

THE EXPRESSION

MARCH 2019 ~ NEWSLETTER



CHRIST'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
5330 Old Logan Ferry Road
Murrysville, PA 15668
(412) 795-1212

Pastor Wayne Gillespie

Email: office@christsmurrysville.org

Website: christsmurrysville.org

Sunday School for Children & Adults: 9:00 am

Services

Saturday Contemporary – 6:00 pm

Sunday Worship – 10:00 am

From the Pastor's Desk



"Building-up the Body of Christ" in 2019



"And God gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds, and the teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building-up of the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-12)

Five years ago, we began a journey. The members of the Call Committee were deeply engaged in searching for a pastor, while

the members of Christ's Lutheran Church anxiously waited. A pastor, on the other side of Westmoreland County, was in prayer—asking for God's guidance and direction and trusting that God would lead him to a place where his gifts and talents would be well-used. And after a series of interviews and discussions, the pastor was invited to a "Meet-and-Greet" and was invited to share a message. And during that time, we believe God acted. God brings congregations and pastors together because God knows how to build the Church.

I spend a lot of my time listening to you because I believe that pastors need to understand why things work the way they do. I listen to stories about our life and ministry. I've listened to you talk about things that you like the most about the ministry at Christ's Lutheran Church and we've discussed things that probably need to change as we move into the future. Christ's Lutheran Church is moving through a time of dramatic change. But we, also, need to remember that God is faithful, and that Jesus continues to lead His Church.

The uncontrollable part of the change that we discussed happened just as we expected. In 2014, we had a weekly worship attendance of 180 people; but, in the last four years, 36 of those same people have become unable to attend worship services because of their health challenges, 18 have died, 17 have moved to other communities, 9 have transferred to non-ELCA congregations, and an additional 22 are now facing life-changing circumstances, too. We have all witnessed the effects of these uncontrollable changes. We see more empty seats during our worship services. It's harder for us to find volunteers because many people who are missing faithfully offered their time and talents to the ongoing ministry of our church. It's not easy to find people who are willing to serve as Council members, or to do things like wash Communion glasses after worship. We decided to combine our Sunday morning worship

services—realizing that it's almost impossible for a congregation to build an attractive worship service with less than 60 people in a worship space that seats more than 200. But, during that time of uncontrollable changes, we've also grown! Children are being baptized. We've welcomed many new people into our congregation. We continue to see people who have decided to join us in worship after visiting our website. Our Sunday School's still filled with faithful teachers and students. We've always been able to rely on your continued financial support as we've moved through this time of sometimes frightening change, and for that we can give thanks!

God is faithful, and Jesus Christ continues to lead His Church in the same way that He's led His Church for nearly two thousand years! I've invited you to explore the foundations of healthy ministry as we've studied Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Life Together, discussed some ways to better understand what God's doing in our lives and in the Church, and taken the time to pray with you and to explore ways that we can build our lives upon spiritual truths. I've challenged you to see that strong and dynamic ministries are built by the power of the Holy Spirit that's at work as we spend time reading the Bible and worshipping. We will be focusing upon Five Faith Practices that have sustained God's people for generations during Lent, and I will be continuing to encourage you to focus upon four basic ministry objectives that stand at the heart of vibrant congregational ministry: We Welcome and Embrace, We Listen and Care, We Worship and Pray, We Equip and Empower. Times change, but fundamental truths and Biblical principles do not change. The Church that follows Christ into the future will see ministries thrive!

I truly believe that the future of the Church will be discovered in the warmth and hospitality of the Christ who extends His love and embrace to all people—and that's why the center of our mission must continue to challenge us to grow and discover what it means

to be Christ's Church for All People. Christ's Lutheran Church must continue to strive to be a community of faith that reaches beyond human barriers. We must strive to be a welcoming and embracing church that is both multi-generational and ethnically diverse. We must strive to be a listening and caring church that meets people wherever they are in life without judging and belittling them. We must continue to build our ministry upon the rock of Jesus Christ—who comes to be with us as we worship and pray. We must strive to equip and empower every Christian for life and ministry in our changing world, and we must also build mission partnerships that bring people together and foster deeper levels of cooperation—realizing that an important part of the Church's ministry continues to be “calling people together” and inviting people to “come and see what God can do” when the Holy Spirit stirs our hearts and brings us together as a “community” where, with God's help, we can become something more than what we can become by ourselves.

