

The Herald

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102 Apple Street ▪ Leesport, PA 19533 ▪ 610-926-7176 ▪ www.lcht.org

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Back in October Pastor Mary Gade visited us to administer a survey that measures a congregation’s vitality. While it is only a snapshot of those who were in attendance on that particular day, several things can be gleaned from the data. First the troubling news LCHT is a senior dominated congregation. Less than 10% of our regular worshippers are younger than 55 years old. Without an infusion of younger worshippers in the near future, there is reason to be concerned for the longevity of the congregation.

24 of 40 respondents felt that the congregation was not very willing to try new things.

32 of 40 respondents felt that the congregation did not do a very good job of incorporating new people into its life and ministry.

27 out of 40 respondents felt that the congregation did not seek out and use the gifts of all of its members.

There are other gleanings, but these will be shared in future letters in *The Herald*. So what can be or is being done about these concerns?

First, regarding the average age of our worshippers, I am concerned and uncertain whether or not LCHT has reached a tipping point, namely a point at which it cannot reverse the current aging trend it is experiencing. Many of the members that LCHT lost over the last decade were its young members. And those who are still on the rolls, for the most part, are not very involved in the life of the congregation. One of the things your leaders plan to do over the next several months is to send out mailings to the Leesport community inviting new and/or unchurched residents to consider LCHT for their spiritual home.

When visitors begin to show up because of this outreach effort into the community, you and I need to welcome them and their new ideas and find ways to incorporate their gifts into the life of LCHT.

In addition, I have begun to identify some of our current, younger members for leadership roles in the life of the congregation. It will be important for us “veterans” to

BAD WEATHER INFORMATION

In the event of bad weather, please refer to the following for cancellation notification:

- On the internet: www.wfmz.com
- On television: channel 69 news
- By telephone: 610-926-7176 option 5 for special announcements

encourage them and to be open to the new ideas and initiatives they will bring to these roles. Because of this effort, for example, the average age of our congregation council will be lower in 2018 than in previous years, and all of the council’s seats (9) will be filled for the first time in years. I look forward to the new energy and excitement that these young, new leaders will bring with them.

Finally, the coming months and years will require a greater openness and willingness by all of us to try new things. Calls for change don’t mean the old ways of doing things were wrong, as we so often want to believe. They simply mean that times change and organizations that wish to remain relevant and vibrant need to change with them or risk dying. In Isaiah 43:18-19 God speaks of a new beginning for his people, Israel, with these words.

*Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.
I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.*

I believe that these verses have relevance for our time and our situation here at LCHT and we need to be ready for the new things God has planned for us.

To be sure there will be challenges ahead for us, but together with God I believe that LCHT can grow and continue to serve God for years to come. God is about to do a new thing in our midst. Do you not perceive it?

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ritter

P.S.: Next month I will examine some of the positive gleanings from the survey and how we might begin to build on the strengths we already exhibit.



WORSHIP AND MUSIC NOTES

Submitted by Renee Lenning, Chairperson

Worship Attendance



Worship services for January:

- January 7 – Baptism of Our Lord, Communion service, Installation of council members
- January 14 – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
- January 21 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany, Communion service
- January 31 – 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Other Notes:

- Committee would like to include a service honoring fire fighters, police and EMS personnel in 2018
- Next meeting is Thursday, January 4, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
- De-decorating on January 6 @ 9:00 a.m.

11/25	51
12/03	39
12/10	38
12/17	44
12/24 (9:00 a.m.)	50
12/24 (6:30 p.m.)	72
12/24 (9:00 p.m.)	51

NOTES ABOUT OUR FOLKS

PRAYERS:

- * Jim DeLong, who celebrated 50 years on the choir.
- * Jerry Leutze, who is at Masonic Home in Elizabeth-town.
- * Ralph and Delores Seaman, who have moved to Rit-tenhouse Senior Living, Reading.
- * Anna Mae Beitler, who is at home.
- * Warnen Seip, who is at Keystone Villas
- * Gerri Kauffman, who is recovering from a stroke.
- * Yvonne Graeff who is recovering from knee surgery.
- * Sallyann Hoke who is home following a recent hos-pitalization.
- * The Hoke family who is in transition.
- * To all our shut-in members and all those who are on our prayer list.

