200!! We are planning another for the spring!



## **Happenings From November...**

Our craft for this month was led by Charlie and Brenda, participants created unique tote bags, using various different materials.

**Luncheon-** Today was our annual Thanksgiving feast, 12 turkeys were cooked by Sharon Maletsky along with her homemade gravy. Thank you to everyone who donated the turkeys for this event. The activity was Turkey Bingo. We received a donation of various Christmas decorations from a retired staff from Allentown State Hospital. The Sharing Life participants were able to take home some decorations for the Holidays, many cannot afford this luxury.

**October 21** was Harvest Full of Hope, Brenda, Charlie and DJ were at our Sharing Life outreach table at the conference. We handed out pine cones with bird seed on them attached was a tag with our church information. Terri created an updated flyer about Sharing Life to hand out. (Event was held at Steel Stacks with over 400 in attendance)

**November 20** we are having 10% donation night at Texas Road House ( See Attached) you must give the server the flyer or have it on your phone. Texas Road House will provide a raffle basket for us to raffle and Sharing Life will have a few additional baskets to raffle that evening.

**Looking Ahead-** The notification of the recipient of the grant we applied for was extended to Nov. 21.

**Sharing Life's Christmas** -Luncheon will be again paid for by Advocacy Alliance. The Caterer will be Kornfeinds . Advocacy Alliance has been very supportive of Sharing Life, volunteering at our events, providing candy at Halloween and cases of water for our luncheons.

**Volunteer opportunity** - We are looking for two volunteers on our craft day to assist our participants while they are crafting. This event has grown and often needs additional support.

Blessings,  
Sue Krasley and the Sharing Life Committee.



## St Mark Adventurers Outings for

### December-

**Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>** Join in the fun at Christkindlmarket in Bethlehem PA: Carpooling at the church 4:30pm -4:45pm and then head on over to, Fridays are free admission from 5:00pm-8:00pm

Admission, food, beverages and official merchandise purchases will require cashless payment through debit or credit cards, Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay or ArtsQuest CashCards. Individual artisan vendors may accept cash payments at their discretion.

### **Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm Tree of Lights:**

Carpool at the church 1:00pm-1:15pm and then off to NCC Lipkin Theatre, 3835 Green Pond Rd, Bethlehem Cost \$20 Please see Roxann Rieger  
A sign-up sheet can be found in the Narthex.  
or call the church office to let Terri know you are interested.



December BIRTHDAYS!!!  
We want to wish  
you a Very, Blessed  
Happy Birthday!!

Jennifer Fenstermacher – December 1  
Thomas Rieger, Jr – December 3  
Bryan Green – December 11  
Gloria Strohl – December 13  
Bill Mullory – December 22  
Brenda Covely – December 25

Share your birthday with us, please call the church office. We would love to see you on our birthday list.



**St. Mark/Sharing Life  
Basket Social  
Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup>,  
& Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>,  
2026!!**

**We will also be looking for bakers.  
If you wish to contribute, please see Terri  
Harkins, Linda Gier or Sandy Dillaway.  
Thank You!!**



Debra Deifer is still collecting old eye glasses and all kinds of can tabs. They benefit The Pennsylvania Association for the Blind. There is a basket in the Narthex on the table to place your items. Thank You!!!

## Stewardship 2025:

This year, as we enter our annual Stewardship initiative, we invite you to help support our ministries with a financial pledge for 2026. Reflecting on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the blessings and challenges that have brought us closer together. We believe that stewardship isn't a burden, but instead, a celebration of the joy we receive from coming to worship and being a part of this Church Family.

Our ministries continue to grow, be vibrant, and provide hope for many, however, we will be facing financial challenges in the upcoming year. As a result, many new ideas are being explored. We trust that, with your help, we will continue to find joy in supporting our Church mission.

The 2026 Stewardship Pledge cards are available in the Church Narthex or can be mailed to you. Please prayerfully consider your financial commitment as you complete your pledge card. Your responses are vital in planning for the upcoming year.