In 2019, we will continue to build upon the “successes” that we've enjoyed in the last few years, and we're going to be stretching our wings in several new and exciting ways:

1. I'm going to be challenging the leaders of our congregation to regularly spend time in prayer and daily devotion, and I'm going to be challenging the members of our Church Council to begin each monthly meeting with a time called “Dwelling in the Word” – where we intentionally spend time focusing upon God's Word and asking God to lead us in the direction that He wants us to move. We must continue to work together and pray together realizing that the ministry of the Church is both God-inspired and God-directed.
2. We are going to be re-developing our worship and prayer life as a congregation by more intentionally focusing upon the Five Faith Practices that stand at the heart of faith-filled

living, by challenging families in our congregation to adopt “Faith5” as an end-of-the-day routine that can help families to more deeply connect and pray together, by developing “Life Groups” that facilitate relationship-building and small-group Bible Study, by providing resources and tools that parents throughout our community can use to strengthen their families, and by offering Discipleship Coaching to those who want to explore ways that they can more deeply live-into their faith during the week.

3. We are going to continue to expand our electronic presence on the Internet, and we’re going to keep spreading the message of God’s love in Christ by making study guides and audio recordings of sermons that are preached at Christ’s available to people around the world. We’re also going to continue expanding our electronic giving option—realizing that banks are trying their best to eliminate hand-written checks.
4. We are going to continue to deepen our ministry of caring – ensuring that members of our congregation who are not able to attend worship services are visited and have the opportunity to regularly receive Holy Communion; supporting and caring for people who are moving through a time of grief; continuing to focus upon the safety of children who participate in activities at our church and promoting Kindermusik’s outreach; providing a place of care and fellowship for people in our community who are receiving support from life-giving ministries like Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous and the Cancer Support Group; supporting the faithful ministry of Caring Hearts and Hands, and the Plum Food Bank; providing Prayer Shawls for

people who are facing struggles and crocheted hats for those who require treatment for cancer at the Hillman Center; and, of course, continuing to actively support the prayer and discernment ministry of the Christian Life Community.

5. We're, also, going to continue to focus upon "telling our story" both inside and outside of our building's walls, so that people can gain a deeper understanding of our mission and Christ-driven ministry, and better understand the types of help and support that we need from people (both inside and outside the walls of our building) to accomplish our God-inspired mission. We're also going to continue to refine our Mission Budget, so that you can more fully understand how we are using your generous contributions and more clearly interpret the financial reports that are always available to you through the church office.

6. And finally, we're going to explore new ways to develop "Teams of Teams" and new ways that we can build-up the Body of Christ through a newly-developing ministry called "Each One Reach One"—a new and life-giving ministry that's centered upon the building-up of caring and supportive relationships, the creation of prayer partnerships, and the building of healthy connections that can last a lifetime.

~ Pastor Wayne

Bela Molnar — President
 Judy Bernardini — Vice President
 Michelle Gravante — Secretary
 John “Kip” Cooper — Treasurer
 Bela Molnar — Financial Secretary

Wally Utley — Finance
 Kris Meade — Parish Administration
 Cindy Lott -
 Scott Ritenbaugh
 Dave Hall

CHURCH COUNCIL

Church Council Highlights ~ February 18, 2018

- Ash Wednesday is March 6th and is the beginning of Lent. For lent we will have a bare altar with 2 candles. There will be no altar flowers but we may try to have what is called a Lenten Garden arrangement which is made up of dried stuff.
- During Lent we will have a Taizé service on Wednesday at 7:00 pm.
- For Easter we will have an additional Sunday 8:15 service. Since Easter is late this year, we will explore having a Sunrise Service with sunrise being at 6:30 am. Need to find out who will help coordinate this service.
- Communion at Easter will be by intinction.
- For Palm Sunday, palms need to be ordered, getting the same type of order as last year.
- Shrove Sunday Pancake Lunch will be March 3rd following the 10:00 am Service
- The next Stewardship Meeting will be March 12th.
- Worship and Music next meeting will be March 4th.
- A special thank you to Dave Hall for being our newest Council Member. Welcome Dave!

Next Council Meeting will be Monday, March 18, 2019

We'll be having our annual Easter Egg hunt on Palm Sunday during the Sunday School hour. As always, we appreciate any candy donations for the cause! If you can donate candy, please make sure it's at the church by SATURDAY, 4/6. You can put any donations in the box on a shelf in the nursery marked EASTER EGG HUNT.