THANKS TO:

- * Everyone who decorated the Church for Christmas on December 2.
- * Everyone who sponsored Poinsettias for Christmas.
- * Ron & Judy Corl and all our volunteers who help with the SV Food Pantry.
- * To all the leaders of our church, the nation and the world.

JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 01 - Lisa Kuhns | 12 - Mason Wink |
| 02 - Joseph Lowery | 13 - Paul Clery |
| 09 - Shelby Gabel | 14 - Janet Kleffel |
| Linda Greely | 19 - Wilbur Minnich |
| 10 - Pauline Bond | 20 - Alyssa Potts |
| Johnathan Greely | 25 - Victoria Wagner |
| Laura Reiger | 27 - Derrick Potts |
| 11 - Elaine Lombardo | 28 - Barry Beitler |
| Ronda Wolfe | 29 - Donna Degler |
| Bradley Buchalter | Sallyann Hoke |
| Anna Mae Beitler | |

Anniversaries:

- 04 - Michael & Amy Korpics







January 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	5 7:00 PM Youth Group	6 9:00 AM Removal of Christmas decorations
7 <i>Baptism of Our Lord</i> 9:00 AM Worship/ Holy Communion	8 1:00 PM WELCA meets 7:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal	9	10 7:00 PM Council meets	11 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 8:15 PM Worship & Music meeting	12	13 6:30 PM LCHT Movie Night
14 <i>2nd Sunday after Epiph- any</i> 9:00 AM Worship 4:30 PM Pack Committee Meeting 6:00 PM Den meeting	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 7:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal	16 9:30 AM Pastoral Care Team meeting	17	18 5:30 PM Soul Supper 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM RHP Board meets 7:00 PM Food Pantry Committee meeting	19 2:00 PM Food Pantry Delivery	20 9:00 AM Food Pantry Distribution
21 <i>3rd Sunday of Epiphany</i> 9:00 AM Worship 2:00 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry	22 7:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal	23	24	25 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	26	27 5:00 PM Cub Scout Movie Night
28 <i>4th Sunday of Epiphany</i> 9:00 AM Worship/Holy Communion 6:00 PM Den meeting	29 7:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal	30	31			


 For up to date calendar information, visit our website, www.lcht.org and click on the on Calendar tab
 

JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

Bulletins

- 7-available
- 14-available
- 21-available
- 28-available

Altar Flowers

- 7-Vicki Fetterman
- 14-available
- 21-available
- 28-available

See bulletin board to sign up to sponsor the weekly bulletins, and the altar flowers.

Nursery

no attendant but room will be open

Acolytes

- 7-Evan Lash
- 14-Mason Clery
- 21-Makayla Lowery
- 28-Asher Clery



Greeter:

Ron & Judy Corl

Ushers

- 7- Lowery, Corl, Davidheiser
- 14- DeAntonio, Biehl, Lenning
- 21- Reiber, P. Heffner, R. Heffner
- 28- Lenning, Corl, Diana Biehl



MOVIE NIGHT IN THE HALL

January 13 @ 6:30 PM

THE CASE FOR CHRIST



Bring your blankets, snacks or even picnic dinner to enjoy while watching this months movie about an investigative journalist and self-proclaimed atheist who sets out to disprove the existence of God after his wife becomes a Christian.

CALLING ALL YOUTH

GRADES 1 TO 8

Come on out for our next youth group meeting on Friday, January 5 from 7-8:30 p.m. downstairs in the fellowship area. We will have a time for games, snacks and fun. Plan to come out and bring a friend. We would love to see you. If you have questions, email Mike or Lori Lowery at mllowery@comcast.net. Thanks!

