

THE EXPRESSION

December 2021 ~ 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

Services

Saturday Evening – 6:00 pm
Sunday Worship – 10:00 am
Sunday School – 9:00 am



Christ's Lutheran Church
cordially invites you to our

Christmas Eve Worship

December 24, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Join us In-Person or Online

5330 Old Logan Ferry Road
Murrysville, PA 15668

Holy Communion will be celebrated.

For more information please contact:
office@christsmurrysville.org or
call (412) 795-1212.

***From the Pastor*****Hope**

I find myself saying, again and again: “Who could have ever imagined that we would live in times like these?” Many things that are usually very stable are shaking all around us. We are almost two years into our battle with the coronavirus, and it’s still sometimes hard to know what’s best to do. Gasoline prices are rising, and we are hearing about inflation and supply chain problems. Nations are testing missiles and rattling sabers at each other, while churches struggle to get back on their feet. Most of us don’t like change, but change is all around us. Tempers are flaring. People are impatient. Little things that normally don’t matter have, suddenly, become important enough to fight about. And now, in the midst of the chaos, we are going to be challenged to put on happy faces and to celebrate one of the biggest days of the year – which, by the way, always returns during the shortest days and the darkest nights of the year. “Who could have ever imagined that we would live in times like these?”

Jesus warned us that there will be times when we hear about wars and rumors of wars. Jesus said that nations are going to rise against nations, and that kingdoms are going to rise against kingdoms. Jesus talked about earthquakes. He spoke about famines and persecutions. He said that people will live in times when they are betrayed by people they know (and even by family members) and that some people will be put to death. And we bring all of these scary things with us into the Season of Advent this month....

Advent is a time when we listen to God’s promises of better days ahead. We listen to the prophet Jeremiah tell us, “*The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise that I made to the house of Israel*

and the house of Judah.” (**Jeremiah 33:14**) We will listen to Malachi proclaim, “*The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple!*” (**Malachi 3:1**). Mary, the mother of our Lord, is going to speak about a Day when God will show strength, scatter the thoughts of the proud, bring down the mighty from their thrones (**Luke 1:51-52**), fill those who are hungry with good things and send the rich away empty (**Luke 1:53-55**).

The challenge of Advent – and the challenge of “times like these” – is one that asks us to think about what it means to be hopeful. How do we remain hopeful during a time when we aren’t able to enjoy simple pleasures in life? How do we remain hopeful when people all around us are impatient and when tempers are flaring? How do we live well with each other and remain hopeful during times when little things that we normally wouldn’t argue about are becoming big enough to destroy relationships? How do we remain hopeful and faith-filled during a time in our lives when, as a well-known Christmas song reminds us, we’ve all grown a little leaner, a little colder, a little sadder, and a little older? That’s the challenge before us!

You’ll notice that we are adding the lighting of an Advent wreath to our worship services this month. I am, also, encouraging you to make an Advent wreath for your home that you can light before a meal or a prayer at bedtime. Hope is important in times like these. We all need to be reminded that the light at the end of the tunnel has not been extinguished as we travel through times like these. Immanuel – God is with us! The light of an Advent wreath can help us remember that, even as nights grow longer and as darkness engulfs us, God continues to send light into the world – light that shines even brighter as we light an extra candle, each week, in protest against the darkness that wants to swallow us. The source of our hope is Immanuel – God is with us! Even in a time when we are saying: “Who could have ever imagined that we would live in times like these?” the light of Christ is growing even brighter, and God is reminding us that all will be well.

May the peace of Christ fill your hearts during Advent. May the Good News of Immanuel – God is with us – bring you comfort and peace during challenging days. And may you, and those you love, be filled

with hope as the light of the Advent wreath grows brighter each week and bears testimony to the fact that God is still at work to make our world into a better place for us all.

