

ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH

****** 1400 MARKET ST., WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701 ******

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2022 NEWSLETTER

From the Pastor's Desk

Now that we are on the other side of the election, political advertisement season is (thankfully) over! But as we head into the month of December, a more lighthearted yet still highly contested debate arises: when to start playing Christmas music.

While there are some who are ready to start jingling their bells soon after they give away the last of the Halloween candy, my brother takes a more restrictive approach. In his house, Christmas music is forbidden until the last morsel of the Thanksgiving meal has been consumed. And in the church, we don't do a lot of Christmas carols until shortly before December 25.

When it comes to playing music in your home or car, it really doesn't matter when you start. I have no desire to, as a friend of mine would put it, be a "peppermint pooper". But this time of year, it's good to be reminded that the church celebrates Advent for a reason. It is not so much a time of celebration, but a time of preparation. It's a time to reflect on the God who comes to us in grace and peace. It's a time to watch, to wait, and to wonder.

Advent is about preparation, but it's about more than just preparation for the Christmas celebration. It's about preparing ourselves not only for the baby who

would be born in Jerusalem, but for the savior who will come in the future to usher in the kingdom of God and bring an end to all darkness. So, to skip straight to Christmas is ironically not looking to the future, but restricting ourselves to the past. Advent gives us the opportunity to look at the “big picture” of Christmas before we celebrate the event itself.

To that end, I hope that you’ll join us for a midweek Advent series this year. On Wednesdays during Advent (starting on November 30 and ending on the Wednesday before Christmas), we’ll gather in the Chapel for a brief prayer service that will include an opportunity to discuss, ask questions, or even simply reflect on one of the prior Sunday’s scriptures.

However you observe the season this Advent, I invite you to listen to as much (or as little) Christmas music as you please. But I also hope that you’ll take a break from that to watch, to wait, and to wonder about the love of God that would not only provide us a savior for the present, but a hope for the future.



Serving in December

Altar care – Charles Mahler

Ushers – Bob Larson

Dec. 4th *The Second Sunday of Advent*

10:30 am Lector – Jay Nau

Communion Assistant – Kathy and Bob Borch

Dec. 11th *The Third Sunday of Advent*

10:30 am Lector – Wilma Reeder

Communion Assistant – Cameron Sims and Olivia Strother

Dec. 18th *The Fourth Sunday of Advent*

10:30 am Lector – Melanie Taormina

Communion Assistant – Mark Bergren & Charles Mahler

Dec. 24th *Christmas Eve Candlelight service*

***8:00 pm Lector** – Scott Seyler

Assisting Minister – Marilyn Eshleman

Administrant – Patty Durand and Nancy Wood

Communion Assistant – Rod Strother and Sandy Lentz Strother

Dec. 25th *Christmas Day 10:30 am *Online only*

Lector – Brad Nason



COFFEE HOUR will be immediately following the 10:30 AM service on the first Sunday of each month. An additional Coffee Hour following the 8 AM service on the third Sunday of the month. **Please see the sign-up board in the West Hall.**

SERVING If you would like to help serve in our 8:00 am or 10:30 am worship service(s), please contact Diane Kohler at 570-419-7085 or email kohlerdede@gmail.com or Pastor Jeff at 570-323-7309.

USHERS Anyone interested in serving as an usher, please contact the office or email or call Nancy McCarty at: nmac7149@gmail.com; (570) 419-7827).

SEW FINE QUILTERS will meet on **Monday, Dec. 5th from 9:00am - 3:00pm** in Bell Hall with lunch provided.



Watch, Wait, Wonder, and Worship: A Midweek Series for Advent

Join us for a contemplative Advent liturgy on Wednesday nights this Advent season! **Beginning Wednesday, November 30**, we will gather in the chapel at 7 pm on Wednesdays for a brief prayer service that will include reflection and/or discussion on the previous Sunday's scripture. (Dec. 7th, 14th & 21st)

ST. LUKE ANNUAL MEETING of the Congregation, Part One will be held **Sunday, December 11, following the 10:30 am worship service.** A copy of the Agenda and 2023 Budget will be available in the back of the nave for pick up starting Nov. 27th - Sunday, Dec. 11th.