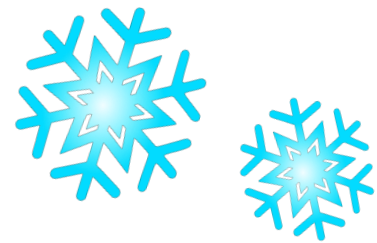
Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training to be Offered

Since its founding the ELCA has encouraged greater participation by the laity in the worship and sacramental life of the congregation. One of the opportunities for increased participation in these areas is the training and sending of lay persons to homebound or institutionalized members of the congregation with the sacrament of Holy Communion. While regular visitation and the distribution of Holy Communion to homebound or institutionalized members is an important function of the pastoral office, it is one of many functions carried out by the modern pastor. As such while congregations have come to celebrate the sacrament with greater frequency, pastors often can only bring communion to those who are homebound or institutionalized on a much more infrequent basis.

The use of trained lay eucharistic visitors in partnership with the pastor can serve both to increase the frequency with which indi-

viduals who are homebound or institutionalized receive the sacrament of Holy Communion and to forge greater connections for them back to the worshipping community from which they have become separated because of age or other health issues.

On Saturday, February 10, 2018, from 9 am until 4 pm, here at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Pr. Ritter will provide a lay eucharistic visitor training event for members of our congregation and other congregations in the Leesport, Shoemakersville and Hamburg communities. The cost for this training is \$30/ person. It includes morning refreshments and lunch. **Contact Pr. Ritter by the 1st of February, if you want to learn more about this opportunity or if you wish to register for the training.**



CITY THRIFT SHOP:

is looking for donations of desperately needed children's clothing (not baby clothing), especially boys clothing up to age pre-teen for the people coming up from Puerto Rico. Other badly needed items are men's jeans and other adult-size clothing including outerwear and winter-type boots and shoes. The City Thrift Shop is at 314 Penn Street, Reading PA 19602



ROCKING HORSE PRESCHOOL

Submitted by Mrs. Woods and Mrs. Leshner

Welcome to 2018! Can you believe it's the New Year already! We had such a busy month in December that we welcome January and a slower pace! Now let's hope the weather cooperates.

During December, the students enjoyed shopping for gifts for their loved ones and everyone enjoyed the Cookies and Cocoa day! It is always so much fun decorating cookies, "Christmas trees", playing games, and doing crafts together. Santa even made a surprise visit to our party and handed out candy canes to everyone.

A big thank you to Pastor, for sharing a Christmas story and a craft with the students, this is always something the children look forward to. And another thank you everyone who participated in the Angel Tree program. We were able to

fulfill many children's wish lists due to your generosity and kindness.

Please mark your calendar for our annual Hoss's day. This will take place on Sunday January 21st. More information will be available in the church office and by contacting the preschool at rhps@comcast.net.

As we look forward to January we will be learning all about community helpers, winter and space.

As always thank you for continued support!

Current Wish list:

- Glue Sticks, Snack Ziploc Bags, Sandwich Ziploc Bags
- Gallon Ziploc Bags
- Quart Ziploc Bags

Thank You to the people who gave Memorial Contributions:

In Loving Memory of Ruth Seip:

Mary Davis
 Leesport Jaycee/Historical Society
 Dr. & Mrs. George Gerhart & Family
 Raymond & Linda Reichard
 Glenn & Sally Miller
 William & Coralyth Adams
 Thomas & Phyllis Heffner
 L.C.H.T. - WELCA Group
 Victor K. Biebighauser
 Irvin & Nettie Kauffman
 W. Marshall Simons
 Robert & Shirley Reber

In Loving Memory of Randy Wolfe:

Rhonda Wolfe

In Loving Memory of Edna Machamer and Ruth Seip:

Sue Reiber

In Memory of Deanna Sue Miller:

Mr & Mrs. William Koenig
 Nettie & Irvin Kauffman
 Charles & Lori Johnston
 Dale & Anna Brobst
 James & Barbara Spatz
 Florence Riegel
 Peter & Deanna Barbis
 Robert & Shirley Rahn
 Kenneth & Jean Stoudt
 Janice D. Weaver
 John & Maxine Williamson
 William & Kay Young
 Rev. Edgar & Marilyn Reed
 Raymond & Linda Reichard

Dennis Clemens
 Jim & Audrey DeLong
 Sandra Fister
 William & Barbara Quinn
 Arlene Degler
 Jean A. Patschke
 Walter & Carolyn Christ
 Richard & Connie Bashore
 Thomas & Phyllis Heffner
 Phyllis I. Weaver
 Arthur & Janice Care
 Larry & Sylvia Miller
 E. Stewart Degler
 Suzanne Mattioni

Donald & Gerri Kauffman
 Earl & Sandra Mostoller





December found the cub scouts of Pack 160 Christmas Caroling at Berks Heim, followed by a Christmas gathering at Hoss's. Thank you to all who participated in our Cash Cow day at Hoss's in December. We will be holding our first sandwich sale of 2018 on February 3. Please keep an eye on the bulletin board for the order form.

