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Pastor's Page

New Year, 2016. January 1 is just another day; were it not for the date change, and the tradition, what would be different about it? Nothing, really.

But as temporal beings, living by the calendar and the clock, we are used to marking the passing of time, and every so often, pausing to think about what we experience in life, what we anticipate, what we can change, and what we are powerless to change.

So New Year's serves many as a "benchmark" day, or as a time to look ahead, or to look at ourselves (hence, "New Year's Resolutions").

Can you remember any of your New Year's resolutions from 1 January, 2015? I can't even remember making any.

For me, a "resolution" to change or improve something comes when it comes—and if I don't act on it right away, I usually forget what it was. Better to get right to it than forget altogether, if the thought is worthwhile.

At the moment several worthwhile things come to mind, things I want to remember, and things I hope you will remember.

First, this is a leap year. We have one extra day in 2016. Think about that day. Is it just one extra day to suffer through a Presidential election? One more day to slog through at work or school?

Or is that day an extra gift from God? A bonus opportunity to savor life, to find reasons to give thanks, to seek and act upon opportunities to love our neighbor—these are all good ways to spend a day. Perhaps we should begin to view 29 February not as "leap day" but as "take a leap" day—a leap of faith, a leap of agape, a leap for joy.

We can always use more joy in life. Let's resolve to make the most of such times.

Second, this is a major election year. These are unpredictable times. Many are fearful, many are weary, many are frustrated with human institu-

tions, whether government or health care or employment or education.

This also means that many are longing for a message of hope.

Can you think of a more hope-filled message than the Gospel of divine love, mercy, forgiveness, and new life in Christ? Can you think of any other who has kept promises, remained faithful, and made sacrifices as our God has? Many have heard of God; far fewer know God as we are blessed to know—and trust—Him.

Will you resolve to seek, and even pray for, opportunities, and the presence of mind, to share your trust in God and confidence in His love with the fearful, the weary, and the disillusioned? Will you resolve to bring Christ to people? —And when you do, to invite them to come with you to know Him better?

I hope and pray that we all will. — Happy New Year from your Pastor.

+

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January Birthdays

- 2 John Garner
- 4 Debra McGowan
- 6 Mary Ann Hartman
Dorothy Martin
- 10 Jean Patschke
- 12 Dawn Stickler
- 16 Tilman Frye
- 18 Suzette Buffamoyer
- 19 Greg Field
- 22 Thomas Lilley
- 24 Leah Connatser
Gayle Hoffman
- 25 Ernestine Batdorf
- 26 Michaela Blouch
- 31 Betty Murray



HAPPY NEW YEAR

Weekly Worship Schedule

SUNDAYS:

9 AM The Holy Communion
 10:30 AM Living in Faith Education Hour
 (4th Sunday of the month—Joint class, Bible Reading Covenant)

WEDNESDAYS:

(as noted in the calendar and bulletin)
 10 AM Anointing and Holy Communion

New Phone Number

Andy and Jill Hartman have a new phone number. It is 717-454-1076. Please make this change in your directory.

Please remember to notify the church office if you have **moved**, are planning to move, have a **new email address**, or have a **new phone number**. It is really important for the church office to stay current with addresses and phone numbers. Thank you for helping us keep our records up to date.

Open Flower Dates

There are three Sundays in 2016 that do not have a flower sponsor. Those dates are:



February 14
 August 7
 August 14

Please contact Janet Gassert at 272-3757 if you are interested in sponsoring flowers for any of these Sundays. Thank you.

Wintry Weather

In the event of wintry weather or power outages on Sunday mornings, please listen to WLBR radio for information on worship schedules. If there is a power failure on a Sunday morning, worship will be held in the Fellowship Hall. The emergency generator provides enough light in that area.



Also, in the event of adverse weather/road conditions, the office will open as soon as conditions allow us to travel safely. On a Wednesday

morning, if the Cornwall-Lebanon or Lebanon City school districts have a 2 hour delay or are closed, the Wednesday morning worship service is cancelled.



2016 Souper Bowl of Caring

On **Sunday February 7th** 140 million Americans will tune in to the Super Bowl football game. There will be parties with abundant food, friendship and fellowship. At the same time, there will be people worrying about staying warm, finding shelter and a warm meal.

Please join young people around the country as they demonstrate God's love by loving their neighbors through the Souper Bowl of Caring. It's

a simple, yet significant act of caring for others.

During the **Sundays in January and on February 7th**, we will be **collecting food items and monetary donations for the Lebanon Rescue Mission** as part of Messiah's Souper Bowl of Caring. Please support our efforts to tackle hunger.

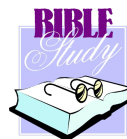
Then on Super Bowl Sunday (February 7) we will travel to the Rescue Mission to deliver

our donated items and throw a **pizza party** for the men while we enjoy watching the football game. We hope to see you there!



