

HILLTOP HERALD

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

LINGLESTOWN, PA

Website: www.churchonthehilltop.org Facebook: @Church.on.the.Hilltop.Lingestown

Annual Meeting - Pt. 1 A Summary

At Part 1 of our Annual meeting on December 1, the 2020 Budget was approved as presented, and elections were held with the following results.

Elected to Congregation Council: Heather Iannantuono, Jenn Miller, Tina Morgan, and Scott Sebastian.

Elected to the Nominating Committee: Karen Economopoulos, MarLee Kertulis, Bill Noonan, Sarah Wadsworth, and Linda Weller.

Our congratulations to all and our sincere thanks to the following Council members who have concluded their terms: Marlene Bayer, Deb Cernugel, Kathy Elser, and Linda Guerrisi.

Also, our thanks to this year's Nominating Committee: Peggy Horton, Carol Maxwell, Pete Sosik, Leslie Wadsworth, and Sandra Zumbrum.

We look forward to a full and challenging year of ministry in service to our Lord.

Annual Meeting - Pt. 2 Sunday, February 2 (after the 10:30AM service)

Our Annual Meeting - Part 2 will be held on *Sunday, February 2*, following the 10:30AM worship service. We will receive reports from our committees and organizations, review our ministry, programs and finances for the year 2019 and look ahead to what is in store for 2020.

NOTE: Committee & Organization annual reports are due to Sherry in the church office by Monday, *January 13*. Thank you!

Snow Closings— Check for closings on TV Channels 15, 21 or 27, or the web sites cbs21.com, cw15.com, or abc27.com. In addition, you may call the church office. We will do our best to leave a message on the answering machine.

JANUARY 2020

A Heartfelt "Thank You"

A special "Thank You" from the Pastor and staff here at Christ Church for the generous congregational Christmas gift. Your thoughtfulness and support is heartwarming, and a source of continuing inspiration to us all.

And, a Special Thanks ...

to everyone who was so generous with their time to make our Advent/Christmas seasons especially meaningful again this year: our Staff; our Vocal, Handbell and Tone Chime Choirs; our Worship and Music Committee; our decorators; our new St. Lucy, Aldora Gebhard, and our many, many worship assistants. To all of you, our sincere thanks.

After-Five Group

The next meeting of The After Five Group is *January 15* (snow date, January 22). Dr. Donald Koones will lead a book discussion on the book, *A Woman of No Importance* by Sonia Purnell. This is a nonfiction account of the American spy, Virginia Hall. Also available on the library book truck is another title about the same woman, *Wolves at the Door* by Judith Pearson. We will gather at 7p.m. in the Great Room. If you have any questions contact Bev Stickley at 717-545-3661.

AND...

The group will meet on *January 8* (note date change) at Panera Bread (Noon) on Jonestown Road since the first Wednesday of 2020 is New Year's Day. No reservations necessary, just show up!

SIMPLY GIVING

Please consider enrolling in "Simply Giving", our electronic funds transfer program to join the families in our congregation who currently participate. Complete the form located on the table in the Great Room. Place in the secretary's mailbox or mail to the church office

and someone will contact you. Thank you.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

The Synod Assembly for 2020 will be held on Saturday, June 6 at Messiah College. The theme for the assembly is "Encountering Jesus." There are two days of edification scheduled as well at a different location. We are in need of two lay voting members, one female and one male. We will be electing the vice president of the Synod which is a lay person and Synod Council members. If interested or have questions, please talk to Pastor Kerns.

2020

Bulletins & Flowers



The new Bulletin and Altar Flower Chart for 2020 is posted in the Great Room. The cost to sponsor remains the same, \$15 for bulletins and \$25 for flowers. Sponsoring these items is a wonderful way to memorialize a loved one, to honor someone, or to remember a special event. There is space allotted for, but not limited to, two sponsors per week. Dates tend to go quickly, so sign up for your special dates, now!

HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

We have received smiles and many thanks for the Christmas gifts (a pair of goats) that were purchased in their names from the ELCA Good Gifts for our homebound members. Please remember our homebound members by sending them greetings throughout the year. They are listed on the board in the Great Room.

From the Pastor...

During the St. Lucy service this year, there were many images of light and darkness. St. Lucy is known as a saint of the light for her presentation of wearing a wreath on her head ... continued on page 3

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with lighted candles to shine in the darkness but to *show the way as well*. We crowned our new St. Lucy, Aldora Gebhard, and as I spoke about the light and darkness in my homily, she stood out for me that night. You see this was her third opportunity to be picked and in the past opportunities two others were chosen before her and she said she was glad for those who were chosen. It was very humbling to me to see such vision in one so young.

With the theme centered on light and darkness and St. Lucy's service to the Lord, I kept thinking about the closing hymn for the night, "All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night" (ELW 565). We sang the first verse and it hit me. "All praise to thee, my God, this night for all the blessings of the light. Keep me, oh, keep me, King of kings, beneath thine own almighty wings."