***We strive to be people of God, Believing, Caring,  
Loving and Serving our Community.***

Let us help those less fortunate than we are. Please consider a Reverse Advent Calendar to help with the St. Mark Food Pantry. Take the list along with you on your next shopping trip so it is right at your fingertips..







Altar Guild, Lectors, Ushers, Acolytes and videographers are asked to perform their duties each Sunday. Please find a replacement and notify the church office if you cannot join us on your scheduled Sunday.

**December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Second Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19  
Romans 15:4-13  
Matthew 3:1-12

**December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Third Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 35:1-10  
Psalm 146:5-10  
James 5:7-10  
Matthew 11:2-11

**December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025 – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 7:10-16  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
Romans 1:1-7  
Matthew 1:18-25

**December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Christmas Eve**  
6:30pm Prelude of Music followed by  
7:00pm Candlelight Service



**December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – First Sunday of Christmas**

Isaiah 63:7-9  
Psalm 148  
Hebrews 2:10-18  
Matthew 2:13-23

The Church Office will be closed  
Thursday, December 25<sup>th</sup> for Christmas.



We are streaming "LIVE" during the service via Facebook each Sunday.

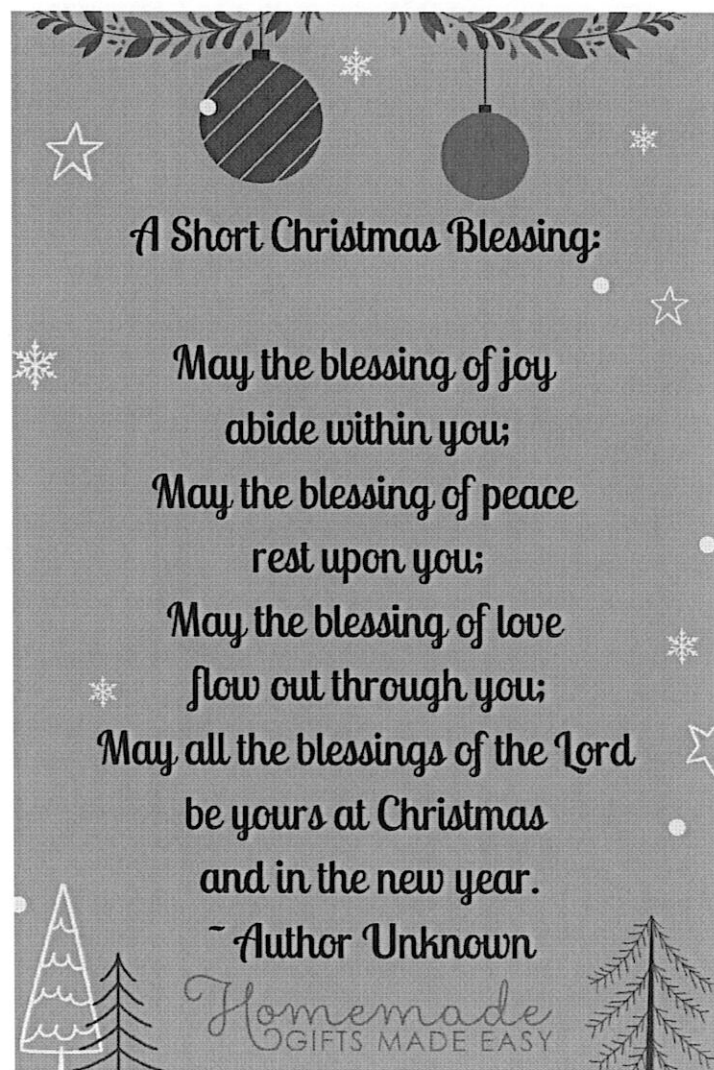
You can access the service on Facebook, user or not, at the following web address:

[www.facebook.com/stmarkallentown](https://www.facebook.com/stmarkallentown)

Please be patient while the page loads.

