

# THE EXPRESSION

February 2023 ~ NEWSLETTER



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

Pastor Wayne Gillespie  
Email: [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org)  
Website: [christsmurrysville.org](http://christsmurrysville.org)  
Administrator Assistant: Currently Vacant

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



## From the Pastor

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge the Lord and God will make your paths straight.” ~ Proverbs 3:5-6*

We celebrate a special day during the month of February each year. Thousands of people crowd into the little town of Punxsutawney, PA to watch a group of grown adults dressed in tuxedos pull a sleeping groundhog from a box and thrust him into the air. I've often asked myself, "How much can an animal that lives most of its life underground even know about the weather?" And yet, I've also come to see that Groundhog Day gives us just a little bit of carefree amusement that breaks up the monotony of one of the most joyless times of the year. We are tired of Winter. We long for the return of far longer and warmer days. And why not spend just a part of one day being a little bit ridiculous on the top of a hill and then scrambling through the streets of Punxsutawney to get some pancakes?

Did you know that Groundhog Day is rooted in the Christian tradition of Candlemas? Candlemas, the day when Christians

celebrate the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, is celebrated on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tradition holds that, if Candlemas turns out to be a sunny day (think about Punxsutawney Phil being able to see his shadow), the second half of the Winter is going to be both cold and stormy. But, if Candlemas turns out to be a cloudy day (think about Punxsutawney Phil not being able to see his shadow), warmer days are just around the corner and Spring will soon arrive.

There's an old English poem that captures this idea:

If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,  
Winter will have another flight.

But if it be dark with clouds and rain,  
Winter is gone and will not come again.

But where does the idea of using a groundhog come into the picture? Well, according to German/Dutch communities, we need to consider the fact that bears, hedgehogs, and badgers are all animals that hibernate. Hence, if bears, badgers, or hedgehogs are seen at or about the time of Candlemas, it's a sign that Spring is just around the corner. And, since the German/Dutch settlers didn't find many badgers in America, they preferred to allow groundhogs to make the seasonal prediction.

Candlemas can also offer us some things to think about as a church this month. We've journeyed together through the long Winter of a pandemic and we're longing for far better days. It's almost as if the Church has been caught in a blizzard that has changed almost everything that we've cherished. We long for days of rebirth and new life. We hope and pray for better times. We know that Spring brings us the promise of growth and budding newness. Perhaps, on Groundhog Day, we need to realize that we've all been changed by what's been happening in the last few years and that we all need to smile more often and remember that laughter and humor are important parts of our lives, too.

And so, take some time to take a deep breath this month and to remember that God is a God who continues to promise that the Season of growth and renewal will return even after a long Winter. Celebrate Candlemas! Find yourself embracing the ridiculous

notion that Punxsutawney Phil can point you toward better days. And, if Phil predicts that the Winter is going to last six more weeks, just let it go. Spring will come. New life is about to break out all around us. The Season of budding growth and new life is almost here in both Murrysville and in our church.

Pastor Wayne



*Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:  
10:00 am - 3:00 pm*

5330 Old Logan Ferry Road, Murrysville, PA 15668

You can contact the office at [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org)  
or by calling 412-795-1212



### **January Church Council Minute Highlights**

- Pastor Wayne emphasized the need for the Council to return to what he called "Best Practices."
  - Council decisions need to be made at regularly-scheduled meetings, or at special meetings called for a specific reason. Decisions cannot continue to be made through email exchanges since making decisions in that way does not allow Council members to discuss items that are being considered. There is, also, no way to accurately record minutes when decisions are made through a series of email exchanges.