If you haven't attended this service, you are missing out on a blessing that this night brings. The candle enters the Nave as the light of Christ and then other candles are lit. Each candle brings more light to the space and the mood is one of stillness and comfort for those in attendance. And then we sing the closing hymn and lift up praise to God for that night and the blessings of the light. There is so much darkness in the world around us right now that pausing for just a moment in the midst of the night and to sit in the light of the candles brings me peace. The light of Christ is represented in the candles that night and every time we light them for worship. Then the hymn asks that "God keep us beneath thine own almighty wings."

The Epiphany Season is approaching as you read this newsletter and in Epiphany we stop and hear about the three Wise Men who followed a star to the infant Jesus. Again, it was a light provided by God for them to find Jesus. A star shining brightly in the night sky giving light and hope to all who too seek out our Lord. The same light that we experience at Christmas when the angel comes to the shepherds and a bright light shown all around them is comfort for us.

I invite all of you to just stop for a moment and seek out the light of Christ in your lives. Where has that light shined on you and your loved ones this holiday season? What is that light directing you to do or where is that light pointing you to? Our new St. Lucy represented the light of the Lord because of her unselfish praise for those who were chosen ahead of her. May her example and that of St. Lucy and the light of Christ be with you. Peace Pastor Kerns

THE STORY OF THE EPIPHANY: The church celebrates the day of Epiphany on January 6, twelve days after Christmas. The church recalls the story (found only in Matthew 2:1-10) of the wise men who came from the East searching for a king born under a star. They met with King Herod in Jerusalem and ascertained that a king was to be born in Bethlehem. Herod directed them to continue their search for this

new king.

"When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road." (Matthew 2:10-12 NRSV)

The wise men risked much and traveled far to pay homage to the king born under a star in Bethlehem. They came offering their gifts, only to be overcome with joy, not grasping that it was Jesus who provides the greater gift to the world. God was revealed to the wise men!

AS WE MOVE FORWARD IN THE CHURCH YEAR through Epiphany, we then prepare ourselves for Lent. Ash Wednesday is on February 26 and that begins our Lenten journey to the cross and the resurrection. Christmas is still on our minds at this time and we are looking to take a deep breath from the season and begin to move forward. As we move forward into Lent, I wanted to share some information with you.

When I think about Lent and then the Three Days, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil, I wanted to focus a little on some of the things that are part of the season. I read an article recently from the ELCA website that started me thinking about some practices that are part of the liturgy in church and what do they mean for us as the participants in worship.

The article was entitled "How do we use a Paschal Candle?" The Paschal Candle is the larger candle that is placed at the baptismal font on Sunday mornings except during the Easter Season when it is moved to the side of the altar during the Easter Vigil. "In Jerusalem, the earliest Christians blessed and lighted candles every Saturday night. By at least the fifth or sixth century, the custom had become associated with the celebrations of the Resurrection, and paschal candles had found their way into the liturgy of the Western church." (ELCA article)

"For us, the symbolism of Christ's triumph over the darkness of sin and death is preeminent. This symbolism is most apparent when the paschal candle is introduced each year to the congregation in the Easter Vigil on Easter Eve. When the vigil begins, the church is dark, symbolic of the darkness of the sepulcher that held the crucified Christ. A new fire is kindled, and the paschal candle is lighted, representing the Risen Christ, the light of the world." (ELCA article)

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The paschal candle is carried in procession into the dark nave so Christ lights our way out of darkness. During the procession, the pastor, in our procession, sings out at three different places, "The light of Christ." The point is that Christ is present with us and that the light from the Paschal Candle stands out as his presence.

Throughout the fifty days of Easter, the paschal candle traditionally stands near the altar as a symbol of the resurrection. It is lighted for each liturgy during the great fifty days of Easter and Easter ends at Pentecost when the candle is then moved back to the baptismal font. At the font, the candle stands as a visual reminder that in our baptism, we are crucified and resurrected with Christ. The candle is lighted for baptisms, at which time small baptismal candles are lighted from it for presentation to the baptized or sponsor. This act is a visual reminder of the integral connection between Baptism and Easter.

The candle is also lighted for funerals and is placed in its stand at the head of the casket or the urn for ashes. In a visual way, the paschal candle visually proclaims the message of Romans 6:3-5 (used at the beginning of the burial liturgy): "In our Baptism we have already died and been raised with Christ."

The Paschal Candle is marked with the sign of the cross as it is lighted during the Easter Vigil and the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, is declared before it makes its way to the Nave at the Easter Vigil. The paschal candle is the reminder that Christ is present with us and that its light is that of Christ among us.

(Information for this article comes from the ELCA Web Site "How do we use a Paschal Candle?")