\*\*If you would like to Usher, be a part of the Altar guild or an Acolyte please reach out to Roxann Rieger or Terri Harkins. We are looking to update the schedule for 2026.

Thank You!!



Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for the church office to receive all Newsletter Information for January.



**ST MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA  
TREASURER'S REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2025  
(Subject to Audit)**

	MONTH OF SEPTEMBER	9TH MONTH BUDGET	9TH MONTH ACTUAL 2025	8TH MONTH ACTUAL 2024
BUDGETED CURRENT INCOME	\$7,322.74	\$57,220.00	\$73,159.77	\$76,543.06
BENEVOLENCE	\$19.00	\$2,475.00	\$1,163.29	\$1,882.80
TOTAL BUDGETED INCOME	<u>\$7,341.74</u>	<u>\$59,695.00</u>	<u>\$74,323.06</u>	<u>\$78,425.86</u>
NON-BUDGETED INCOME	\$6,114.81	\$0.00	\$45,011.63	\$33,764.28
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$13,456.55</u>	<u>\$59,695.00</u>	<u>\$119,334.69</u>	<u>\$112,190.14</u>
BUDGETED CURRENT EXPENSES	\$11,191.52	\$159,851.40	\$101,022.16	\$104,446.57
BENEVOLENCE	\$162.50	\$2,475.00	\$3,350.76	\$3,823.30
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES	<u>\$11,354.02</u>	<u>\$162,326.40</u>	<u>\$104,372.92</u>	<u>\$108,269.87</u>
NON-BUDGETED EXPENSES	\$229.95	\$0.00	\$17,142.49	\$12,361.17
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$11,583.97</u>	<u>\$162,326.40</u>	<u>\$121,515.41</u>	<u>\$120,631.04</u>
<b>MONTHLY ACTIVITY SUMMARY</b>	<b>BALANCE 9/1/2025</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>BALANCE 9/30/2025</b>
CURRENT OPERATING FUND - TRUIST	\$226.85	\$13,456.55	\$11,583.97	\$2,099.43 +
QUAINT OAK BANK	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL OPERATING FUND	<u>\$226.85</u>	<u>\$13,456.55</u>	<u>\$11,583.97</u>	<u>\$2,099.43</u>
<b>NORTHEASTERN PA SYNOD</b>	<b>PROCEEDS</b>	<b>INTEREST</b>	<b>PAYMENTS</b>	<b>LOAN BALANCE</b>
SYNOD LOAN				\$0.00

**ST MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA  
TREASURER'S REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2025  
(Subject to Audit)**

	MONTH OF OCTOBER	10TH MONTH BUDGET	10TH MONTH ACTUAL 2025	10TH MONTH ACTUAL 2024
BUDGETED CURRENT INCOME	\$5,186.66	\$63,580.00	\$78,346.43	\$85,224.48
BENEVOLENCE	\$97.70	\$2,750.00	\$1,260.99	\$2,257.80
TOTAL BUDGETED INCOME	<u>\$5,284.36</u>	<u>\$66,330.00</u>	<u>\$79,607.42</u>	<u>\$87,482.28</u>
NON-BUDGETED INCOME	\$916.34	\$0.00	\$45,927.97	\$35,557.54
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$6,200.70</u>	<u>\$66,330.00</u>	<u>\$125,535.39</u>	<u>\$123,039.82</u>
BUDGETED CURRENT EXPENSES	\$8,758.82	\$177,612.40	\$109,780.98	\$116,407.53
BENEVOLENCE	\$221.20	\$2,750.00	\$3,571.96	\$3,980.80
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES	<u>\$8,980.02</u>	<u>\$180,362.40</u>	<u>\$113,352.94</u>	<u>\$120,388.33</u>
NON-BUDGETED EXPENSES	\$953.45	\$0.00	\$18,095.94	\$13,182.95
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$9,933.47</u>	<u>\$180,362.40</u>	<u>\$131,448.88</u>	<u>\$133,571.28</u>
<b>MONTHLY ACTIVITY SUMMARY</b>	<b>BALANCE 10/1/2025</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>BALANCE 10/31/2025</b>
CURRENT OPERATING FUND - TRUIST	\$2,099.43	\$6,200.70	\$9,933.47	(\$1,633.34) +
QUAINT OAK BANK	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL OPERATING FUND	<u>\$2,099.43</u>	<u>\$6,200.70</u>	<u>\$9,933.47</u>	<u>(\$1,633.34)</u>
<b>NORTHEASTERN PA SYNOD</b>	<b>PROCEEDS</b>	<b>INTEREST</b>	<b>PAYMENTS</b>	<b>LOAN BALANCE</b>
SYNOD LOAN				\$0.00