- Committees and teams that are requesting funds for a special project should submit their request to the Council for consideration at its next regularly-scheduled meeting. Special Council meetings can be scheduled in an emergency.
- Council members (and members of the congregation) are asked to remember that deadlines have been set for the submission of materials to be included in the weekly bulletin and in the newsletter. These deadlines are needed to keep the Church Office running smoothly.
- Council members (and members of the congregation) are asked to remember that while Pastor Wayne gladly offers 24/7 pastoral emergency coverage, he and other staff members are not available 24/7 for routine church business. Please contact the church office during regularly-scheduled business hours, or send an email to the office/staff. Please refrain from sending non-emergency text messages to staff members before 9 am and after 5 pm.
- The Congregational Life Team is presently looking for a Vacation Bible School Coordinator.
- A team of church members is being gathered to speak to the congregation about our deficit/debt during the Annual Meeting.
- Several Council members are developing a much-needed Emergency Staff Coverage Policy. The policy will be discussed and will be implemented in February.
- A soup luncheon and the **Annual Meeting** will be held after our worship service on **Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>**.
- The Administrative Assistant's job description was reviewed. The new Administrative Assistant will be expected to have regularly-scheduled, in-the-building hours between 9 am and 2 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.
- We have been asked to host our Synod's annual Council Member Retreat on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. We will be providing the meeting space, coffee, a cold drink, and fresh water.
- The Council considered and approved a request for \$875 to repair lights in our parking lot.

May God's blessings always be yours,  
Pastor Wayne

**Next Council Meeting/Retreat: Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**11:30 am – In-person**

Pastor Gillespie -- Council Facilitator  
Barth Tamenne -- Vice President  
Linda Paulovitch -- Secretary  
Dave & Barb Hall -- Treasurer  
Bela Molnar -- Financial Secretary

Kim Boyer  
Fran Spagna  
Mary Huffman  
Lauren Huffman  
Sharon Pfeiffer

# CHURCH COUNCIL



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Annual Congregation Meeting**  
**February 19<sup>th</sup> 2023**

You should have received a letter  
via email or US mail.

## **Job Opening**

We are currently seeking qualified applicants who are interested in serving as our part-time Administrative Assistant. You can find a detailed job description on our church webpage or our Facebook page. If you are interested in applying for this position, please send your resume to: [office@christsmurryville.org](mailto:office@christsmurryville.org)

**Current fund information for the month of December:**

Income: \$22,536.71

Expenses: \$29,619.52 This number includes the church liability insurance bill

Difference: \$ -7,082.81 Paid out of Current and Non-Specified funds

The Current fund balance is \$0.00

**Current fund information for 2022:**

Income: \$227,448.33

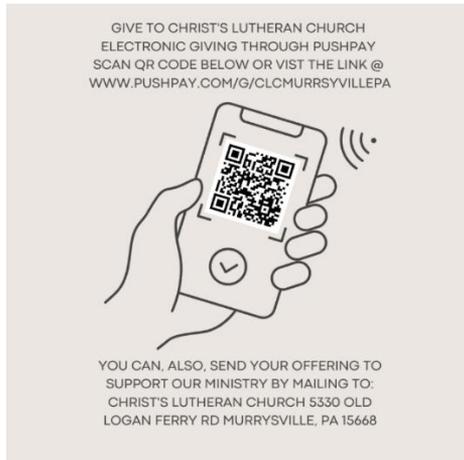
Expenses: \$272,008.55

Difference: \$ -44,560.22 Paid out of Current and Non-Specified funds

The balance in the Current fund is \$0.00

The balance in the Non-Specified fund is \$29,193.49

Please continue to make additional donations to Current if able to do so.



**Attention all Weekend Service Helpers, Readers, Worship Assistants, Co-Hosts, Techies and Reconcilers...**

Thank you to all of our current Helpers. I hope to get a few more helpers in the new year. If you are interested in learning more about what is involved in these opportunities, please email me at: [christslutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:christslutheranchurch@gmail.com). Also, I hope to have a meeting in February with current and new helpers to discuss what is working, what we need to tweak, and to train any new helpers. Our sign-up application will be changing when Community Church Builder is launched. Information on that to follow. May God bless you today and always, Sandy

**MEN'S BREAKFAST**

**Men's Breakfast:** Please bring a hearty appetite and join us on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am for our first gathering in the new year. We meet in the downstairs social hall.

**"SOUPER" BOWL of CARING  
Sunday, February 12, 2023**

Bring a can of soup or  
Drop a donation into one of the soup pots to support your favorite team.  
All donations collected will be used to support the Little Pantry

**ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE**

We will be having the Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 pm on February 22, 2023. Please watch our bulletin announcements and our website for more information.



