

THE LAMPSTAND

Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church

80 Gockley Road ☩☩ Stevens, PA 17578

PASTOR'S MEDITATION

This I Yet Possess

Yes, it's that joyous, bell ringing, coin clinking, song singing time of year again when people are more depressed than at any other time. The reason is probably because there are expectations of happiness but realities of loss.

Thinking about plunging into despair this Holiday season? Consider this:

"When life becomes meaningless, and when one is drowning in despair, any kind of do-it-yourself faith does not work. When the bottom has dropped out, one discovers that one's ego power has been reduced to zero and that it takes two to believe, for one must borrow faith from someone still strong in faith when one's faith is gone. It is a word from the outside that promises radical change and brings comfort. The biblical God is a lover who offers good news in the crucified Christ, who endows victims of ego power with gospel power."

-Reverend Doctor Eric W. Gritsch, Fortress Introduction to Lutheranism, Fortress Press 1994, p. 99

Before you get all excited or all depressed, it's wise to remember that all of us get down once in a while and it only means we're human.

If you are diving into a deep darkness even as all the Christmas lights are going up, please consider the above quote from my old mentor, professor and friend from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

The reason that Jesus Christ was born, the reason we celebrate is precisely because we can't do this heavy lifting by ourselves. We need help. We need others. We need God.

Dr. Gritsch was a man who taught me the nuances of the simple faith my parents gave to me. He would say things like, "If the fundamentalist preacher asks me, 'Eric, do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior?'" in a threatening tone, I might say, 'Well, I'm really not sure. But my Grandmother taught me this and she believed this and that's good enough for me!'"

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Volume 18 Number 11

December 2024

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Meditation.....	1-2
Parish Notes.....	2
Hymn of the Month.....	3-4
Sunday School.....	5
Prayer Corner.....	6
Calendar.....	7
Readings & Psalms.....	8
Usher Schedule.....	8
Church Council.....	9
Organ Report.....	10
Thank You Notes	11
Contribution Opportunities.....	11
Birthdays.....	13
Anniversaries.....	13
Community Events.....	14
Important Contact Information.....	15
Christmas Eve Services Information.....	16

Insert sheet
2025 Budget

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

**January's newsletter
article deadlines will be
Thursday, December 19th.**

**Your articles can be
emailed in the formats of
Word or PDF to:
mellingerslutheran@gmail.com**

“Go where a bell rings,” he would say. “If you want to learn how to bowl associate with bowlers. If you want to have faith, associate with the faithful.” This is one reason church and worship is important, especially during the Advent and Christmas seasons. We worship Our Resurrected Savior who was born a baby. But we also sit next to the faithful! This helps us. Do what they do. Go where they go. Say what they say.

So have no fear little flock! Enjoy what God has so graciously given you. Eric would say, “The worst four letter word for Christians is ‘fear’. The best one is ‘hope’”.

Grieving some loss? Listen to this quote from Martin Luther:

“I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess.”

Enjoy the season! Or as Martin Luther told his wife Katie when she worried about him during his many travels, “Pray, let God worry!”



Parish Notes

Decorating the Church, Congregational Meeting and Christmas Party

‘Tis the Season. We are hoping to see everyone on December 8th after worship when we will be decorating the Church for the Season.

On December 15th after worship we will have our Annual Congregational Meeting at which time we will elect Council members and discuss the 2025 Resource Allocation (Budget). Following the meeting we will have a Christmas Party and a meal at 11:30. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or call the Church office (717-336-8800) if you are planning to attend the meal.

Christmas Worship

December 24 4:00 pm Family Service of Holy Communion

**December 24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight
Service of Holy Communion**

December 29 9:00 am Hymn Sing

Hymn of the Month for December
“O, Little Town of Bethlehem”

The Christmas carol *“O Little Town of Bethlehem”* was written in 1868 by Phillips Brooks. Brooks was the second rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity on Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia.

He was in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve in 1865. He went to the service where they were singing Christmas carols at the site where Jesus was born and he was inspired to write this carol. Brooks wrote the text to the song and asked the organist at the time, Lewis Redner, to write the music for it.