THANK YOU



Thank you, church family, for your unwavering support of our youth as we continue to plan for our upcoming mission trip. While we have 1 or 2 more fundraisers coming up, we have successfully met our core goal amount of \$6,500.

Whether you have written a check, allocated Thrivent dollars, or offered kind words of encouragement and support, we cannot be more grateful. We are so blessed to have such a kind, thoughtful and generous congregation behind us moving forward.

This generosity is not surprising to me. As a lifelong member of Christ's Lutheran, I've seen firsthand how this congregation rallies to support and lift up its own. This church has again risen to the challenge for the sake of these outstanding kids.

They will have an opportunity to experience God's love and serve others in an entirely new way! We owe that opportunity to each and every one of you!

Sincerely,
Trish Lasher'

Thank You

Dear Pastor Wayne,

Hello! I hope all is well with you!

I just wanted to say hi and tell you ~ and I wish everyone I miss seeing so much at Church~ that I think of you all often, and I hope everyone is doing well.

Life is fun with my daughter and our “new” angel Sadie.

Take Care.

Love, Wendy Seibert

2019 Catechism Class Schedule:



March 10, 2019
May 12, 2019

April 14, 2019

Classes will be held from 6:00—8:00 pm

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 6th - Ash Wednesday

March 13, 20, 27 - April 3, 10 - Taize Services

April 14th - Palm Sunday

April 18th - Maundy Thursday

April 19th - Good Friday

April 21st - Easter



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Please join us in extending the happiest of Birthday Wishes to the following Mission Partners who celebrate Birthdays in the month of **MARCH**:

MAR 1-8

Michelle Gravante
Debra Somple
Tyler Cook
Amber Grabowski

Tammy Scanga
Roy Ruzomberka
Heather Cook

MAR 9-14

Ken Hinkelman
Helen Lang
Ruth Goetz
Wally Utley

Anna Scanga
Dwight Schuetz
Collin Rogers

MAR 15-25

Randy Shanter
Michele Grieco
Dorothy Beacom

Meghan Martin
Rob Carnahan
Adison Federovich

MAR 26-31

Amanda Federovich
Atreyu Ho

Kathy Doyle
Sharon Pfeiffer

If you don't see your name, and you have a MARCH birthday, please forgive the oversight and give the church office a call so that we can record your birthdate in our parish records.

Thanks, and have a



We kindly ask that you continue to pray for our CLC members, family, and friends of members who are included in our weekly bulletin prayer list. Thank you.

Pat & Don Andelmo - friends of Marianne Trainor
Damian Areth - grandson of Holly Kirsch
Dorothy Beacom - CLC member
Linda Bradish - mother of co-worker of Sandy Buehner
Sandy Buehner - CLC member
Judy Daum - daughter of Shirley Daum
Edna Dymond - CLC member
Deborah Ethier - friend of Gloria Frick
Chuck & Irene Evans - CLC member
Julie Fallin - friend of Dwight & Carolyn Schuetz
Evelyn Gilbreath - friend of Sandy Buehner
Bob Glunt - son of Nancy Glunt
Nancy Hartwick - friend of Sandy Buehner
John Heilman - brother of Jane Montgomery
Peggy Henry - CLC member
Diane Hughes - co-worker of Sandy Buehner
Maureen Horansky - friend of Gerry & Cindy Lott
Abby Johnson - friend of Wally Utley
Gary Keibler - son of Oren Keibler
Holly Kirsch - CLC member
David Little - son of Roger and Barb Little
Grace Lucas - CLC member
Bob Lyons - CLC member
Emma Lyons - CLC member



John MacDonald - brother of Tammy Wilson
Donna Magerl - friend of Sandy Buehner
Audrey Mauro - sister of Louise Fitz
Derek McClemens - son of Greg & Debby McClemens
Christopher Molnar - son of a friend of the Marion O'Donnell
Debra Pavlock - friend of Gloria Frick
Rich Radcliffe - former co-worker of Wally Utley
John Ring - brother of Mary Wentroble
John Russell - son of Theresa Russell
Theresa Russell - CLC member
Tony Santacasa - friend of the Bernardini & McClemens
Kathy Schultz - CLC member
Sarah Schlegel - sister-in-law of Sandy Buehner
Harry Shkuratoff - brother of Mary Huffman
Patti Smith - daughter of Frieda Cushing
Mary Sorrells - request from Pastor Wayne
Wilma Stewart - mother of Tammy Scanga
Arlene Switzer - friend of Oren Keibler
Marianne Trainor - CLC member
Dawn Werner - niece of Sue & Mike Werner
Joy Wisneski - friend of Sandy Buehner
Gloria Zagorac - CLC member