It is never too early or late to join us and have a ton of fun! Day Camps/Camping, Community Events, Earning Badges, Pinewood Derby, Cub mobile Races, Holiday Parties, Adventures/Trips and so much more! For more information, call Cubmaster Jason Witters at 610-515-5385 for Cub Scouts (Kindergarten—5th grade; ages 5-11) or Assistant Scoutmaster Karen Bausch at 610-334-9739 for Boy Scouts (6th —12th grade).

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

MONTHLY MEETING

Join us on Tuesday, January 8 at 1:00 p.m. for our monthly meeting.

REDNER'S REGISTER TAPES

Submitted by Janet Kleffel

Did you know that Redner's Warehouse Markets gives 1% of purchases back to the Women of the ELCA? This one percent can really add up! And the monies goes to good things like the Mission Trip, VFW, Berk's Women in Crisis, just to name a few.

How does Redner's calculate the one percent? Glad you asked. Well, we depend on church members to drop off their Redner's receipts. However, its not quite that simple.

In order for Redner's to count the

receipt (a.k.a. - register tape), it has to be the ENTIRE receipt, and it has to have a "save-a-tape" number on it. How do you insure this? Well, you must use your pump perks card or save-a-tape card at the checkout. Then, just drop the ENTIRE receipt in the box at the ushers station in the narthex. DO NOT cut the bottom off. We only get credit for COMPLETE tapes! Also, please be sure to turn your tapes in in a timely manner, as Redner's will not accept any over three years old.

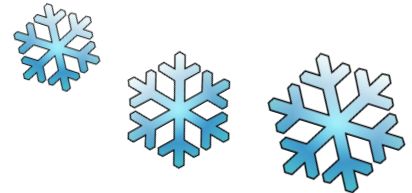
Your help is so appreciated. If you have any questions, please see Janet Kleffel.

LABELS TO SAVE

The Women of the ELCA continue to save **THE BARCODES** from,

Pepperidge Farms, Franco-American and Swanson products. The bar codes are sent to Solheim Lutheran Home in Los Angeles in support of the Navajo Lutheran Mission and School in Rock Point, AZ, where they are used to purchase vans and school supplies at the mission.

We are just one of 525 congregations participating in this worthwhile project. Keep on saving the bar codes and place them at the usher's station or give them to Darlene Savage.



LCMT MINISTRIES INFORMATION

FOOD PANTRY:

Our church is the distribution site for the Schuylkill Valley Food Pantry. It is a monthly distribution done on the third Saturday of each month, from 9 to 11 a.m. There is an income guideline and a registration form to fill out, giving us your name and address as well as the number of family members in your household. Also, there are brochures and information available on heating assistance, ways to conserve energy and general concerns of limited income families. Please contact the church for further information.

2018 MISSION TRIP:

We are scheduled to return to New Jersey the week of April 22, 2018 for the Mission Trip. Watch the calendar for the next scheduled team meeting early in 2018. If you are interested in participating for all or part of the week, please contact Dan DeAntonio.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY:

The prayer shawl ministry group meets the third Sunday of the month from 2 to 4 p.m. Some of the projects that we are currently knitting and crocheting are prayer shawls to give out for various reasons, baby blankets for Baptisms at our church and for babies at Mary's Shelter, and scarves and wash clothes for Opportunity House, The Children's Home of Reading, and Mary's Shelter. Ideas for new projects are always welcome. You do not have to come to the monthly get-togethers, you can work on projects anywhere. Anyone who has any questions or suggestions, call Carolyn Heffner at 610-926-9662 or 484-332-0783.