Pastor Wayne

Scott Ritenbaugh — President
Joe Kelly — Vice President
Ron Spagna — Secretary
Dave & Barb Hall — Treasurer
Bela Molnar — Financial Secretary

Sandy Buehner
Fran Spagna
Mary Huffman
John Reed

Sharon Pfeiffer
Linda Paulovitch
Lauren Huffman
Michelle Gravante

CHURCHCOUNCIL



Church Council Minute Highlights

November 18th, 2021

- *Five Focus Points:*
 - Clarifying our Mission
 - Identifying what our partners and community “value”
 - Clear Communication – Messaging – Marketing
 - Building Sustainable & Interactive Ministries
 - Inviting Everyone to Participate – Stewardship
- There will be NO SATURDAY EVENING SERVICES ON December 25th and January 1st!
- Hankey Church Cemetery gathering was well received by the eight children that attended.

- Regular Sunday School was switched back to the original 9am class time.
- We have a new compassion kid that we are sponsoring. You can see a picture of this little girl in the entryway.
- Congregational meeting letters & stewardship letters will be mailed out the end of November. Check your mailboxes.
- We are slowly stepping away from zoom and will be streaming on youtube only eventually (date to be determined).
- Parking lot drainage project has been fully completed!
- The church will be getting a brand new database system! This will be in the works over the next couple months. The new database will help us better communicate between the church office and congregation. We will be double checking church members current addresses, emails and all the things moving forward to make sure we have a correct and organized system. Look forward for more details after the holidays.
- The 2022 approved budget is being worked on before the congregational meeting this month.

Next Council Meeting –
Thursday, December 16th, 2021 at 6:30 pm

Zoom



Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:
9:15 am - 2:00 pm

5330 Old Logan Ferry Road, Murrysville, PA 15668
You can contact the office at office@christsmurrysville.org
or by calling 412-795-1212

You may notice there is something different in the front of the sanctuary! We have hung two Advent/Christmas banners to add to the beauty of our worship space. The banners are a visual reminder that in this season of the church year we HOPE for the Savior to come to us and bring PEACE to our troubled world. "Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people." ELW#247



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDERS
ARE NOW BEING TAKEN



We are currently taking orders for poinsettias for use during our Christmas Eve Service. As we are sure you know, supply chain issues are a continuing challenge in our country. We have ordered 20 poinsettias because we were surprised by the florists early order deadline of December 5th. If you would like to sponsor one of these poinsettias please contact the church office. All poinsettias will be red and cost \$8.75 per plant. If we receive more than 20 requests before December 5th, we can order more.

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.

Denise Abrams
Damian Arenth
Doug Custer
Ed Bertesen
Linda Bradish
Beth Ann DeSimore
Irene Evans
Julie Fallin
Dan Feibig
John Heilman
Linda Hill
Abby Johnson
Anthony Johnston
David Little

Derek McClemens
David Little
John Magnus
Tony Santacasa
Vi Shipman
Pat Sisco
Patti Smith
Mary Sorrells
Wilma Stewart
Gerry Suter
Jeff Weber



*In Our
Thoughts
and Prayers*

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

Dec 4-10

Rebekah McKenzie
Robert Lyons
George Meade
Dianna Hooper

Emma Bevacqua
Ivy Hoffman
Tyler Hoffman

Dec 12-18

Tina Ashbaugh
Betty Reagan
Britney Shanter
Sarah Hoffman

Carter Yankoski
Sidney Shanter
Kimberly Boyer
Emma Van Orden

Dec 19-24

Nathan Fink
Matthew Jr. Federovich
Grace Wilson
Cole Kelly

Eric Gipson
Carolyn Schuetz
Laurel Gillespie
Inge Pizzica

Dec 25-30

George Federovich
Gary Heberling
Jeff Wolfe
Rudolph Shanter

Joseph Borgia
Kelly Rogers
Grace Lucas
Stephanie McClintock

If you don't see your name, and you have an December 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 an amazing birthday month!

Stormwater Update

The stormwater pipe repairs are underway! You may have noticed the construction materials in the back parking lot. National Gunnite has completed the first part of the repair, cleaning out the pipe in order to take the next steps. This is a huge undertaking for our congregation, and we want to thank Gerry Lott, Scott Ritenbaugh, and others for their leadership to Christ's Lutheran on this issue. If you would like to help, please feel free to make a contribution. You may donate in person, by mail, or online with the tithely app. Please make sure you note "stormwater repairs" on your donation. Contact the Church office at office@christsmurrysville.org.