Three years later, at Christmastime, remembering that experience, Brooks penned the words to this beautiful song for the children’s choir of his church. The organist of the church put music to the lyrics and on Christmas Eve, 1868, *“O Little Town of Bethlehem”* was sung for the first time.

We don’t know too much about Brooks, although he was a published author and his church did erect a statue of him standing near a cross in his honor. He may have been quiet and unassuming, we aren’t sure. But from the words of the song we know he was impacted by his experience in Bethlehem.

Bethlehem was about six miles outside of Jerusalem, the birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Meaning *house of bread*, it was also the *City of David*. This is where Samuel, the prophet, anointed David to be king over Israel. Then, in the book of Micah, the prophet tells that the Messiah would come from this small *unimportant* town of Bethlehem! *By the time Jesus was born, Bethlehem was just a tiny village.*



O little town
of Bethlehem

But it didn’t matter the place. This was God’s plan. He didn’t choose to come with fanfare and crowds broadcasting the news. He chose to come humbly with the host of heaven proclaiming His birth!

You see, it doesn’t matter how insignificant or little we may be, we have the potential to be used for something great in the Kingdom of God!

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Just like the little town of Bethlehem, if God chooses us, He will make a way for us to be used and to be used in a big way. Don't sell Him short!

The city of Bethlehem today? Approximately 60,000 people live in and around the area. It is home to one of the most sacred Christian sites in the world, the Church of the Nativity, circa 330 A.D. It still stands over a cave believed to be the very spot where Jesus was born. Of course, this tourist site is one of the oldest surviving Christian churches in existence today, making Bethlehem a thriving tourism destination.

True, tourism is not Bethlehem's destiny. But centuries ago, the God of the universe picked this *Little Town* for the birth place of the Messiah. And that *Child of Bethlehem* can come and abide in us today.

Submitted by Vickie Kissinger

Choir and Handbell Practices

Choir

Wednesday, December 4, 11 & 18 at 6:00 pm

Hand Bell

Wednesday, December 4, 11 & 18
at 7:00 pm



Sunday December 15th
Ahava will be playing

~ During the months of September, October and November, our children's Sunday School class studied several Bible stories including: The Good Samaritan, Banquet with Simon, Mary & Martha, The Lost Sheep & Lost Coin, Ten Men Healed and The Wedding at Cana. We explored these stories by reading our Bible and through games, art, cooking, science and video.

CHILDREN'S Sunday School Scoop

~ In November the children helped create a Thanksgiving bulletin board which is displayed in the Narthex. The children enjoy creating new boards every several months and take pride in displaying them for all to see and enjoy.

~ During the next several weeks, we will be creating Christmas ornaments which will be used to decorate our classroom tree during Hanging of the Greens.

**JOIN US FOR CLASS IN DECEMBER AS WE CELEBRATE ADVENT
AND AWAIT THE BIRTH OF THE BABY JESUS**

**** NOTE: There will be no Sunday School
classes on December 29th ****



PRAYER CORNER

Please pray for the following people:

Vic Richard, Elaine Haldeman, Carl Mohler Jr., Kim Craven, Patty Gehman, Ed Wentzel, Shirley Sweigart, Skip Hutchinson, Jeff Moyer, Nancy Jeffers, Dave Haldeman, Clair Miller, Jane Goshert (Home Hospice), Mike Leed, Anita Soto, Jay Stoltzfus (with family in Florida), Beverly Sweigart, Theda Raffauf, Mary Weidman, Sam Soto, Dorothy Hutchinson, Walter Goshert Jr., Deb Zerbe, Roy Latshaw, Amanda Benton, Marty Leed & Family, Fay Weitzel, Vivian Gehr, Jay Weaver, Barb Moyer, Betty Cordes and Judy Meckley.

