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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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Pastor's Page

Have you ever noticed that leaves and snowflakes seem to fall at the same speed?

I don't know the science of it, or whether this perception is actually true, but when I watch leaves float down out of a tree, or snowflakes (not the stormy wind-driven kind) silently fall, the same sense comes to mind: there is a Design and a Unity behind these events.

Whether or not leaves and snowflakes really fall at the same velocity, they turn my thoughts to God. In a busy world, and especially as I notice that my brain isn't as fast as it used to be, I appreciate every reminder that brings God to mind.

I'm trying to train myself not to brush off such thoughts, but to let them interrupt whatever earthly thing I'm doing and invite thoughts of God to stay for awhile. I figure that if God wants me to get the mundane thing done that I'm in the midst of, He'll take a break from revealing Himself to me and let me get on with my task.

More and more I find that thoughts of God are not a distraction from other

things; many of these other things are a distraction from God, and it's the God-thoughts that are most valuable.

I don't mean that I've taken to sitting still and dreamily contemplating the Divine while the soup boils over or spiders weave cobwebs from my head to the wall. Thinking about God is not daydreaming (for thoughts about God are guided *by* God), and thinking about God is not unproductive.

In fact, there are few things which yield more benefit for the time and effort invested than becoming mentally, spiritually still so that God can better acquaint us with Himself.

We don't learn to know and love a friend or prospective spouse by being in a hurry. We invest time, thought, and more time and thought to the effort, deepening our sense of who this other person is and growing in appreciation of what he or she means to us.

Just so, we grow to love God more and more deeply from the discernments, great and small, which He provides to those who seek Him.

I can rake leaves and think about the Steelers, or what's for supper. Or I can rake leaves and let God turn my thoughts to Him and take me where He wills.

We can do the same while engaged in holiday preparations. Instead of endlessly pondering the precise menu for Christmas dinner, we can establish the menu, then while we're mixing dough for cookies or wrapping presents, we can let God whisper to us about the Incarnation of His Son and the divine Love behind this wondrous act. We can let the lights on tree or house remind us that it was God Who said "Let there be light!" and sent the Light of the World.

This Christmastide, let your thoughts turn to God and abide there. God will show you new and wonderful things.

May you and yours have a blessed and holy season.

Peace to you from your Pastor. +



2016 Congregation Council

Nicholas Adams, *President & Property co-chair*
Charlotte Varone, *Vice President & Personnel chair*

Nancie Whelan, *Secretary, assistant Treasurer & Christian Education chair*

Karen Fox, *Worship & Music chair*

Harry Hatt, *Fellowship co-chair*

Deborah Lutz, *Evangelism & Volunteer Resources chair*

David Machamer, *Property co-chair*

Rita Savant, *Social Ministry chair & Financial Secretary*

Non Council Committee Chairs and their positions:

Ernestine Batdorf, *Assistant Financial Secretary*

Janet Gassert, *Altar Guild*

Karen Hatt, *Fellowship co-chair*

Gayle Hoffman, *Strategic Planning chair*

Kathaleen Lilley, *Treasurer & Finance chair*



Christmas Worship

The Nativity of Our Lord

Saturday, December 24

4 PM and 7:30 PM

A liturgy of Holy Communion, carols and candle lighting



Worship will be held at **10 AM on Sunday, December 25**. Please note the time change for this week only. There will be NO Living in Faith Education Hour that day.

Living in Faith Cookie Baking & Caroling

The *Living in Faith* Sunday School will once again put their culinary skills and vocal talent to good use! We will be baking Christmas cookies for our shut-ins, then distribute them during the *LiF* hour every Sunday in Advent. The schedule is as follows:



November 27—Baking cookies

December 4—Caroling/cookie distribution

December 11—Caroling/cookie distribution

December 18—Caroling/cookie distribution

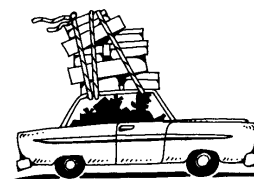
Address Change

New address:

TJ Lilley

1935 Hughes Avenue
Lynchburg, VA 25401

His cell number and email remain the same.