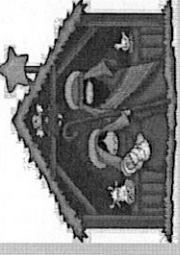





# December 2025

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 201 E Juniata St  
 Allentown PA 18103  
 610-797-6440 fax 610-351-6114

[www.saintmarkallentown.org](http://www.saintmarkallentown.org)  
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 Hospital Code: 300

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent Nov 30</b> Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fundraiser Meeting after service	<b>1</b> Worship/Music Meeting 6:00pm	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Sharing Life Craft/Knit Day 1:00pm – 3:00pm Choir 6:00pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent 7</b> Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am Pressure Cuff Ministry	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Open Door 10:00am – 12:00pm	<b>10</b> Widows Club Luncheon 1:00pm – Perkins Choir 6:00pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent 14</b> Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am Congregational Meeting after service	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Open Door Food Delivery 10:30am	<b>17</b> Sharing Life Christmas Luncheon 12:00pm – 3:00pm Council 6:00pm Choir 6:00pm	<b>18</b> Open Door 4:00pm – 6:00pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent 21</b> Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:00am Poles and candles put up after the service Carolling to Homebound *snow date for Congregational Meeting	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Prelude of Music 6:30pm Candlelight Service 7:00pm	<b>25</b> Merry Christmas 	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Worship 10:00am <b>NO SUNDAY SCHOOL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> New Year's Eve	<b>Office Closed 1</b>  Happy New Year!	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas 4</b>						



Serving Our Church December 2025		
December 7 <sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday of Advent		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship/Pressure Cuff Ministry		
<b>Lector/Communion</b>	<b>Ushers:</b>	<b>Council on Duty:</b>
<b>Assistant:</b> Linda Kline	LuAnn Bresnak Carol Hartigan	Gloria Hottenstein
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Roxann Rieger and Edie Lindenmuth	Linda Kline Sue Krasley Josephine Wieder	<b>Videographer:</b> Tom Rieger
		<b>Acolyte:</b> DJ Landis
December 14 <sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday of Advent		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
<b>Lector/Communion</b>	<b>Ushers:</b>	<b>Council on Duty:</b>
<b>Assistant:</b> Brenda Mann-Orben	LuAnn Bresnak Carol Hartigan	Carol Hartigan
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Roxann Rieger and Edie Lindenmuth	Linda Kline Sue Krasley Josephine Wieder	<b>Videographer:</b> Terri Harkins
		<b>Acolyte:</b> Patrick Merkle
December 21 <sup>st</sup> – Fourth Sunday of Advent		
9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
Caroling after the service/Blue Christmas Worship 4:00pm		
<b>Lector/Communion</b>	<b>Ushers:</b>	<b>Council on Duty:</b>
<b>Assistant:</b> Carol Hartigan	Doris Brezan Tammy Walbert	Tom Rieger
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sue Krasley, Makayla Krasley and Josephine Wieder	Linda Gier Terri Harkins Sandy Biery	<b>Videographer:</b> Kathy Walker
		<b>Acolyte:</b> Aliyah Wragg

