

HILLTOP HERALD

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.churchohthehilltop.org

LINGLESTOWN, PA

JULY 2017

Seasonal Rite for Summer Worship

Prayer Around the Cross:
Beside Still Waters

Sunday, July 16, 2017

7:30 PM

“Prayer Around the Cross: Beside Still Waters” is a liturgy of healing prayer with the laying on of hands and anointing, based on Psalm 23. You are invited to come and gather on this night for a time of silence, laying on of hands and anointing along with a time of quiet personal prayer. We will gather in silence and the Nave will be in semi-darkness. There will be times when chants will be sung as we prepare ourselves for each part of the service. The chants are similar to the ones we use while we take Holy Communion on Sunday during the liturgy. There will be times of silence for contemplation and quiet personal prayer. There will be a time to pray around the cross that will be accompanied by background music that will be played by our Pianist. Candles will be lit in a container to invite the light of Christ to come and be with us.

This service is different than other evening prayer services. This would be a great opportunity for you to come and have a time away from the busyness of life and the worries or concerns of life that fill your time. So come and join us on July 16 in the evening for prayer, laying on of hands, and anointing.

An Important Message from Pastor Kerns . . .

On the wall of my office are the reports of the Town Hall Gatherings that we were part of back in 2015. A small group of us gathered to look over the reports and summarized them as part of our “Strategic Plan.” There has not been a formal plan laid out but the pieces of the reports have been implemented and some have been in conversation and in the works, so to speak. One of the first things we worked on was updating the Sunday School and Confirmation curriculums and begin a post confirmation group. As far as education goes, the next steps are to offer some type of study and gathering for young adults and other Bible study opportunities. As part of my May Council Report, I mentioned that I would like to seek out the thoughts of the congregation on Adult Bible studies. That will be taking place this summer and I am looking for feedback from the congregation.

Another point in the gathering’s report, is engaging the community and seeking ways to reach out to our neighbors. Several ideas were given and the Fellowship Committee has invited our neighbors to attend our monthly Sunday breakfasts with two banners positioned at two different places on the property. At that breakfast there were at least eight new folks who joined us for breakfast. This is a start and the committee plans on continuing this invitation. There were other ideas that came out of the gatherings and one was how can we be an inclusive worship community. I believe we are open as a congregation to being inclusive and so the next point is to work on a welcome statement for the church that

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UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

The following information comes from a transitional web site for a new venture in theological education. Things are changing in the educational process more than just a joining of two seminaries but also a change in theological education.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia are forming a common venture in theological education United Lutheran Seminary. Bringing together the strengths of these two historic seminaries makes it possible to form the newest graduate and professional theological education enterprise with the deepest roots.

April 20, 2017 (Gettysburg and Philadelphia) The United Lutheran Seminary named the Rev. Dr. Theresa F. Latini as the first president to lead the unified Seminary with campuses at Gettysburg and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

President-elect Latini will officially begin July 1, 2017, which is also the inaugural date of United Lutheran Seminary (ULS), a consolidation of two historic Lutheran Seminaries in Gettysburg and Philadelphia. ULS is the oldest seminary of the 3.8 million-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), dating to 1826.

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says just that. I will be gathering a few folks from the congregation to discuss possible welcome statements. There are a few other items on the summary of the gatherings such as joint worship opportunities for the congregation, special music in worship (which is already being worked on) and seeking out people's gifts to be used in worship or the life of the church.

As we move forward with these suggestions there is another issue that we are going to have to deal with sooner than later and that is facility issues. We are currently working on prioritizing them and sometime in the future we will have to bring these concerns to the congregation and will most likely have to move forward with a capital campaign to cover the costs.

Strategic plans can change as time goes on due to unforeseen circumstances but we need to be open to those changes to move forward. There will be more information coming in the future. May the peace of Christ be with you all.

Pastor Kerns

Lower Susquehanna Synod Annual Assembly

The Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA (of which we are a member congregation) met in Assembly June 2-3, with Pastor Kerns and Tim and Tina Morgan serving as our delegates. A "wrap-up" of Assembly actions is available on the Synod website: www.lss-elca.org.

Then go to the events tab and click on the Synod Assembly drop down tab to access information about the assembly.

Some of the items from the Assembly were the election of lay and rostered leaders to positions within the Synod. There was the installation of new deans and secretaries as well as other positions within the Synod. There was a debate over the budget for 2018 as the proposed budget's spending amount remained the same as 2017. This is an area of concern since it is projected that there will be a short fall by the end of 2017 and that the Bishop, Synod Staff, and the Synod Council will have to make some hard decisions as to cut funds from ministries or even the reduction of staff. The budget was passed as presented.

Pastor Kerns' commentary—

It is a time of concern for the life and vitality of the ELCA. Mission Support (Benevolence) for the Church in general is down and is trending downward. This means that the mission of the church is being affected. We at Christ Lutheran have met our budgeted obligation for mission support in the past but our support is not where it can be for sure. The Finance Committee has carefully considered our mission support each year for our budget. We are the body of Christ as Lutheran Christians and we are part of the three expressions of the church including the ELCA, Lower Susquehanna Synod, and the local congregation. Our mission support is essential for the ministries of the church. How we respond can make a difference to the ministry of the church at large and at the local level. It is always the business part of the Synod Assembly that brings anxiety at times for the structure of the church's function around the business of the church. I have asked our Church Council to consider how we may be able to step in and assist in closing the shortfall realizing we cannot cover but a very, very small part of it. All the congregations of our Synod were challenged to consider helping to close the shortfall. This would be a start in enabling the Synod to do its work. We will be in conversation at the next Council meeting and it may be that we will ask for a love offering from the members of the congregation or use some funds in the Clearing Account and not to exceed an amount determined by the council. The other option would be using both a love offering and the clearing account in some manner.