Artman Lutheran Home, Ambler: Sally Wealand

Ephrata Manor: Vesta Reber, Shirl Tobias, Pauline Sawyer, Joan Wentzel, Ella Felker and Bob Weaver

Keystone Villa: Betty Firestine

Lancaster Nursing & Rehab: Pat McQuate

Neffsville Nursing & Rehab: Pauline Martin

Maple Farms: Janet Hirneisen

Phoebe Berks: Nick Rampolla

Alyssa Schmeck, Cole Prevoznik, Vincent Fortunato, Karen Leonhard, John Duing, Sue Kreitz, Brian Auker, Janet Hirneisen, Sue Gray, Chris Miller (Home Hospice), Gaile Gehman, Barry Kreider, Dennis Betz, Esther Neidigh Betz, Dale Firestone, Pastor Scott Davis, Mary Royer, Tom Parrish Sr., Bea Hassler, Quentin Ellis, Earl Crum Jr., Mary Sanger, Larry Weachter, Andy & Brenda Gabig, Matt Thorn, Brian Fetter, Kelly Means, Patty Hall, Pastor Karen Larson, Brian Kerns, Mary Lou Crum, Meredith Palmer, Althea Hillegas, Bob Bos, Curtis Townsley, Mary Morton, Robyn Redcay, Corrina Bender, Margaret Weller, Bud Bender, Mike Fasnacht and Cynthia Peters.

Pray also for the grieving families of:

John Hutchinson, Reverend Judy McKee, Ethel Leed, Grace Wentz, Don Craven, Maribel Sanchez, Alex Becklin, Faye Pannebecker, Maggie Bollinger, Cindy Novak, Dot Demming, Harriet Stoltzfus, Mick Smyer, Shanan Shortuse, Ray Vargo, Lavern Gehman, Patricia Kieffer, Tom Craven, Bill Nodeen, Michelle Simpson, Sam Heiser, Hunter Bristow, Clair High, Tom Dittoe, Donald Hain and Clara Ingram.



Sunday

December 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29

9:00 am Church Services

10:15 am - 11:00 am Sunday School

1st: The 1st Sunday of Advent

8th: The 2nd Sunday of Advent

10:15 am Hanging of the Greens

15th: The 3rd Sunday of Advent & Ahava Band playing

10:15 am Annual Congregational Meeting

11:30 am Christmas Party and Dinner

2:00 pm Pastor Tim leading worship at Keystone Villa

22nd: The 4th Sunday of Advent

29th: 9:00 am Christmas Hymn Sing

Tuesday

December 3, 10, 17 & 24

3rd: 6:00 pm Social Ministry Christmas Party at the Lincoln House

10th & 17th: 6:30 pm Pastor Tim Zoom Bible Study

24th: Christmas Eve Worship Services - 4:00 pm Family Service with Holy Communion & 7:00 pm Candlelight Service with Holy Communion

Wednesday

December 4, 11 & 18

4th, 11th & 18th: 6:00 pm Choir Practice

7:00 pm Handbell Practice

4th & 11th: 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm In Person Bible Study at Church

18th: 1:00 pm Pastor Tim performing music for Exeter Seniors

Thursday

December 12

6:30 p.m. Council Meeting



Readings for the month of December

DECEMBER 1 – 1 ADVENT: Jeremiah 33:14-16, Psalm 25:1-10,
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 & Luke 21:25-36

DECEMBER 8 – 2 ADVENT: Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79,
Philippians 1:3-11 & Luke 3:1-6

DECEMBER 15 – 3 ADVENT: Zephaniah 3:14-20, Isaiah 12:2-6,
Philippians 4:4-7 & Luke 3:7-18

DECEMBER 22 – 4 ADVENT: Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55,
Hebrews 10:5-10 & Luke 1:39-45[46-55]

DECEMBER 24 – CHRISTMAS EVE: Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96,
Titus 2:11-14 & Luke 2:1-14[15-20]

DECEMBER 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY: Isaiah 62:6-12, Psalm 97,
Titus 3:4-7 & Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

DECEMBER 29 – 1 CHRISTMAS: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26, Psalm 148,
Colossians 3:12-17 & Luke 2:41-52