December 24 <sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve		
Prelude of Music 6:30pm/Candlelight Worship 7:00pm Fellowship Luther Hall following the service		
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sue Krasley, Makayla Krasley and Josephine Wieder <b>Ushers:</b> Volunteers <b>Acolyte:</b> Wyatt Trautman		
December 28 <sup>th</sup> – First Sunday of Christmas NO SUNDAY SCHOOL/10:00am Worship		
<b>Lector/Communion</b>	<b>Ushers:</b>	<b>Council on Duty:</b>
<b>Assistant:</b> Laurie Rompilla	Doris Brezan Tammy Walbert	Bill Walker
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sue Krasley, Makayla Krasley and Josephine Wieder	Linda Gier Terri Harkins Sandy Biery	<b>Videographer:</b> Dan Christman
		<b>Acolyte:</b> Wyatt Trautman
January 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2026 – Second Sunday of Christmas 9:00am Sunday School/10:00am Worship		
<b>Lector/Communion</b>	<b>Ushers:</b>	<b>Council on Duty:</b>
<b>Assistant:</b> Linda Kline	LuAnn Bresnak Carol Hartigan Linda Kline	Josephine Wieder
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Terri Harkins and Linda Gier	Josephine Wieder	<b>Videographer:</b> Tom Rieger
		<b>Acolyte:</b> Patrick Merkle





# NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Growing New Communities of Faith: Updates on SAWCs, SAOMs, and Mission Leadership

*Written by: Deacon Kat Tigerman, NEPS Directors for Evangelical Mission*



Every year, the Synod Council re-authorizes our Synod-authorized ministries, typically in October. It is also a great opportunity to hear updates from these ministries, the people they are serving, and the stories of their communities. It is always a powerful testament to God among us – often in ways we might consider “non-traditional” – ministries made possible by our NEPA congregations’ mission support and the mission support to the ELCA.

Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs for short) are communities committed to worshipping together but who may do so outside the normal “walls” of the church. A SAWC may look like a recovery worship service, dinner church, messy

church, or church on the streets. SAWCs are also communities discerning and taking steps to become formal (known as “organized”) ELCA congregations. They are led by a Mission Developer. Our NEPA Synod currently has 3 SAWCs: Common Ground in Wyomissing, Common Ground in Reading, and the Indonesian Lutheran Church of Scranton (which just became a SAWC in September!).

Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries (SAOMs for short) are ministries committed to evangelism, outreach, and discipleship. A SAOM may look like a food truck ministry, a small group ministry, or a prison ministry. They are led by a SAOM Leader. Our NEPA Synod currently has 2 SAOMs: Free to Be in Bethlehem and Hope’s Table in Reading. Free to Be is a ministry dedicated to reaching out to moms, families, and folks in recovery by building intentional small groups on the road of faith and discipleship. Hope’s Table was initially a SAWC but is in the process of transitioning to a SAOM. While Hope’s Table continues to offer weekly worship, it is a feeding ministry which builds community and creates a safe and welcoming space for all to find the love, grace, and warmth of Jesus.

Each year, to help support these leaders and connect them to one another, the ELCA hosts a Mission Leadership Training Conference for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, Strategic Ministry Leaders, and key leaders of various SAWCs and SAOMs. This year Seminarian April Mulvey was invited to attend as a Mission Developer Scholarship recipient along with Deacon Kat Tigerman as DEM. 118 leaders from across





the country attended the 3-day training in Chicago the last weekend of September.