I know that when some folks hear the word synod they panic and get defensive. But the reality is that we are the Synod too. We elect a bishop, a lay person as the vice president and the church council members. The Synod supplies support for congregations in various ways and helps guide our ministries within the church. They are not the bad guy as some seem to think, but they are our peers who are working very hard doing the work they were called to do. Sometimes that work is very difficult just as it is in the local church.

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I ask that we keep our Church, the ELCA, and all of its three expressions in our thoughts and prayers as we all move forward in ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pastor Kerns

WELCOME NEW MEMBER—

We welcome our newest member, Lodusky Brennan, who was received into membership by transfer from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Lebanon, on May 21. Please greet her and welcome her to our church family.



Confirmed in the Faith!

The following baptized members of our church family were confirmed on Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2017 at the 10:30 am service—Alex Scott Cordner and Gabriella Hope Frye.

Please remember them in your prayers as they move forward in their lives of faith and commitment.

BIBLE STUDY

Pastor Kerns is planning on starting a Bible Study in the fall and is seeking some input as to what day and time will work. He is open to morning or evening times and or both if the study uses the same material. Please drop Pastor Kerns a note in his mailbox or send him an email (pastor@churchonthehilltop.org) or just speak directly to him. God's word is very important in our faith journey. The study will be easy to follow and will be designed that if you would miss a session or two you would still be good to continue when you are able to be present. Pastor Kerns will appreciate your feedback.

NEW LUNCH PROGRAM

The Dauphin County Library System is sponsoring a new lunch program this summer. It is called "Lunch at the Library" that runs from June 12—August 25. Kids 18 and under can join the Library for a nutritious lunch at no charge. The meals are provided by the Halifax School District and Dauphin County Technical School.

Call and check at your library for lunch hours.

REMINDER— SCHEDULING FOR THE HILLTOP HERALD

With summer vacation time upon us many of our members will be out of town. 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 before the 15th of the preceding month when you are not able to serve. We will not schedule you on the requested date(s) when you are not available.

also...

Be sure to notify the office of any changes in your address, telephone number or email address. We can only keep you informed if we have your current information. Thank you!

Youth Mission Trip with LutheranHANDS July 8-16, 2017

Our Youth Advisor, Sean Hoffman, will be accompanying three members of our Youth Group—Kara Parker, Samantha Parker and Allyson Stauffer to another mission trip this year. They are returning to where it all began for LutheranHANDS 10 years ago, in New Orleans! On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, covering more than 80% of the city with water. As of today, 12 years later, there are still an estimated 5,000 families who do not have the funds or resources to rebuild homes. This summer, LutheranHANDS will be partnering with the local organization St. Bernard Projects to help continue rebuilding homes and restoring hope in NOLA communities.

We would like to thank the congregation for supporting our youth group throughout the year, so that the youth are able to help serve the communities in New Orleans. Please keep them and the



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Seasonal Rite
July 16, 7:30PM

After-Five Group
July 5 and July 19

Youth Mission Trip
w/LutheranHANDS
New Orleans, LA
July 8-16

Youth Happenings --

- Christ Lutheran Youth (CLY) (Grades 7-12)*
- No meetings scheduled during July
 - July 8 — July 16 Mission Trip w/LutheranHANDS
 New Orleans, Louisiana
- Upper Elementary Youth (Grades 4-6)*
- No meetings scheduled until the fall

Thank You ...

- “Dearest Church family, Jesse and I would like to thank the congregation for all of their prayers, support, cards, flowers and well wishes that were sent Ann’s way during her illness and hospital stays. We are especially appreciative of Pastor Kerns’ help and advice along her last journey. He visited regularly, offered prayers, readings and communion when Ann was unable to leave the house and while hospitalized. Ann loved her church and the activities she attended. With love and the sure assurance of everlasting life, Bill Noonan”
- “Dear Pastor Kerns and my whole church family, thank you very much for the visits, prayers and well-wishes for Mike and me during Mike’s extended illness. I really appreciate all the support. Mike is improving daily and the inflam-

Continued ...

- mation should be gone in the next couple of months. The power of prayer should never be underestimated! Thank you! Donna Murray”

After-Five Group
July 5, Noon
July 19, 7:00PM

The After-Five Group - open to all members and friends of our church family - will meet for their monthly lunch on *Wednesday, July 5*, at noon at Panera Bread.

Then...

We will meet again on *July 19* at 7:00PM in the Great Room. This is the annual planning session for the upcoming year. Please come for fellowship and to share ideas. No need to let Beverly (Stickley) know if you plan on attending.

LIBRARY NOTES

For your summer reading, the Church Library has added a variety of books. There is something for everyone of all ages. Take a few minutes and look at our new additions. The books are on the book truck in front of the library. Don’t forget to sign the card and place in the wall holder.