SHAWL MINISTRY will **not** meet in December. If you know someone who could use the comfort of a shawl to wrap themselves in, please contact Nancy McCarty at 570.419.7827 or nmac7149@gmail.com or the church office.

2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES may be picked up in the West Hall starting in December. Please note, that the envelopes will be in numerical order for the convenience of the office. Your offering envelope number may have changed, so please look for your name. If you have any questions or need help, please contact the church office.

FAITH MATTERS GATHERING Our December get-togethers are TBA. Call the office or check the Sunday bulletin for an update.

END OF THE YEAR Contributions for 2022 are needed into the office by **12/28/2022**. If an up-to-date statement is needed beforehand, please contact the church office. Thank you.

COME TO THE MANGER

On Sunday, December 18th at 3:00 pm bring your family to St. Luke Church for a fun, low-pressure, Christmas celebration! We'll be telling the Christmas story in an interactive way that places you and your children in the center of the story. Upon arrival, kids will choose a costume headpiece that will help them to portray a lamb, magi, or angel. Parents will receive a corresponding headpiece (shepherd hat, camel, or star). We'll all move to different locations in the sanctuary, telling the story of the birth of Jesus, singing, and interacting along the way. Refreshments will be served afterward. **Large flyers are available at the church office to share with a friend or neighbor!**



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES

In-person Service & (Livestream)

Sunday, December 18th: “Come to the Manger: An Interactive Telling of the Christmas Story for Families” at 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 24th Christmas Eve: Candlelight service at **8:00 pm** (pre-service music will begin at **7:30 pm**). *One service only.

Sunday, December 25th Christmas Day: Worship will be livestream-only at **10:30 am**. A brief in-person communion service will be held at **11:30 am**.

Sunday, January 1st New Year's Day: Lessons and Carols at **10:30 am**. *One service only.

Daniel's Closet

Daniel's Closet needs your help! Now more than ever, warm winter clothing and accessories are needed for all ages, from infant through adult. **Seasonal clothing** (*no summer clothing at this time and please NO hangers*) for infants, children, and adults, as well as accessories (belts, ties, shoes, boots, scarves, hats, gloves, purses, backpacks/bags, suitcases, etc.). All clothing must be bagged, no loose clothing, please. A collection box is located in our West Hall or items can be taken directly to Redeemer Lutheran Church at 1101 Washington Blvd., Williamsport

From the Personnel Committee: Our present temporary Choir Director, Susan Horn, has asked that St. Luke searches for a permanent Choir Director to relieve her in early 2023. Church members with the requisite musical skills who might have an interest in this part-time paid position or in the alternate might have leads regarding a qualified individual are asked to contact any member of the Personnel Committee. Formal applications and a job description will be available through the church office. (Members of Personnel: *John Kelsey, Susan Duchman, Deb, Bernocco, Cheryl Newberg, Diane Gonzales, and Ruth Croyle.*)

PRAYER CHAIN UPDATE

If you or someone you know needs prayer, please call Cindy Belles at 570-419-1363 or Karen Bergren at 570-220-3201 to start the prayer chain. If you want the name to be on the bulletin prayer list call the church office.