Staff Christmas Gifts

Christmas is coming, and our custom has been to request donations towards Pastor Kendall's Christmas gift. As we did last year, we are also asking that you donate towards gifts for our other staff members. As you know, there has been a deficit in congregation giving for the past several years, and we are not able to budget an appropriate amount for our employees. Please help us to give each of our employees a generous Christmas gift. Please give your contribution to any Council member or officer (see list on the upper left of this page).



Nick Adams

Congregation Council President

December 2016 Schedules

Assisting Minister

- 4 Michael Bowman
- 11 Kathaleen Lilley
- 18 Nancie Whelan
- 24 4 PM Ernestine Batdorf
- 7:30 PM Sandra Smith
- 25 Deborah Lutz



Altar Guild

- Janet Gassert, chair
- Carol Anspach
- Raymond Anspach
- Tom Gassert



Lector

- 4 Robert Bowman
- 11 Kathaleen Lilley
- 18 Nancie Whelan
- 24 4 PM Ernestine Batdorf
- 7:30 PM Sandra Smith
- 25 Deborah Lutz



Crucifer By Carol Artz

- 4 Andrew Hartman
- 11 Daniel LaRue
- 18 Daniel LaRue
- 24 4 PM Eugene Martin
- 7:30 PM Gayle Hoffman
- 25 Kathaleen Lilley



Greeters

- 4 Carol Artz
- 11 Raymond & Carol Anspach
- 18 Daniel LaRue
- 24 4 PM **NEEDED**
- 7:30 PM The Bowman Family
- 25 Deborah Lutz



Acolyte

- 4 Michael Bowman
- 11 Keeley Hartman
- 18 Ernestine Batdorf
- 24 4 PM Mary Whelan
- Nancie Whelan
- 7:30 PM Mikayla Bowman
- Harry Hatt
- 25 Deborah Lutz



Finance Steward
Deborah Lutz

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

December 4—The Bowman Family

Head Usher
Carol Anspach



For Your Information

December 4

FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY

The first Sunday of each month we collect food and personal care products for our neighbors in need. Unless there is a special request from a specific agency, the schedule is as follows:



December:
Rescue Mission

PLEASE DO NOT MIX SOAP AND FOOD IN THE SAME BAG. Thank you.

Transfer:

Please remove **Michael Brossman** from your congregation directory. He has transferred his membership.



Please sign up today to be a **Greeter!** The sign up sheets for 2017 are posted and ready for you to fill in your name!

The **Welcome Time** sponsor sheet for 2017 is posted on the Information Center in the narthex.



If you are thinking of **COFFEE, TEA, OR COCOA** as Christmas gifts they will be available during Welcome Time on December 4 to make your choices. Remember that these beverages not only solve your gift needs but will help small farmers around the world and return some of the cost to our national organization. Thank you!



Volunteers are needed to set up the **luminaries** on **Christmas Eve** before the 4 PM service and to remove them after the 7:30 PM service. If you can help please contact the Evangelism Ministry Team: Deb Lutz, Charlotte Varone or Mary Garrett.



Ministry Plan Summary for October

(Budgeted need per week: \$3,575.60)

10/2	\$2,809.00	48 + / 16 LiF
10/9	\$3,450.00	52 + / 20 Kline presentation
10/16	\$2,266.50	46 + / 17 Kline presentation
10/23	\$2,368.00	48 + / 22 LiF
10/30	\$1,988.00	45 + / 23 LiF

Received to date: \$125,562.60
Needed to date: \$154,942.50

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



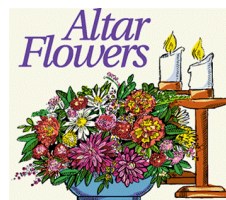
December Birthdays

- 1 Jacob Anspach
Nolan Anspach
- 5 Holly McGuire
Joan Prestegord
Walter Shirey
Carol Van Raay
- 7 Eileen Lutz
- 8 Andrew Hartman
- 9 Barbara Adams
Susan Galbraith
- 12 Nancy Potteiger
- 18 Alyson Hartman
- 22 Debra Miller
- 23 Dolores Rittle
- 24 Donald Munford
- 25 Mikayla Bowman
- 26 Beckett Lutz
- 31 Mary Ellen Dietrich
Gary Dohner