The first week of October, the Region 7 DEMs (Directors for Evangelical Mission) hosted a 2-day retreat for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, and other new ministry leaders. There were 35 participants across the 6 Synods of Region 7 who came together to worship, reflect, connect, learn, and pray. The Retreat was facilitated by the ELCA's Organizing for Mission who grounded the time theologically as well as provided practical on-the-ground skills and tools for these leaders are the margins and cutting edges of Church. NEPA Synod participants included:

- Rev. Lauren Applegate, Free to Be
- Seminarian April Mulvey, Hope's Table
- Rev. Tom Scornavacchi, Common Ground
- Deacon Kat Tigerman (DEM)
- Rev. Dr. Jennifer Hope-Tringali (Director for New Ministries).



Region 7 was blessed to receive an ELCA grant to help make this retreat affordable to leaders who are serving ministries on the margins. Our Director of New Ministries will be piloting a learning opportunity in early 2026 to work alongside leaders who have a new ministry idea that they want to develop into a plan of action. Interested leaders are encouraged to email Pr. Jennifer at [jennifer@nepsynod.org](mailto:jennifer@nepsynod.org).

Thank you for all you and your congregations do to pray for and support these leaders and these ministries across our Synod and across the country!

**DID YOU KNOW** that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod and ELCA like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit [godslove.org/missionsupport](http://godslove.org/missionsupport).

## SAWC & SAOM

[godslove.org/sawc-saom](http://godslove.org/sawc-saom)

Want to learn more about the NEPA Synod's Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities and Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries? Visit our website for details.





VOLUME 30  
ISSUE 11  
December  
2025



The Thomas D. Busteed, Dean  
The Rev. Jean L. Huber, Assoc. of the Bishop  
Mission District Chair  
Linda Gery, Newsletter Editor

610-966-3834  
610-704-5133  
TBD  
610-395-5535

## 2025/26 Rostered Ministers Gatherings:

**Thursday, December 11**  
beginning at 8am  
at Egner Chapel,  
Muhlenberg College  
Advent Eucharist Service  
& breakfast

*(Please RSVP for breakfast to  
lehighlutherans@gmail.com)*

**Wednesday, January 14**  
10:30am at the Lutheran  
Center, Rev. Dr. Jennifer  
Hope-Tringali - Director of  
New Ministries

**Wednesday, February 18**  
10:30am at the Lutheran  
Center, Rev. Dr. Woody  
Maxon - An update on  
Lutheran social services

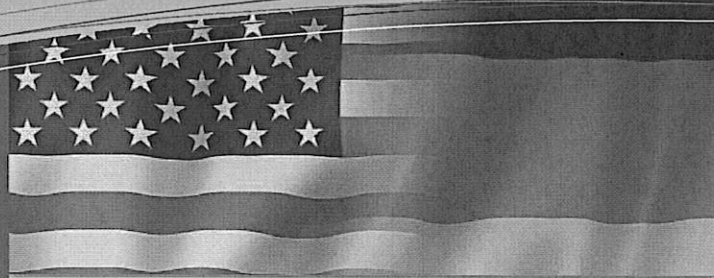
**Wednesday, March 11**  
10:30am at the Lutheran  
Center, Rev. Dr. Roger  
Timm - Reengaging ELCA  
Social Teaching on Abortion

**Tuesday, March 31**  
at the Lutheran Center  
Annual Chrism Mass and  
luncheon (see synod news  
for updates and to RSVP)

**Sunday, May 3**  
4pm at the Lutheran  
Center, Lehigh Mission  
District - Annual Spring  
Assembly

**Thursday, June 4 -  
Saturday, June 6, 2026**  
at Split Rock Resort  
NEPA Synod Assembly

July/August - on break.  
See you in September!