Thank you!
The Support Team

We are teaming up with our mission partner, the Plum Food Pantry, for their toy drive. Due to the pandemic, they are asking for gift cards instead of actual toys! If you wish to participate, we are asking for monetary donations so we may purchase the gift cards for the children on our list. Please mark on your envelope "Toy Drive" if you include it with your weekly offering. Any funds received in excess of the gift card purchases, we will donate to the food pantry to be used to make sure every child receives equal value gifts! We know that this time of year we all get inundated with requests for donations. We would like to thank you in advance for your generous support of our Outreach projects! If you have any questions please contact Judy Bernardini at 412-795-6769.

PRAYER CIRCLE

If you have a prayer request, special concern or a thanksgiving to share, please contact Audrey Ferris, the Prayer Circle coordinator, at: (724) 327-3738 or audrey.m.ferris@gmail.com

(Please indicate on the subject line that it relates to the prayer circle).



WE PRAY FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS:

December 5th

Mrs. Rebecca Conway
Mr & Mrs Dean Cook
Richard Crofutt
William & Teresa Crossland

December 12th

Nancy Cuomo
Frieda Cushing
Douglas Custer
Mr & Mrs Mike D' Ascenzo

December 19th

Mrs. Shirley Daum
Mrs. Lori Davis
Mrs. Bertha DeCecco
Norma Delligatti

December 26th

Mary DeLoach
Mr & Mrs Edward Dikun
Mrs Kathy Doyle
Mrs Sally Dutzman





New Council Members

Three (3) new council people are needed for 2022. Each team has an opening; Congregational life, support and outreach. There are mentors available who can help you learn as you go. Former council members, after a breather, can be a bonus, however also need to learn the Church is changing as the world changes but the message doesn't.

Those new to Council can be surprised at what a "Blessing they can be". Come and join us. Answer the call.

"If you can hear this called don't hide, God will find you and anoint you to do what's needs to be done".

Christ in our Home, Booklet

First Samuel, Chapter 10, vs 17-25

Please email office@murrsville.org or call 412-795-1212 with your acceptance of the call.

~Linda Paulovitch~

Light of Life Thanksgiving Baskets



Baseball fans know what a “Can of Corn” means – an easy catch, right?

What do you call 520 cans of corn?

That’s what we call Christ’s Lutheran Church’s 2021 donation to the

Light of Life Thanksgiving Baskets!

THANK YOU to everyone who made this donation possible!



Caring Hearts and Hands



Caring Hearts & Hands wishes you a Merry Christmas!

Sunday School

Weekly Sunday School classes are being held for young children, people and adults on Sunday mornings. The Congregational Life Team decided to move Sunday School classes back to 9:00am in an attempt to draw more youth & teachers. We are trying to be sensitive to the fact that some of our families are still being very cautious during these unusual times and we are asking all Sunday School teachers & students to wear a mask.

We have hit a few bumps in the road as we have been trying to restart weekly Sunday School classes for both children and youth. We are in urgent need of some people who can help teach a class, or serve as a substitute teacher.

We are asking you to prayerfully consider how you can help to support this vital ministry of our congregation.



Have you been getting all of our emails?

As you may know, our Church Council, along with Pastor Wayne, has been working diligently to stay in communication with our Members and Ministry Partners. Currently, our live Zoom service has been working well and we want to be sure that you are getting all our emails about these services. We also will be streaming live from YouTube, as well as resuming our 10 am Sunday Morning Worship Service.

We are reaching out to you for help. If you haven't been receiving our emails, they may be landing in your PROMOTIONS/SPAM/JUNK email folder. Please search your mailbox for emails coming from office@christsmurrysville.org To adjust your settings, go to the end of the email and click on the link to "Add us to your address book."

Please use the following updated link to connect to our weekly e-Newsletter, and to find important announcements and information about our ongoing ministry.

<https://prezi.com/view/Zd1LlveQHziMT6Rb0ebY/>

If you would like to connect to the online streaming via YOUTUBE, please email office@christsmurrysville.org with your email so we can send you the link.