WE PRAY FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS:

MAR 3

Joseph, Jennifer, Ashley, Amber Grabowski, Jr.
Robert and Lynn Graper
William Gras
David and Bette Greenwald

MAR 10

Michele, Sydney, Haley, Marissa, Olivia Grieco
Gertrude Grooms
Linda, Cameron, Ethan Guercio
Jayne Gustafson

MAR 17

John, Erin, Grace Guzzie
Dave and Barb Hall
Joann Hauger
Gary and Amy Heberling

MAR 24

James and Peggy Henry
Tim Hileman, Suzanne Boyce, Miranda, Alex, Leah
Ken and Marti Hinkelman
Santini, Phyllis, Scythe, Atreyu Ho

MAR 31

Aaron, Sarah, Tyler, Ivy, Mia Hoffman
Mark and Nancy Holland
Richard Hood
John, Diana, Emily Hooper





***Caring Hearts & Hands will meet on
Thursday, MARCH 7th at 9:15 am
Kings Restaurant.***

All are welcome to share in our fellowship and ministry.

If you or someone you know would benefit from hearing from us, please contact Romaine Miller at 412-795-6473.

*This month's **SCRAPBOOKING** gathering will be on Friday, **MARCH 15th** at 6:00 pm!*

We usually meet on the second Friday of every month.

Please contact Betty Molnar at 724-327-3437 with questions.



Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday morning, **MARCH 16th** at 8:00 am in the Lower Social hall.

Bring a hearty appetite and enjoy hanging out with the guys.



The Sewing Group meets on Tuesdays at 9:00 am. Come join us !

Please contact Leslie Sill at 412-793-2546 for additional information.



The Shofar



Week #105: Mar 3 – Mar 9

Sun: Transfiguration Sunday; Mon: Exodus 35:1-29, Acts 10:9-23a; Tues: Ezekiel 1:1, 2:1, Acts 10:23b-3:3; Wed: Ash Wednesday; Thurs: Exodus 5:10-23, Acts 7:30-34; Fri: Exodus 6:1-13, Acts 7:35-42; Sat: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, John 12:27-36.

Week #106: Mar 10 - Mar 16

Sun: First Sunday in Lent; Mon: 1 Chronicles 21:1-17, 1 John 2:1-6; Tues: Zechariah 3:1-10, 2 Peter 2:4-21; Wed: Job 1:1-22, Luke 21:34-22:6; Thurs: Genesis 13:1-7, Philippians 3:2-12; Fri: Genesis 14:17-24, Philippians 3:17-20; Sat: Psalm 118:26-29, Matthew 23:37-39.

Week #107: Mar 17 - Mar 23

Sun: Second Sunday in Lent; Mon: Exodus 33:1-6, romans 4:1-12; Tues: Numbers 14:10b-24, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Wed: 2 Chronicles 20:1-22, Luke 13:22-31; Thurs: Daniel 3:19-30, Revelation 2:8-11; Fri: Daniel 12:1-4, Revelation 3:1-6; Sat: Isaiah 5:1-7, Luke 6:43-45.

Week #108: Mar 24 - Mar 30

Sun: Third Sunday in Lent; Mon: Jeremiah 11:1-17, Romans 2:1-11; Tues: Ezekiel 17:1-10, Romans 2:12-16; Wed: Numbers 13:17-27, Luke 13:18-21; Thurs: Joshua 4:1-13, 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5; Fri: Joshua 4:14-24, 2 Corinthians 5:6-15; Sat: Exodus 32:7-14, Luke 15:1-10.

Week #109: Mar 31 - Apr 6

Sun: Fourth Sunday in Lent; Mon: Leviticus 23:26-41, Revelation 19:1-8; Tues: Leviticus 25:1-19, Revelation 19:9-10; Wed: 2 Kings 4:1-7, Luke 9:10-17; Thurs: Isaiah 43:1-7, Philippians 2:19-24; Fri: Isaiah 43:8-15, Philippians 2:25-3:1; Sat: Exodus 12:21-27, John 11:45-57.