LCHT NEWS

Congregational Meeting News

On Sunday December 10, 2017 following our 9 am worship a meeting of the congregation was at which individuals were elected to terms on the congregation council and 2 other boards and a budget was approved for 2018. Here is the list of those elected, their positions and terms:

Congregation Council

- Dennis Biehl, 2 year term
- Diana Biehl, 1 year term
- Ron Corl, 2 year term
- Ron Davidheiser, 2 year term
- Phyllis Heffner, 2 year term
- Rebecca Heffner, 1 year term
- Renee Lenning, 2 year term
- Suzanne Reiber, 1 year term

Cemetery Board

- Ron Kessler, 3 year term

Memorial Fund Committee

- Nettie Kauffman, 3 year term



With those who were elected to the congregation council and the addition of Mike Lowery who in 2018 will enter the second year of his current 2-year term, our congregation council will be at full strength (9 members) for the first time in several years. Leaving council after serving nearly 6 years is our current council president, Dan DeAntonio. When you see him, be sure to thank him for his faithful service.

As noted above a budget for 2018 was presented, discussed and approved. It reflects a deficit of \$24,598. While this is nearly half of the 2017 projected deficit, it is something that we can further address with improved giving to LCHT and work to grow our membership and weekly worship attendance. It should be noted that the deficit was able to be reduced because of a strong stewardship campaign this fall and because of cutting pastoral expenses to reflect a 2/3 time call, which is what we presently have with Pr. Ritter as our transitional minister.

Renewal is taking place at LCHT come and be a part of the new things that God is doing in our midst!

A New Ministry for Children Is in the Works

Starting Sunday, January 7, 2018 during our 9 am worship, elementary age children will be invited, following the Children's Sermon, to go to the preschool room for a time of learning tied to the scriptures and the children's sermon for the day. We urge parents to use this new venture to fulfill their baptismal promises to bring their children to worship and to help them grow in the Christian faith and life.



A Lending Library Has Begun

Because of our congregation's participation in the Reformation 500 Bookstore, we received approximately 20 books that can be borrowed for your personal reading. To borrow a book you simply need to place your name and requested information on the clipboard that is located next to the books. The books are on the shelves under the display case in the narthex. Happy reading!

New Members Wanted and Welcomed!

If you or anyone you know is looking for a church home, let Pr. Ritter know. He will be happy to meet with them and to share the ministries of the people of God at LCHT. New members will be received into membership at times appropriate for them. You can contact Pr. Ritter at dsritter@ptd.net or 484-529-7801.



Deadline for submissions for the February Newsletter will be Monday, January 15.



About The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity

Our Mission:

"The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity is a worshipping, growing community of faith in Christ Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit to reach out and serve all people with God's love."

About The Herald:

The Holy Trinity Herald is a newsletter distributed by the beginning of each month, except August. Articles can be submitted to the church office or e-mailed (preferred) to the Secretary.

Deadline for article submission is the 15th of each month.

LCHT Sundays' Schedule:

Worship at 9 a.m.

LCHT Staff Information:

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Dennis Ritter
Office: 610-926-7176 ext. 2
Cell: 610-451-3082
E-mail: dsritter@ptd.com

Secretary: Amanda Schwendeman
Office : 610-926-7176 ext. 1
E-mail: lchtsecretary@comcast.net
Office hrs: Monday - Friday 9 to 1

Sexton: Ana Calencea

Treasurer: Pat Miller
E-mail: lchttreasurer@comcast.net

Music Director: Virginia Lash
Home: 610-916-1316
E-mail: vlash224@comcast.net

Mailing Address:
102 Apple St.
Leesport, PA 19533

Website: www.lcht.org
Church Fax Number:
610-926-7273

Rocking Horse Preschool

Information:

Teachers: Mrs. Aliesha Woods
Mrs. Adrienne Leshner
Office: 610-926-7176 ext. 3
Email: rhps@comcast.net

Mailing Address:

Rocking Horse Preschool
The Lutheran Church
of the Holy Trinity
102 Apple St
Leesport, PA 19533

Website: www.lcht.org

January 2018



Return Service Requested

The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity
102 Apple Street
PO Box 221
Leesport, PA 19533