



THE LAMPSTAND

Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church † 80 Gockley Road † Stevens, PA 17578

Volume 11 Number 12

December 2018



Pastor's Message

The Birth of God's Peace

This world is anything but peaceful. Hatred and violence and a lack of ability to care for each other and a general sense of hostility has overtaken our nation. People are gunned down in groups at a random and alarming rate which seems almost inconceivable.

People who are supposed to be leaders and healers actively and intentionally sow division among us.

Into this world comes Jesus.

Despite the hectic nature of the season during which there can be much emotional tension, stress and depression within families....despite this and the rushing around to decorate and buy and eat....despite all this there remains within the human heart the search for peace and rest and a type of non-anxious presence and reality which seems ever more elusive and out of reach. Some people give up completely.

And yet this is precisely what happens when Jesus is born.

Jesus was born into a world of violence. The Romans had taken over Palestine. Cruelty is nothing new to the twenty-first century. The Old Testament particularly is full of barbaric slaughter.

For over two thousand years Christians have lived in this world clinging to the hope that despite everything bad that happens that God Almighty is in charge and that His Son Jesus Christ loves all of us and died for our sins in order that we too may be made righteous and whole once again, at peace once again.

Five hundred years ago this vision and understanding of God's love for sinners was highlighted and lifted up once again by Martin Luther who, reading Romans 3: 19-28, came to the beautiful and liberating awareness that a person does not get to heaven because of good works but rather because of what Jesus has done and continues to do for the world.

When Luther discovered this he breathed a great sigh

of relief, as do we all when we realize that we are to do good works not in order that we would do God's job but rather joyfully with the knowledge that God has freed us from our misery through the love of Christ.

The Reformation idea of God's Grace is truly the "peace of God which surpasses all understanding" as it is written in Philippians 4:7. This is the peace that even now, especially now, in our current situation "will guard (our) hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4: 7

As we begin this Christmas season and continue our search for peace in the world, let us never forget that this is exactly what we have in the birth of Jesus Christ. This is why we celebrate. Gather with us in worship and song and praise and proclaim the peace of God in your heart and in the whole world. See you in Church and Sunday School.

In Christ,
Pastor Tim



A Holiday Prayer

Loving Father, help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift, and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!

—Robert Louis Stevenson

Newsletter articles are due on the second Sunday of each month for the following months newsletter.

Please email your articles to mellingerslutheran@gmail.com



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WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Christmas Eve Worship December 24, 2018

On Christmas Eve we will have two worship services. At 4:00 we will have an informal Family Service of Holy Communion. At 7:00 we will have the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Holy Communion which begins with a musical presentation from 7:00-7:30. Please take time in your busy preparations to stop and join us as we praise and thank God.

FINANCIAL REPORT

General Receipts Compared To Budget September

	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Allocation</u>	<u>Over/</u> <u>(Under)</u>
11/04/2018	6,136.00	5,104.74	1,031.26
11/11/2018	4,836.00	5,104.74	(268.74)
11/18/2018	3,082.00	5,104.74	(2,022.74)
11/21/2018	546.00	0.00	546.00
11/25/2018	3,383.00	5,104.74	(1,721.00)

General Receipts Compared to Budget Year to Date

	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Allocation</u>	<u>Over/(Under)</u>
11/25/2018	196,523.00	225,408.45	(28,885.45)

SERVANT OPPORTUNITIES

We are in need of the following Worship

Assistants: Acolytes, Candlebearers, Communion Assistants, Crucifers, and Lay Worship Leaders. Anyone interested in participating in worship as a leader in this way should contact Pastor Tim or the Church office.

Volunteers Wanted for the Nursery: In the quest to provide a pleasant nursery experience for all, we are extending to the congregation the ability to work in the nursery on the dates that they choose. The sign-up sheet is available on the table in the narthex. You MUST have a completed PA Child Abuse History Certification and PA State Police Criminal Record check completed and turned in to the office. Forms can be obtained through the office or at the following websites:

PA State Police Request for Criminal Background Check Volunteer Only:

<https://epatch.state.pa.us/TandCVolunteerAction.do>

PA Child Abuse History Certification:

http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/form/s_001762.pdf

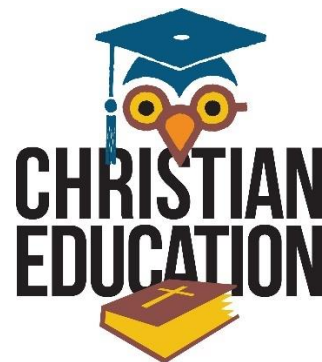
Volunteers Wanted to Take Communion to Shut-ins:

To supplement Pastor Tim's visits, Mellingers is looking for volunteers who would like to be trained to visit and take Holy Communion to our shut-ins. This ministry will benefit those receiving communion and will also be a blessing for those who offer it. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Tim at (717) 468-9049.