Open Flower Dates

There are **FIVE** open flower dates for **2017**. If you are interested in sponsoring the altar flowers (or giving an additional contribution to the General Fund in lieu of flowers) for any of these dates please contact Janet Gassert at 272-3757.



- April 30
- June 18
- August 6
- August 13
- December 10

Thank You Notes

Dear Messiah Church Family,

Thank you so much for keeping our son Jason in your thoughts and prayers during this past year while he was deployed to South Korea. He is safely home in NC.

Harry and Karen Hatt

Membership Changes

Please **amend your directory** to reflect he who joined the Church Triumphant last month:

Reuben Miller
1927—2016

If we have died with Christ, we shall also live with Him; if we are faithful to the end, we shall reign with Him.



2016 Contributions

YEAR-END GIVING



ALL year-end contributions **must be received by the last Sunday of the month (December 25)** to count for 2016. All contributions received after that date will be recorded for 2017.

Weekly Worship Schedule

SUNDAYS:

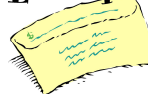
- 9 AM THE HOLY COMMUNION
- 10:30 AM LIVING IN FAITH
(4th Sunday of the month—Joint class)

WEDNESDAYS:

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

2017 Offering Envelopes

Offering Envelopes The 2017 offering envelopes have arrived. Please take yours



home with you at your earliest convenience. If you live close to a shut-in, please consider helping us out by delivering their envelopes too. Please note that the envelopes are arranged in **ALPHABETICAL** order. Thank you.

General Fund Summary for October

	October	Year/date		October	Year/date
Income	\$12,881.64	\$125,562.60			
Expenses	\$13,929.85	\$145,789.13			
Income-expenses	-\$1,048.21	-\$20,226.53			
Income	October	Year/date	Expenses	October	Year/date
Regular giving	\$11,681.00	\$121,073.40	Staff	\$10,004.83	\$100,869.18
Jesus Tree envelopes	\$100.00	\$1,787.00	Administrative	\$187.78	\$2,972.89
Bowl of Blessings	\$0.00	\$374.00	Maintenance	\$1,928.90	\$23,238.73
Checking interest	\$0.14	\$1.70	Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00
Donations	\$0.00	\$515.00	Additional	\$375.00	\$4,375.00
Other Gen. Fund*	<u>\$1,100.50</u>	<u>\$1,811.50</u>	Benevolence	\$1,333.33	\$13,333.33
Total Income	\$12,881.64	\$125,562.60	Loan Repayment	<u>\$100.00</u>	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
*initial envelope, altar guild, communion gifts, etc.			Total expenses	\$13,929.85	\$145,789.13
Budgeted Year-to-Date		\$154,942.50	Income less expenses	-\$1,048.21	-\$20,226.53

Benevolence Giving

October 2016	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	\$54.17		\$54.17
Independent Church in India	\$54.17		\$54.17
PACC Caring Cupboard	\$54.17		\$54.17
NALC Disaster Response	\$54.17		\$54.17
Lutheran World Relief	\$54.16		\$54.16
Lebanon Rescue Mission/Agape Shelter	\$54.16		\$54.16
Lebanon Free Clinic	\$54.16		\$54.16
City of Lebanon (in lieu of taxes)	\$50.00		\$50.00
Water Missions International	\$54.17		\$54.17
Total	\$1,333.33	\$0.00	\$1,333.33

Messiah Lutheran Church
 1800 Oak Street
 Lebanon, PA 17042-5852
 Office Phone 272-2922

E-mail
 Pastor Kendall: messiahpastor@epix.net
 Robin Harris/office: messiahluthleb@epix.net
Web Site
<http://www.messiahluthleb.org>

Upcoming Events

BIBLE STUDY on the Book of Romans

Thursday, December 8

7 PM

Conference Room



EVENT NIGHT

Thursday, December 15

6:30 PM

Come on out for an evening
of fun and fellowship!