Caring Hearts and Hands will meet on Thursday, February 9th in the downstairs fellowship hall at 9:15 AM. We will be packing and delivering lunches to many on our Caring List. Please let us know if you, or someone you know, could benefit from our caring mission. If you have any questions, please contact Romaine Miller at 412-996-4915.



### **CHRIST'S LITTLE PANTRY**

Are you, or someone you know, experiencing food insecurity?

Our church now has "Christ's Little Pantry."

If you need food, "Take what you need."

If you have extra food to share, "Leave what you can."

Please share our story, so no one goes hungry.

If you have food to donate, please feel free to put it into the pantry at any time.

The Pantry is in our lower parking lot.

*"The Little Pantry is being used by folks in our neighborhood. If you are able, when you come to church, please consider bringing 1 or 2 items to add to the collection box in the entryway, or to put directly into the pantry. The folks in need will definitely appreciate your generosity. Thank you & God Bless!"*



*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.*

Hans Andrae  
Ashley Bohman  
Lindsey Boyer  
Patricia Elicker  
Debbie Faust  
Patti Federovich  
Linda Hill  
James Holt  
Thomas Lengerer  
John Magnus  
Kenley McCurdy  
David McKeag  
Derwood Montgomery  
Taylor Niemetz  
Mark A. Schultz  
Sue Werner  
Wally Utley  
Bob & Donna Yoder  
The Family & friends of Dr. Robert Byrne  
The Family & friends of Marvin Conway

*Dear Pastor Gillespie,  
On behalf of Bethesda Lutheran's Council and congregation, we want to thank you and express our gratitude for consecrating our elements for communion. It is greatly appreciated.  
Wishing you and your congregation a very happy and healthy New Year.  
God's Blessing,  
Rita - Council President*

**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](mailto:audrey.m.ferris@gmail.com)

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

**WE PRAY FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS:**

**February 5<sup>th</sup>**

George & Patti Federovich  
Matthew & Lara Federovich  
Amanda Federovich-Hogan  
Audrey Ferris

**February 12<sup>th</sup>**

Jeff & Shane Ferris  
Gloria Frick  
Ronald Fueher  
Marlene Gerdes

**February 19<sup>th</sup>**

Steve & Kristen Gestrich  
Wayne & Laurel Gillespie  
Eric Gipson & Amy Lederer  
Linda Gould

**February 26<sup>th</sup>**

Joseph & Jennifer Grabowski  
Vincent Grabowski  
Robert & Lynn Graper  
Bill Gras

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

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

**February 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>**

Fred Salenske

Susie Lasher

**February 8<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup>**

Eric Waxbom

Alexis Paddock

Gianna Suhadolnik

Liam Suhadolnik

Alana Tensuan

Gail Byrne

Kaitlyn Bevacqua

Paige Van Orden

**February 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**

Joann Hauger

Dan Martin

Jenessa Porter

Tammy Wilson

**February 22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>**

Neena Molnar

Lisa Tenuan

Randi MacKeil

Janet Beall

Jayne Gustafson

If you don't see your name, and you have a February 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!

**Thrivent Choice Dollars**

By directing Thrivent Choice Dollars through the Thrivent Choice program, eligible Thrivent members recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable outreach grant dollars among thousands of participating nonprofit organizations and congregations. Christ's Lutheran is an eligible recipient.

2022 Allocations, which can be made by internet or phone, are required to be made by March 31, 2023, or the allocations will expire unused.

If you wish to include an announcement in our weekly bulletins or monthly newsletter, please email the Church Office. Just send your typed announcement article into the [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org) no later than noon on Thursday (to provide time needed for bulletin preparation & printing). The deadline for submitting information you want us to include in the newsletter is due at the end of the business day on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.



**If you would like to connect to the online streaming via YOUTUBE, simply visit our website page [www.christsmurrysville.org](http://www.christsmurrysville.org) and click first green block in the middle titled “Join Our Church’s Livestream Service”.**