December Usher Schedule

December 1

Head – Troy Adair, Randy Brubaker, Nancy Eberly & alternate Jill Showalter

December 8

Head – Shawn Jeffers, Jean Lausch & Joan Moore

December 15

Head – Piper Leonhard, Kristi Leonhard, Jill Showalter & alternate Dave Weidman

December 22

Head – Lowell Yost, Troy Adair, Joan Moore & alternate Linda Weaver

December 24 Christmas Eve

Head—Nancy Eberly, Jean Lausch & Joan Moore

December 29

Head – Shawn Jeffers, Kristi Leonhard, Piper Leonhard & alternate Jill Showalter

COUNCIL NOVEMBER 14, 2024

- * Lowell Yost called the November meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Mike Haller read a devotional about gratitude from Jesus Today by Sarah Young.
 - * A motion was made for a few lectern microphones to be replaced. They are outdated and causing feedback issues with the newer system.
 - * Mellingers has been approved to be an affiliate with EASS involving the Cocalico Builders of Hope Committee.
 - * Council terms for members were discussed.
 - * Review of the 2025 usher schedule and discussion to change from 4 to 3 ushers each Sunday.
 - * Next Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 12th at 6:30 pm. We adjourned the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.
- *The December Newsletter will have a report from the Organ Committee for everyone to review before the Congregational Meeting. If you have questions about the report please contact a Council member or it can be discussed at the Congregational Meeting.

Council Terms as of January 2024

3rd Term ENDS December 2024 ~ Jean Lausch

2nd Term ENDS December 2024 ~ Troy Adair, Randy Brubaker & Lowell Yost

1st Term ENDS December 2024 ~ Linda Weaver & Nancy Eberly

3rd Term ENDS December 2025 ~ Jill Showalter

2nd Term ENDS December 2025 ~ Mike Haller, Kristi Leonhard

1st Term ENDS December 2025 ~ Shawn Jeffers & Piper Leonhard

ORGAN COMMITTEE REPORT

During our first meeting on June 4, the Organ Committee (Vicki Kissinger, Nancy Hain, Kim Craven, Andy Leonhard & Troy Adair) discussed current & possible future issues with the current organ.

Current – Chimes are not working, blower for wooden pipes needs electrical work and wiring is brittle.

Future – Limited parts availability & more wiring getting brittle.

Other concerns include availability of organists in the future & the price of a new organ.

We discussed options for the replacement of the current organ:

New hybrid organ, Used hybrid organ, Specialized keyboard (similar to Clavinova) and Piano

At the next meeting on July 25, we discussed the following items which were researched after our first meeting:

- Vicki found out from Greg Gehman of the Organ Guild that there are students still specializing in organ playing in local colleges.
- Vicki contacted Mike from Roger Organ and he stated the availability of replacement parts is good except for the CPU board (if the CPU fails, the organ will need to be replaced).
- Andy researched options with Allen Organ & Viscount Organ – the dealers would be out of the area & price would be higher than Rodger Organ (current organ).
- Troy checked with Buch Organ on a price of a new hybrid organ – the price would be around \$80,000
- Andy was able to repair the blower with the help of Witmer Motor Service.

After the Organ Committee submitted the above information to Church Council, it was decided that since there are replacement parts available for the current organ and the pipes and the organ are working, we are choosing not to replace the current organ at this time.

Moving forward the Organ Committee along with the approval of Church Council would like to start a fund titled the “Music Equipment Fund”. These monies could then be used towards the purchase of new musical equipment in the event that the CPU board of our current organ fails.

If you have question about the report please contact a Council member or wait and discussion can be at the Congregational meeting.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT CHURCH

We are a blessed congregation to have hard working individuals involved in our volunteer opportunities. If you ever feel like lending an extra hand, here are the areas:

- During Sunday Services: Communion Assistant, Scripture Reader, Soundboard, & Video operator
- Worship & Music: Choir, Handbell Choir, & Special music
- Coffee Time: Servers, Donations of Baked Goods or Monetary Contributions
- Discipleship Committee: Help maintain the garden for EASS donations, help with fund raisers like the Goat Program and Great Eight Lenten giving.
- Social Ministry Committee: Help serve at social functions and memorial service luncheons. Help with Lutheran World Relief collections.

CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITIES AT MELLINGERS

Contributions may be made to the following funds at any time and may also be used to aid people in designating monies for memorials. Should you wish to donate to any of these funds, please place funds in an envelope and provide the name of the fund in which you would like your donation placed, your name and envelope number.

† Maintenance and Building Fund † Needy Fund † Lutheran World Relief



Mellingers Church Family,

Thank you all so very much for your healing prayers, cards & good wishes during my recent surgery and recovery time. It means so very much to know you care.

A special thanks to the Social Ministry Committee for the visit and lovely plant.

God's peace to all.

-Kim Craven

Dear Pastor Tim and friends of Mellingers,
Thank you for your prayers, cards, fruit basket and visits following my knee surgery. They were greatly appreciated and made me smile.

Thank you
Patty Gehman

Social Ministry Committee,
I would like to say "Thanks" for the lovely plant... it is greatly appreciated.
"God" bless you all and thanks again...

Sincerely,
Vesta Belen

Poinsettia Flowers for Christmas



The time has come to order Poinsettias for the Christmas season. The price for one 5.5" potted, red or white poinsettia with blooms will be \$6.00.

Poinsettias can be purchased to remember and honor loved ones.

On the order form include your name, telephone number, number of poinsettia plants, color(s) and the total amount due. Please list to whom you would like the poinsettias made in memory of or in honor of.

Place your form along with payment in the envelope provided and place in the Special Flowers mailbox or give to Pat Haller at church. Please make checks payable to Mellinger's Lutheran Church.

Last day to order flowers is Sunday December 15.

Please pick up flowers after either Christmas Eve service Tuesday December 24.



Christmas Gifts for Children

This year Social Ministry is asking the congregation to consider purchasing a gift for a child.

You choose the gift of your choice for a child up to age 15.

Return unwrapped gifts to the church by December 15th.

Any questions please see Anita Soto or call 717-419-5520

Thank you and God Bless, Social Ministry

DECEMBER

Birthdays

December 01

Scott Engle
Jeffrey Gehman
Elle Sawyer

December 02

Kellie Nichols

December 04

Thomas Parrish

December 06

Caitlin Stafford

December 08

Alex Emberger

December 09

Judy Hibshman

December 13

Nathan Nichols

December 15

Mary Weidman

December 16

Barbara Getz
Verna Kieffer

December 17

Mary Latshaw

December 18

Grace Burkholder

December 19

Zoey Cruz

December 22

Paige Derr
Randy Zerbe

December 26

Lynn Spotts

December 27

Shawn Jeffers
Wendy Zerbe
Whitney Zerbe

December 28

Jonah Hogan

December 29

Gail Harker
Douglas Leed

December 31

Haleigh Leisey



December 4, 1993

Michael & Judy Hibshman

December 6, 1986

Chris & Tess Freeman



December 08

Martha Petery



December 07

Polly Gunzenhauser



December 16, 1989

Michael & Lisa Reed

Christmas Concert



Sunday, Dec. 1st
2 PM
Wiest United
Methodist Church
48 S. King St.,
Schoeneck, PA 17517
Parking at the rear of the church

With
Brenten Megee
as Guest Singer

Refreshments after
the concert



DECEMBER

12/4: National Cookie Day

12/7: Pearl Harbor
Remembrance Day

12/9: Christmas Card Day

12/13: Hot Cocoa Day

12/14: Wreathes Across
America Day

12/21: First day of Winter

12/25: First night of
Hanukkah

12/26: First day of Kwanzaa

12/30: Bacon Day

12/31: New Years Eve



Saturday, December 7th, 2024

9 AM - 1 PM

Wiest United Methodist Church

48 S. King St.

Schoeneck, PA 17517

Parking at rear of church (Cherry Alley)

Wide variety of homemade cookies for sale



Scouts Calendar

Monday December 16:

Troop & Pack Christmas Party

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

MINISTERS: The people of Mellingers STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Craven (717) 738-3838 Cell: (717) 468-9049
Director of Christian Education: Diane Adair (717) 715-3124
Director of Music: Vickie Kissinger (717) 354-6575 vickiekissinger@gmail.com
Secretary: Ashley Weinhold (717) 336-8800 mellingerslutheran@gmail.com
Treasurer: Jon Hogan (814) 289-1646

Peace be with you!