Christmas Office Hours

The office will be closed on
December 26 & 27.
Merry Christmas!



November Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

The Messiah Congregation Council met on Tuesday, November 15, 2016.

- 8 members were present; 1 was excused. Devotions were led by Deb Lutz.
- Approved a proposal from Finance Committee to split the proceeds from the Advent envelopes between the Community Outreach Fund and reducing the deficit.
- Approved a proposal to not pay the city the full amount in lieu of taxes but an amount based on giving. The same is being done to the NALC.
- Approved the transfer of the unused portion of the benevolence giving from the Zeller Trust which amounts to \$267.32 to reduce the deficit.
- Approved a proposal from George Strohm to build a roof over the HVAC units behind the brick wall outside the furnace room. Most of the money for this was already budgeted for the new system. Cost is \$3,255.
- Approved a maintenance agreement for all the HVAC systems to Strohm's for \$1,075 for the next year.
- Approved the names of the candidates for Congregation Council to be placed on the ballot at the congregation meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Nick Adams
Congregation Council President

In Case of 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.



Messiah Lutheran 2017 Ministry Plan

	2017	2016	Net Change	Percent Change
Staff Ministries				
Pastor Salary	38,800	40,878	-2,078	-5.08%
Pastor Housing	31,000	31,000	0	
Pastor's Social Security	5,786	6,166	-380	-6.17%
Car Allowance	2,800	3,000	-200	-6.67%
Pension	9,524	9,365	159	1.69%
Medical/Dental/Disability/Survivor Insurance	16,000	16,000	0	0.00%
Pastor's Continuing Ed	100	100	0	0.00%
Secretary Salary	13,300	13,592	-292	-2.15%
Secretary Social Security	1,017	1,040	-22	-2.15%
Workers Compensation Insurance	800	700	100	14.29%
TOTAL	119,127	121,841	-2,714	-2.23%
Percent of Total Plan	72.45%	72.21%		
Administrative Ministries				
Consumable Supplies	1,800	1,800	0	0.00%
Technology Support	0	0	0	0.00%
Non-Consumable Supplies	100	100	0	0.00%
Postage	100	100	0	0.00%
Worship Supplies	300	500	-200	-40.00%
Telephone & Internet	1,500	1,350	150	11.11%
Offering Supplies	450	450	0	0.00%
NALC Convocation	0	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL	4,250	4,300	-50	-1.16%
Percent of Total Plan	2.58%	2.55%		
Maintenance Ministries				
Electric	10,000	12,000	-2,000	-16.67%
Gas	4,500	5,000	-500	-10.00%
Water & Sewer	600	600	0	0.00%
Refuse Removal	400	350	50	14.29%
Equipment Service	3,000	2,300	700	30.43%
Grounds Care	4,400	4,400	0	0.00%
Facilities Services (Contractor)	3,600	3,600	0	0.00%
Snow Removal	1,400	1,200	200	16.67%
Janitorial - Non-paper Supplies	400	300	100	33.33%
Janitorial - Paper Supplies	400	400	0	0.00%
Property & Liability Insurance	4,600	4,600	0	0.00%
Organ/Piano Tuning/Repairs	1,300	1,300	0	0.00%
Funded Depreciation	0	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL	34,600	36,050	-1,450	-4.02%
Percent of Total Plan	21.04%	21.37%		

The 2017 Ministry Plan was adopted by those members attending the annual congregation meeting on November 19, 2016.