*January 2026 LMD NL news  
will be due December 8, 2025.*

Please email any information to  
[imd.newslettereditor@gmail.com](mailto:imd.newslettereditor@gmail.com)

## "Ohne Verdienst" part 5

Being German in America always brought with it a little suspicion from our neighbors who would ask themselves: "whose side are these Germans on?" Muhlenberg treaded carefully in the American Revolution. What really changed things was World War 1 and World War 2. We have forgotten, by and large, just how strong the anti-German sentiment was in this country during those wars. Speaking German was made illegal. In the late 19th century, we had over 1,000 German newspapers being regularly published in this country. The World Wars put an end to that. American advertisers would not dare advertise in a German newspaper. Suddenly German foods such as hamburgers and hotdogs became 'American' foods. Even though it is against Lutheran theology to have national symbols in a worship space, American flags began appearing in our Chancels. The message was clear to our neighbors: "We're not German. We're American." My Irish-Catholic father remembered when he first started dating my mother, he asked her and her family what nationality they were. My father found it humorous that all her family knew to say was that they were 'American.' We had forgotten any tie we had to Europe. It was as though our family history was rewritten, white paint smeared over our memories of anything having to do with who we were before the war. The more English, and the more American we became, the less our neighbors questioned who we were, and in effect, other than a persistent tradition of eating sauerkraut on New Year's Day, we successfully blended into American society, unquestioned. But in the process, we forgot all the ways we were unique and did not blend into the culture around us. We forgot the context of the saying on Zion's back wall: "Gebet Gott, was Gottes ist." It reminded us of stewardship, for sure; we should give God our firstfruits, the best of our time and talents. Yet, it also reminded us that we are to be in the world but not of it. Our ancestors longed for a homeland and a reality that was always somewhere beyond where we are currently. We were like Israelites wandering in the wilderness of these Penn's woods, in hopeful expectation of soon reaching the blessed "Heimat" or "homeland" or more commonly referred to now as the "promised land" the land flowing with milk and honey. We became so at home in American society, that we've in some ways lost the memory of what it is like to be foreign. We were wanderers. We were seekers. We were spiritual pilgrims...*to be continued.*

The Rev. Thomas D. Busteed,  
Lehigh Mission District Dean



**St. Timothy's Lutheran  
Grace Notes Gospel Big Band**  
December 14, 2025 at 3 PM  
(140 S. Ott Street, Allentown)

Please join us for a  
Christmas concert. A free will  
offering will be accepted.  
Stay for a Christmas Cookie  
Reception afterwards.

Parking available on the  
street & across the street.

See the attached flyer for details.

## OPERATION SUNSHINE

*Operation Sunshine is a non-  
profit fellowship opportunity  
within our Mission District, run  
solely by volunteers.*

1933 Hanover Ave.  
Allentown, PA 18109

Open: Monday 11-3 and  
Wednesday 11-3

Phone: 610-435-9155  
Email: LMDopsunshine@aol.com  
[www.LMDopsunshine.com](http://www.LMDopsunshine.com)

Dear Travelers,  
Our shows are sold out for this  
year, but keep an eye out for  
next year's newsletter  
scheduled to be released in  
December. Thanks for traveling  
with Operation Sunshine.

~ Paula & Dick Skelly,  
Co-Trip Coordinators

The Lehigh Mission  
District would like to wish  
you all a very Merry  
Christmas and a Blessed  
New Year!



## Lehigh Mission District Christmas InGathering Reminder:

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

St. John's Lutheran Church (501 Chestnut Street, Emmaus, PA)

If you have any questions please contact Penny at 610-390-9694.

Sending All a Blessed Thanksgiving!

The Neighborhood Center is busier than ever!  
Kids are filling our center with energy, laughter,  
and learning. But to keep up with the growing  
need, we're asking for your help.

A gift today will provide safe after-school  
activities, homework help, warm meals, and a  
place where kids know they belong. You truly  
make it possible for us to keep serving the  
children who need us most.

With the holidays approaching, there are several  
collections and special events planned. Like us  
on Facebook or check out our pictures!



[www.theneighborhoodcenterallentown.com](http://www.theneighborhoodcenterallentown.com)  
344 N. 7th Street, Allentown, PA 18102  
Phone: 610-434-5799



Family Promise of Lehigh Valley (FPLV), a  
501(c)(3) organization that provides shelter,  
meals, and case management to children and  
families experiencing or at risk of homelessness  
in the Lehigh Valley.