Please Join St. Luke Pre-Schoolers for a
Holiday Program

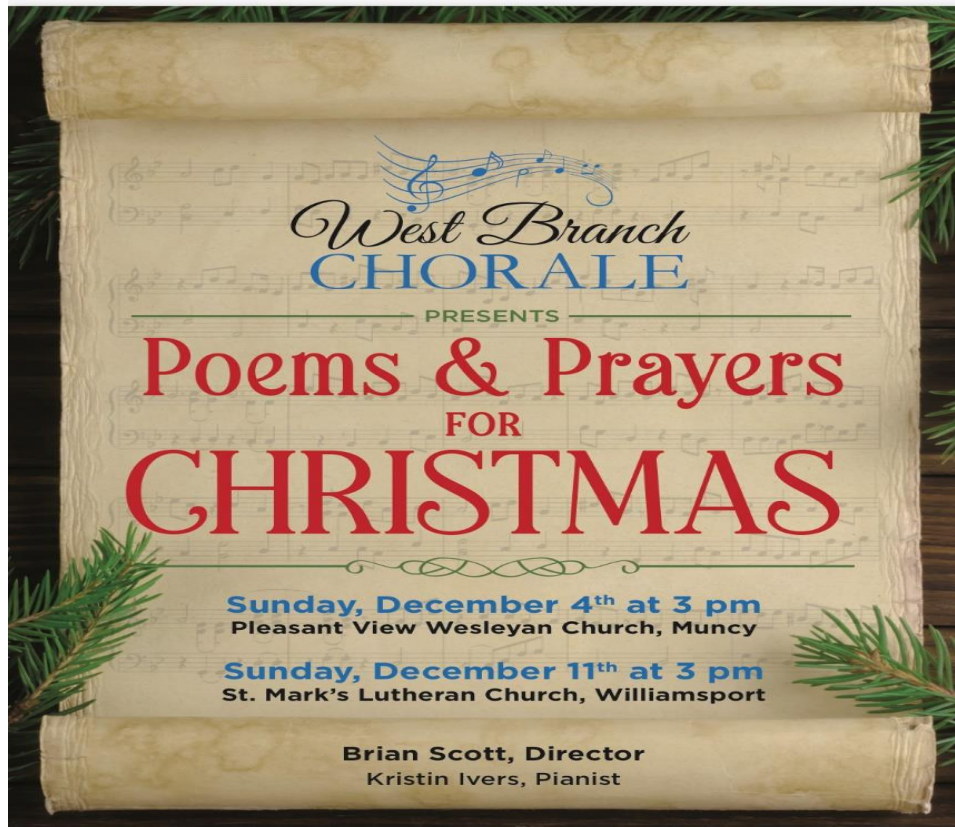
Date: Thursday, December 15th

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Pre-School at St. Luke

Who: Family and Friends

Cookies and Punch afterwards in Bell Hall



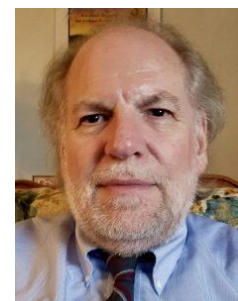
Outdoor Candlelit Procession and Caroling


Trinity Pro-Cathedral, 844 W 4th St, Williamsport, will hold an evening of Christmas Caroling and Giving on **Friday, December 16th**. The night will benefit children in foster care in our community through Dwell. **Assemble at 5:30 p.m. in Trinity Episcopal Church's parking lot**. We will process by candlelight at 6:00 p.m. to Park Place for caroling with special music from several ensembles. Refreshments will be held at the church after caroling. For more information, contact 570-322-0126 or trinitychurchpa@comcast.net.

CROP Walk Update Thanks to everyone for raising funds, walking at the various locations across the County, and praying for this effort. People can still make donations online, by check or cash. Please get all your funds in by Nov. 30th. We have raised over \$6,000 to date and still counting.

The Need to Access Priorities Is Essential

By The Reverend Dr. Ronald Shellhamer. Pastor Ron is ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and is a retired missionary to West Africa and the Aboriginal Tribes of Northern Canada. He, too, serves in The Presbyterian Church/USA





“One day a person in the crowd said to him (Jesus), ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ But he (Jesus) said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?’ And he (Jesus) said to them, ‘Take Care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’ Then he (Jesus) told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he (the rich man) thought to himself, “What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” Then he (the rich man) said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years: relax, eat, drink and be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool!! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves, but are not rich towards God”’ (Luke 12:13-21 NRSV).