Messiah Lutheran 2017 Ministry Plan

	2017	2016	Net Change	Percent Change
Committee Ministries				
Publicity/Advertising	0	0	0	0.00%
Christian Ed	150	150	0	0.00%
Evangelism	100	200	-100	-50.00%
Fellowship	25	25	0	0.00%
Social Ministry	40	40	0	0.00%
Stewardship	50	50	0	0.00%
Youth Ministry	0	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL	365	465	-100	-21.51%
Percent of Total Plan	0.22%	0.28%		
Additional Ministries				
Speakers & Substitutes	150	150	0	150.00%
Organist Substitutes	5,875	5,875	0	0.00%
Pastoral Care Resources	0	0	0	0.00%
Awards & Gifts	50	50	0	0.00%
VBS	0	0	0	0.00%
Library	0	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL	6,075	6,075	0	0.00%
Percent of Total Plan	3.69%	3.60%		
Future Ministries				
Organist Salary	0	0		
Organist Social Security	0	0		
Continuing Education	0	0		
Choir Director Salary	0	0		
Choir Director Social Security	0	0		
Continuing Education	0	0		
Chime Choir Director Stipend	0	0		
Chime Choir Dir. Soc. Security	0	0		
Music	0	0		
Choir Fellowship	0	0		
TOTAL	0	0		
Percent of Total Plan	0.00%	0.00%		
General Fund Total	164,417	168,731	-4,314	-2.56%
Benevolence Ministries				
NALC Benevolence	9,000	9,300	-300	-3.23%
Other Benevolence	6,540	6,700	-160	-2.39%
TOTAL	15,540	16,000	-460	-2.88%
Loan Repayment				
Loan - Repay endowment fund	1,200	1,200	0	0.00%
TOTAL	1,200	1,200	0	0.00%
GRAND TOTAL	181,157	185,931	-4,774	-2.57%

These figures are here for information only in the event that the congregation would hire an organist, choir director or cantor in the future.

* Total Benevolence Commitment: The congregation's tithe that is designated as this congregation's benevolence support will consist of 10% of offerings received in regular giving envelopes and other benevolences as specifically determined by Congregation Council.

Notes for 2017 Ministry Plan

1. Pastor's Letter of Call has been modified to eliminate the "plus five percent of this amount." The word "amount" refers to the minimum salary guidelines that are used to calculate Pastor's salary. Pastor Kendall made this recommendation to modify the Letter of Call.

PLEASE NOTE: The removal of the 5% amount **REDUCES** Pastor's salary from \$73,290 to \$69,800.

2. Car allowance has been reduced to reflect the lower cost for gas and the reduction in the IRS allowable mileage rate.
3. Office hours have been changed from 8:30 to 12:30 PM **TO** 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM. This action reduces her hours by one (1) hour per week to 23 hours/week. Secretary's salary is showing a cost of living increase of 3% based on the reduced hours
4. Reductions or increases in these areas of maintenance ministries are reflective of the analysis of spending over the past year.
5. In light of the deficit, this figure reflects one a Capella Sunday per month.
6. **Benevolence Breakdown for 2017:** The committee recommends the following benevolence amounts for 2017 as follows:
 1. NALC - \$9,000 per year or \$750 each month (6.1%)
 2. Atlantic Mission District - \$900 per year or \$75 per month (.7%)
 3. NALC Partner Ministries (\$630 - divided \$157.50 per quarter per year (.5%)):
 - a. Ethiopian Church Relief Fund
 - b. The Great Commission Society
 - c. Water Missions International
 - d. Lutheran Bible Translators
 4. North American Lutheran Seminary- \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 5. Independent Church in India - \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 6. Caring Cupboard - \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 7. Lutheran World Relief - \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 8. Lebanon Free Clinic - \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 9. NALC Disaster Response - \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 10. Lebanon Rescue/Agape - \$630 per year or \$157.50 per quarter (.5%)
 11. City of Lebanon (in lieu of taxes) - \$600 per year in November (.4%)

TOTAL Estimated Benevolence Giving: \$15,540 (represents 10% of 2017 estimated giving)

7. *****Please Note:** In December of each year, the finance committee will review offerings given for the year to determine if there are additional offerings to send to each organization based upon our 10.00% tithe. The additional offerings will be divided according to the percentages listed above and sent to each organization.