SERVICE TIMES
Sunday
Worship Service
9 am

CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Lowell Yost (717) 471-7758 **Vice-President:** Troy Adair (717) 715-3126

✠ Randy Brubaker (717) 314-3449 ✠ Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895 ✠ Mike Haller (717) 368-1572
✠ Shawn Jeffers (717) 278-5000 ✠ Jean Lausch (717) 572-5385 ✠ Kristi Leonhard (717) 940-7535
✠ Piper Leonhard (717) 419-5691 ✠ Jill Showalter (717) 336-2839 ✠ Linda Weaver (717) 587-1319
Recording Secretary: Ashley Weinhold (717) 336-8800

LEADERS

Altar Guild: Kimberley Craven - Chair: (717) 519-9882
Blood Pressure Check Coordinator: Susan Specht (717) 336-4601
Camp Person: Kimberley Craven (717) 738-3838
Coffee Social: Kristi Leonhard (717) 940-7535
Communion Assistant Coordinator: Ashley Weinhold (717) 336-8800
Finance Committee: Vic Richard (717) 951-8977, Pat Haller (717) 368-4975, Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895
Financial Secretary: Jill Showalter (717) 336-2839 **Assistant Financial Secretary:** Dawn Henry (610) 914-3218
Greeter Coordinator: Fay Weitzel (717) 336-2124
Lawn Care: Pat Jeffers (717) 336-8170
Newsletter Editor: Office Staff (717) 336-8800
Offering Counters: Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895
Scout Liaison: David Haldeman (717) 733-8551
Scripture Reader Coordinator: Anita Soto (717) 419-5520
Snow Removal: Andy Leonhard (717) 336-8800
Special Flowers: Pat Haller (717) 368-4975
Treasurer: Jon Hogan (814) 289-1646 **Assistant Treasurer:** Skip Hutchinson (717) 733-5029
Web Site Editor: Office Staff (717) 336-8800
Wedding Coordinator: Brittany Hartlove (717) 715-3127
Youth Group Advisors: Kristi & Paul Leonhard (717) 733-1260
Cell: (717) 940-7535 Pastor Tim (717) 738-3838

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Discipleship In Life: Robert H. Getz, Jr. (717) 925-4938
Endowment/Memorial: Randy Brubaker (717) 733-9222
Personnel: Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895
Property: Andy Leonhard (717) 336-8800
Social Ministry: Shirley Sweigart (717) 538-1946
Worship and Music: Nancy Hain (717) 336-6270

SCOUT LEADERS

Troop 115: Sheldon Brubaker (717) 468-5333 smb115@ptd.net
Pack 115: Daniel Marszalek. (717) 405-9724 scoutleaderdan115@yahoo.com

SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

WEBSITE:
www.mellingers.org

FACEBOOK:
Check us out on Facebook. We are listed under Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church.



Please Join Us on Christmas Eve as we celebrate The Birth of Our Savior, Jesus Christ

We offer multiple ways to be a part of these services.

You can join us in person.

You can join us from your car in the parking lot by tuning your radio to 98.3 FM.

You can join us from home as we stream to Facebook.

To stream our service you will need to access Facebook, search for the church then listen and enjoy.

Mellingers offers two Christmas Eve Services to our members and community.

Our first service is the Family Service of Holy Communion at 4:00 pm

Second service is the Candlelight service of Holy Communion at 7:00 pm



If you do not have a Facebook account: Open an internet page, type in Mellingers Lutheran Church Facebook, click on the link, a pop up will open asking to log in or create an account, close that box, you will be stay on our page and be able to watch the service(s).