Priorities! Arranging matters which are most essential beginning with that which is most important. Priorities! Making a list of what needs to be thought about and acted upon with regularity. Jesus, in the passage above, is pressing/encouraging us to consider our priorities both in the immediate short term and with vision for the long haul.

Without knowing it, we act on simple priorities each day: getting up in the morning for starters. We might get ready for work. We might have our breakfast to gain physical strength for what lies ahead for the day. We might engage in prayer as we embark on the routine(s) which follow.

Jesus pushes us to think further, as it applies to material possessions, our financial security, and thoughts as to how our possessions might control our thinking, crowding out what is most important. This priority thinking might begin with reflections on our relationships: God first, then each other, followed by actively participating in making our world a better place through a myriad of pathways and channels, which cry out for our attention.

The Lord loves us too much to control or dominate our decisions as to what is most important. Nevertheless, he is quite pointed in the parable mentioned.

In the end, what are the priorities in each of our lives? Truly, where is our heart when we consider the treasures we store in our barns of property, house, and financial silos?

Jesus tries to share with us that the decisions we make will either lead us to greater fulfillment in him or the lack of it. This is truly a “matter of faith.”

Posted in [Faith Matters](#)

THE PRE-SCHOOL AT ST. LUKE



The Pre- School at St. Luke
All You Care to Eat Pancake Breakfast
Saturday, February 4, 2023
7:30 am – 11:30 am

Adult \$10 Children (4-12) \$5 Family Pack (2 adults, 2 children) \$25
Take Out Available

Pancakes, Fresh Sausage, Fruit, and scrambled eggs
Also includes Coffee, Tea, and Juice



The Pancake Breakfast Benefits the Pre-School at St. Luke

*Snow day Feb 11, 2023
1400 Market St, Williamsport

Bell Hall

WEIS 4 SCHOOL PROGRAM The Pre-School at St. Luke is once again partnering up with Weis Market in the Weis 4 School program. By Participating in this program, you can earn money for our school by simply shopping. You can register your Weis Rewards card with the bar code found on the flyer (**located in West Hall**) or by registering online at weis4school.com.

To our members celebrating a birthday in December....



Madalyn Fortin 12/06
Melissa Mahler 12/09
Jere Eshleman 12/12
Krista Hiller 12/12
Marjorie Holland 12/12
Roger Wyland 12/12
Deloris Snyder 12/13
Wendy Kelsey 12/15
Alex Reed 12/15
Christian Scampone 12/18
Brenna Beck 12/20
Rebecca Jean 12/21
Charles Paris 12/21
Gerald Brown 12/23
Leah Nason 12/23
Karl Yoas 12/23
Carole Harris 12/26
Scott Seyler 12/27
Ethan Fisher 12/28
James Donnell 12/29
Ali Wyland 12/r 29

Happy Anniversary.....

David and Susan Horn 12/18
Jim and Sally Labenberg 12/23
Rev. Theodore and Bonnie Cockley 12/27

(We're sorry if we missed anyone. If we did, please contact the office so we can add you to our records.)

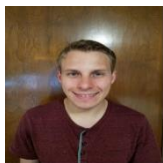
STAFF AT ST. LUKE



Pastor Jeffrey LeCrone, Pastor
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



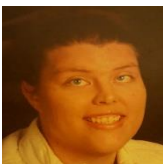
Sarah M. Young, Church Office Manager
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Mark Pall, Organist
Email: pallmark1997@aol.com



Chris Knaur, Sexton
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Melissa Eshleman, Business Manager
Email: info@stlukeweb.com

ST. LUKE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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The church office will be closed Monday, Dec. 26th while staff celebrates the Christmas holiday with family. If you are in need of emergency pastoral care, please call Pastor Jeff at 570-220-3631.