Luther's Breakfast Club

We will meet *Sunday, January 5, at 9:30AM* in Room 4 on the lower level. Anyone post-confirmation and on is invited to join us, and as always, bring a friend. This is an opportunity for our post-confirmation youth to design and work out with Zach Stank the curriculum for the group. When our youth are confirmed that does not mean they are done learning and studying in the church. This is a good opportunity for our post-confirmation youth to be part of the life of the church. We hope you will consider this opportunity and join Zach in Room 4 at 9:30 AM.



CONFIRMATION CLASSES FOR JANUARY

Will take place on *January 5 & 19 from 4:00-5:30* in the evening. Pastor Kerns will be the teacher for these classes. We will meet in the Great Room. (Class scheduled for January 26 will be at the regular time and place.)

The Adult Forum will start up again on *January 12*. We will continue our study of the book of The Revelation of John through a video presentation. The video is entitled "Painting Revelation" by Debbie Topliff. All are welcome to join us between the worship services in the youth room (Room 10) on the lower level. We will have study material available for you as well. Peace, Pastor Kerns

Youth Happenings — —

Christ Lutheran Youth (Grades 7-12)

- ♦ January 5 - CLY Meeting, 6-8:30PM
- ♦ January 19 - CLY Meeting, 6-8:30PM

FIRST COMMUNION

Pastor Kerns is working on scheduling first communion classes in January. He has heard from some parents about their children participating but wants to make sure that no one is missed. Please let him know if you have interest in your children receiving first communion. The schedule will depend on the response from the parents and what time frame would work for the instruction.



PRAYER LIST

Please be advised when adding a name to the prayer list, (which is printed on the weekly announcement page), the name will be kept on the list for two weeks. In an effort to be good stewards of the prayer list, we ask that you please update your prayer request so that we can maintain an accurate listing. We do not want to miss someone who is in need of prayer. Thanks!



REMINDER — SCHEUDLING FOR THE HILLTOP HERALD

If you know you **will not** be available for a particular Sunday, please contact the office 717-545-4211 and leave a message, send an email to secretary@churchonthehilltop.org or you may even write a note on the back of your Sunday attendance form by the *15th of the preceding month (e.g. February newsletter—need information by January 15)*. We will do our best not to schedule you for any duties in the following month. However, if you are scheduled in the newsletter for a particular duty and cannot fulfill that commitment, please find a replacement and notify the Church Office. Thank you for your participation in our ministry of worship!

Hilltop Herald
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**Two Service Schedule
(8:30 & 10:30) & SCS (9:15)
resume on January 5**

**2020 Offering Envelopes
Available in Great Room**

**2020 Flower/Bulletin
Sponsor Chart is Posted**

▲ Word of Thanks . . .

- ◆ “A BIG THANK YOU to Karen Holmes and her “crew”. A lot of prep work & organization has to be done to accomplish this family-oriented evening of the potluck/covered dish, gingerbread house, centerpiece, advent wreath making event that was held on December 1. We had an even bigger crowd than last year! Good times and wonderful memories are made that night and we thank you!”
- ◆ “Thank you for your generous donation of \$866.62. We appreciate all you do for the CDSN NutriPacks program. You have made a difference in a child’s life. Thank you. Pam Jones”
- ◆ “Thank you for your gift of \$25.00 to Lutheran Disaster Response. Thank you for sharing the gifts God has activated in you! In Christ, The Rev. Robin Brown, Mission Funding Director, Congregations”
- ◆ “Just wanted to thank you for being so nice. I am so glad I have a church family that is thinking about me while I am away. This semester has been difficult, but receiving this package brightened my day! I can’t wait to see everyone over the holiday break! Megan Daubenspeck”
- ◆ “Dear Church Family, being part of a loving church family is one of the best gifts a person could ever receive. Thanks for the many thoughts, prayers, cards, and phone calls I received during my brief hospital stay and recuperation at home. Special thanks to Pastor Kerns for the visit prior to my surgery, the choir for the lovely musical number sent to me by Gail via text message, the Women’s Prayer

group for their special prayers and concerns, and Susan Harrison for delivering the beautiful altar flowers to my home. The love and support from everyone was very comforting and oh so appreciated. Love, Marilyn, Koones”

Rest Eternal Grant Her, O Lord

Martha L. Davis, a long-time member of our church family, died on October 21 at the age of 93 years old. Pastor Kerns officiated at her service held here at the church, on Friday, October 25, at 11:00AM. Memorial contributions may be made to our church, Christ Lutheran. Our prayers are with her children, Melanie & Tom, and all those who mourn.

Rest Eternal Grant Him, O Lord

Robert E. Dunmire, a member of our church family, died on December 13. A service will be held here at church on Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 11:00AM with Pastor Kerns officiating. Our prayers are with his daughters, Joy, Pamm, & Amy, and all those who mourn.

NOTE! 2020 Offering Envelopes are available in the Great Room! Please pick up yours today! If you know of someone that you could deliver their envelopes to them, please take them along, too! The envelopes will not be mailed. Thank you!