Our partner congregations are the backbone of  
our mission. As a volunteer-driven organization,  
our work wouldn't be possible without the  
support of congregations like yours. We'd be  
grateful for the opportunity to share this ministry  
with your church or your mission team.  
Please contact us for more information.

1346 W. Hamilton Street, Allentown PA 18102  
Phone: 610-351-1368  
Email: [Director@FPLehighvalley.org](mailto:Director@FPLehighvalley.org)  
[www.FPLehighvalley.org](http://www.FPLehighvalley.org)

**THANK YOU** to all the faithful walkers,  
community leaders, support crew, sponsors and  
other donors who participated in the  
**Sunday, October 19, 2025, Greater Allentown  
CROP Hunger Walk!**

If you or your congregation/group took any CROP  
Hunger Walk **PHOTOS or VIDEOS**, please **POST**  
**THEM** on social media and **SEND THEM** to  
[karehad@gmail.com](mailto:karehad@gmail.com) to include in our CROP follow-up  
emails to congregations and other CROP supporters!

## Many Thanks to Our Generous Sponsors!



**CONGRATULATIONS** to all who received  
awards at the Opening Ceremony! And special  
thanks to Mark Held for creating the awards!

**2024 Golden Sneaker – Blank Slate**

**2024 Silver Sandal – Redeemer Lutheran  
Church, Allentown**

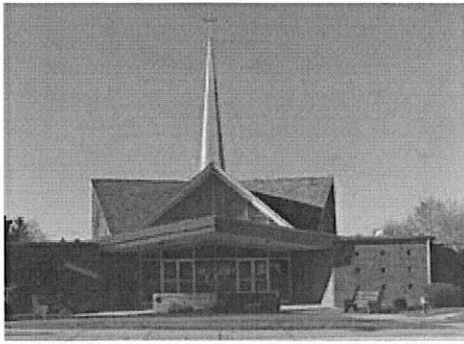
**2024 Bronze Bootie – The Barn**

**CONGREGATIONS/GROUPS:** So that we can  
celebrate more precise YTD totals, please **send**  
**your CROP gifts ASAP** to Linda Held, Allentown  
CROP Hunger Walk Treasurer, 3441 Devonshire  
Road, Allentown, PA 18103.

**LIKE us on Facebook:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/AllentownCROPWalk/>

**CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAY, or ANNIVERSARY  
GIFT IDEA:** In honor of loved ones, give the gift  
of life! **DONATE ANYTIME** to the CROP  
Hunger Walk at  
[www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa)





*St. Timothy Lutheran Church -  
Presents  
Grace Notes Gospel Big Band*



*For a Christmas concert  
Sunday, December 14th 2025 at 3:00 PM  
in the St. Timothy sanctuary  
140 So. Ott Street, Allentown  
**PLEASE JOIN US!***

*A Free will offering will be accepted  
Stay for a Christmas Cookie Reception afterwards!*

*Parking available on the street & across the street*





# *A German Christmas Service*

The Service Spoken and Sung in German

St. John's Lutheran Church  
501 Chestnut St.  
Emmaus, PA 18049

Sunday Evening,  
January 4, 2026, 5:45 PM

The Service Begins with Prelude Music & Candle Lighting

Guest Musicians, The Williams Duo

Ted & Sarajane Williams on Classical Guitar & Harp

A German Cookie & Coffee Fellowship  
Will Follow the Service in the Parish Hall

*Everyone is Welcome!*

Rev. Woody Maxon, Pastor  
Timothy Ginder, Organist & Director of Music Ministries



St John's is a handicap accessible facility

*Weihnachtsgottesdienst in  
deutscher Sprache*

*German Christmas Service of Lessons & Carols*