Upcoming Events

The church office will be closed on **Friday, January 1.**



BIBLE STUDY
On the Gospel of John
Thursday, January 14
at 7 PM

EVENT NIGHT

Thursday, January 21
at 6:30 PM

Come out for a fun night of games and fellowship!



Ministry Plan Report for November

(Budgeted need per week: : \$3,476.75)

Date	Offering Received	Attendance
11/1	\$6,129.70	72 + / 22 LiF
11/8	\$3,143.00	60 + / 20 LiF
11/15	\$3,112.00	58 + / 37 Conversation
11/22	\$2,391.00	66 + / 27 LiF
11/25 (Thanksgiving Eve—rolled into 11/29)		33 +
11/29	\$3,313.00	59 + / 8 LiF, 14 cookie bakers

NOTE: "+" denotes Worship
"LiF" denotes Living in Faith

Received to date: \$153,862.65
Needed to date: \$165,725.08



January 2016 Schedules

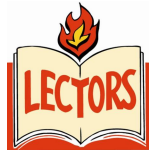
Assisting Minister

- 3 Deborah Lutz
- 10 Ernestine Batdorf
- 17 Charlotte Varone
- 24 Eugene Martin
- 31 Karen Fox



Lector

- 3 Robert Bowman
- 10 Ernestine Batdorf
- 17 Charlotte Varone
- 24 Eugene Martin
- 31 Karen Fox



Greeters

- 3 Karen & Harry Hatt
- 10 Mary Garrett & Anita Keisch
- 17 Marion Bowman
- 24 Joseph Hartman
- 31 Carol Artz



Finance Steward
Nancie Whelan

Head Usher
Nicholas Adams



Altar Guild

- Janet Gassert, chair
- Marjorie Beard
- Tom Gassert



Crucifer By Carol Artz

- 3 Robert Bowman
- 10 Michael Bowman
- 17 Michael Bowman
- 24 Gayle Hoffman
- 31 Gayle Hoffman



Acolyte

- 3 Deborah Lutz
- 10 Ernestine Batdorf
- 17 Keeley Hartman
- 24 Mikayla Bowman
- 31 Harry Hatt



WELCOME TIME Sponsors

(Welcome Time is held the first Sunday of the month at 10:30 AM.)



January 3 —Fellowship Committee



November 2015 General Fund Summary

	November	Year/date		November	Year/date
Income	\$17,970.68	\$153,862.65			
Expenses	\$14,178.43	\$162,563.65			
Income-expenses	\$3,792.25	-\$8,701.00			

Income	November	Year/date	Expenses	November	Year/date
Regular giving	\$17,270.50	\$150,185.90	Staff	\$10,407.35	\$106,169.23
Jesus Tree envelopes	\$370.00	\$1,760.00	Administrative	\$286.28	\$4,253.85
Bowl of Blessings	\$0.00	\$281.00	Maintenance	\$1,584.80	\$31,731.57
Checking interest	\$0.18	\$2.75	Committee	\$0.00	\$9.00
Donations/use of church	\$180.00	\$800.00	Additional	\$500.00	\$5,000.00
Other Gen. Fund*	<u>\$150.00</u>	<u>\$833.00</u>	Benevolence	\$1,300.00	\$14,300.00
Total Income	\$17,970.68	\$153,862.65	Loan Repayment	<u>\$100.00</u>	<u>\$1,100.00</u>
			Total expenses	\$14,178.43	\$162,563.65
			Income less expenses	\$3,792.25	-\$8,701.00

*initial envelope, altar guild, communion gifts, etc.

SPECIAL GIVING ENVELOPES

November 2015	Regular Giving Benevolence	Additional Designated Giving	Total Given to Charities
NALC	\$775.00		\$775.00
Atlantic Mission District	\$75.00		\$75.00
North American Lutheran Seminary	\$50.00		\$50.00
Independent Church in India	\$50.00		\$50.00
PACC Caring Cupboard	\$50.00		\$50.00
NALC Disaster Response	\$50.00		\$50.00
Lutheran World Relief	\$50.00		\$50.00
Lebanon Rescue Mission/Agape Shelter	\$50.00		\$50.00
Lebanon Free Clinic	\$50.00		\$50.00
City of Lebanon (in lieu of taxes)	\$50.00		\$50.00
Lutheran Bible Translators	\$50.00		\$50.00
Total	\$1,300.00	\$0.00	\$1,300.00

For Your Information



**FOOD COLLECTION
SUNDAY**

JANUARY 3

Caring Cupboard

Please sign up today to be a **Greeter!**

The **Welcome Time** sponsor sheet for 2016 is posted on the Information Center in the narthex.



December Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

The Messiah Congregation Council met on Tuesday, December 8, 2015.

- Nine members were present, one was excused. Two newly elected members were present as guests.
- Devotions were led by Nick Adams. Dave Machamer will have devotions next month.
- We received a letter from the attorneys handling Dorothy Daub's estate stating that as soon as we sign the paperwork the funds will be distributed.
- The Christian Education committee has begun Christmas caroling and distributing cookies to our shut-ins during the Living in Faith hour.
- George Strohm Plumbing and Heating came out and adjusted the new system in the sanctuary. They also looked at the present system in the rest of the building in order to bid on replacing it. This system is over 40 years old and has cost us thousands of dollars in repairs this past summer.
- Council retreat is set for Saturday, January 23 at 8:30 AM in the fellowship hall.
- The Social Ministry committee held the annual Christmas party at the Agape Shelter.
- The Ministry Plan was changed in order to keep the two phone lines.
- We approved the purchase of a new vacuum. The money is to be taken from the Memorial Fund.

Respectfully submitted,
Nick Adams
Congregation Council president

Agape Family Shelter Christmas Party



Thanks to the generosity of the congregation there were so many items donated to the Tree of Giving that we decided not to do an individual account. We received enough bath and grooming items to fill five large cardboard boxes. Items included adult and child toothbrushes, cases of toothpaste, bath soap, body wash for both adults and children, shower scrubbies and shampoo. Also donated were gift cards totaling \$180 for the shelter's use.

Each child got a bag of puzzles and games. We had punch and snacks for all, and Joan Smith told a story with stuffed lambs that said a bedtime prayer. Pastor Kendall told the story of the first Christmas with the help of the children and a Nativity set. There are currently four mothers and six children at the shelter.



Recycle Christmas Cards



Please recycle your Christmas cards by placing them in the box on the oak table in the narthex. They will be used to make Christmas books to be distributed to shut-ins next year. Thank you!

October Communion Gifts



October has become available for Communion gift sponsorship. Cost is \$30 for the month, and the donation will be included in your yearly giving summary. You may sponsor the gifts in honor or in memory of whomever you wish. If you are interested, please contact Robin in the office.

Thank You Notes



Thank you notes were received from the Lebanon Rescue Mission, Lutheran World Relief, and the City of Lebanon. They are posted on the bulletin board outside the church office.

Thank you to the members of Messiah Lutheran Church for the care packages that were sent to us. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and enjoyed all the treats. We are both doing well. The care packages were a welcome and enjoyable surprise.

Justyn Connatser (West Chester University)
Jordan Connatser (Lebanon Valley College)

Dear Messiah,

Thank you so much for the care package. It is a wonderful feeling to see a package on your porch when you come back home from a day full of exams. Most of the food you sent me was fuel for finals week. As my final year of college gets shorter each day I am thankful for all of the care packages I have received from Messiah. They have always warmed my heart and have been fuel for my studies. Thank you again so much.

Anna Harris
(Robin's daughter)

I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to all the bakers and cookie decorators that came out the Sunday we baked cookies for the shut-ins. We made 8 dozen cookies that morning, and the help and enthusiasm was wonderful! I am proud and appreciative of all of our young (and young at heart) people who worked hard that morning. A special thank you to Harry Hatt and Barb Adams for supplying additional cookies for our baking extravaganza. Thank you!

Carol Artz

Thank you for the delicious cookies baked by the Living in Faith Sunday School. There were much appreciated!

Tom Gassert

My family and I would like to thank Carol Artz and the Living in Faith classes for the wonderful container of Christmas cookies. We are thoroughly enjoying them, and we love the variety. Thank you for including us in this wonderful (and tasty) ministry.

Blessings to all of you,
Robin Harris and Family

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for coming to Agape on Sunday and doing the Christmas party for our families. A good time was had by all. We appreciate your love for us! May God bless you, each one.

Blessings,
Cynthia Smith
Director of the Agape Shelter

2016 Congregation Council

Nicholas Adams
Harry Hatt
Deborah Lutz
David Machamer
Lori Oliver
Rita Savant
Donald Smith
Charlotte Varone
Nancie Whelan

OUR SINCERE THANKS are due to outgoing Council members **Ernestine Batdorf and Pam Knouff** for their faithful leadership and important contributions throughout their terms of service. Those remaining on Council will miss serving with them.

We also thank **Charlotte Varone** for returning for a new two-year term, and welcome newly elected members **Rita Savant and Harry Hatt**.

Please keep these, and all our Congregation Council members, in your prayers as they seek to serve our Lord and His people in leadership at Messiah. They welcome your prayers, your input into the life of our congregation, and your expressions of encouragement and appreciation for their efforts. +