Calling All Sewers: If anyone is willing to sew school kits for Social Ministry's LWR Ingathering, please contact Betty Cordes at (717) 335-3624. Patterns are available in the church office. Cut patterns are currently available from Betty Cordes. Please note that sewers keep sewing throughout the year to replenish the stock needed for the upcoming year's school kits.

Photos Wanted: Do you enjoy taking pictures of special moments? Would you be interested in sharing those photos with the church? We are looking for photos to share in the newsletter, on our website, Facebook, etc. Sharing is easy, you can send them through email at mellingerslutheran@gmail.com.

2019 Coffee Social Bakers Needed: The 2019 Coffee Social charts are available in the narthex. Please sign up for a date to provide after service treats.



TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Please join us if you can for our weekly Bible study which meets in the Faith Café at church every Tuesday afternoon from 2:00-3:30. Currently we are discussing selected Bible topics.

The discussions are usually thought provoking and often fun as we talk together and enjoy spending time with God's Holy Word as it uplifts us and guides us along life's way.

BIBLE STUDY BREAKFAST

Resumes: December 8 at 8:30 am
Where: Cloister Diner in Ephrata
Contacts: Carl Tobias

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

DIGITAL ELECTRONIC GIVING

Mellingers is in the process of implementing digital, online and electronic giving in order to allow members or anyone for that matter to support the important ministries of the Holy Church here at Mellingers and around the world even when they are away.

Contact the church office for details (717)336-8800.



LWR FARMERS MARKET COFFEE is a new line of coffee sourced directly from farmers participating in Lutheran World Relief projects. Every delicious cup helps transform poor communities that depend on their coffee crop to feed their families. Farmers get a strong up-front price for their coffee beans and a portion of the profit. With LWR Farmers Market Coffee, farmers aren't just suppliers of coffee beans, they are partners in the coffee business.

Mellingers will be selling **decaf, medium and dark roast coffee for \$8 per bag**. A display of the products is available in the Narthex next to the lamp. Coffee is available to purchase in the church office.

CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITIES:

Contributions may be made to the following funds at any time and may also be used to aid people in designating monies for memorials. Should you wish to donate to any of these funds, please place funds in an envelope and provide the name of the fund in which you would like your donation placed, your name, and your envelope number. Should you choose to remain anonymous, do not include your name and envelope number.

- ✦ The Kitchen Project Fund
- ✦ The Seminarian Fund
- ✦ Maintenance and Building Fund
- ✦ Youth Gathering
- ✦ Campus Crusade for Christ
- ✦ Needy Fund
- ✦ Security System

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

December 2: Following worship we will decorate the Church with the Hanging of the Greens and then at Noon all gather to celebrate a Christmas Party and Dinner for all ages.

December 9: Following worship we will have the annual Congregational meeting during which time we will elect Council members and discuss the 2019 Resource Allocation (Budget).

"DO YOUR OWN THING"

TRIP TO NEW YORK CITY

December 8, 2018

Leave Mellingers Lutheran Church, Schoeneck

at 6:30 AM

Leave New York City

after a day "To Do Your Own Thing"

at 7:00 PM

Get dropped off and picked up at rear of Winter Garden Theater (7th Avenue and 51st Street).

Trip Price: \$50 Linda @ 336-6177

COMMUNION FLOW

In order for communion to flow freely communicants are encouraged to form a line to the altar. Time in line can be used for prayer, meditation and listening to or singing to the music.



**Youth of Mellingers
Presents**

**"COMMUNITY DAY"
AT ISAAC'S!**

On **Tuesday, December 11, 2018**, **EPHRATA ISAAC'S** is hosting a fundraiser benefiting the Youth of Mellingers. **BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY** to enjoy homemade soups and unique, fresh deli sandwiches. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the cost of your meal will go directly toward expenses for Youth Group Activities, including Gathering 2021! Dine-in, takeout, and online orders apply. We hope to see you there!

WHERE: **EPHRATA ISAAC'S** – Valid at this Isaac's only.
Cloister Shopping Center
120 N. Reading Road, Ephrata
717-733-7777 (Call ahead for takeout)

WHEN: **Tuesday, December 11, 2018. 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM**

HOW: Flyers are available in narthex, in the bulletin and online at mellingers.org

This form can be used for Dine-In, Takeout and Online Orders at www.isaacrestaurants.com.

Use coupon code **FUND** for online fundraiser orders.

SEMINARIAN UPDATE

By Scott Brubaker

The semester is over on December 10 when I submit my final project for my online class "Story of Jesus and the Early Church" which is a New Testament overview. Clinical pastoral education (CPE) at Lancaster General Hospital is proceeding well. I am learning much, and it is challenging. I have seen many folks in pain and suffering and how faith plays a role in the coping/grieving process. I have enrolled in a weeklong intensive class on the Philadelphia campus in January entitled, Preaching John. Looks interesting. Lastly, I am on the schedule to preach next at Mellingers on Sunday, December 23—looking forward to it.

See you in Church and Sunday School.
As always, I thank God for your prayers and support. In Christ,

Scott

How to help Scott with Tuition Expenses

If you feel called to help assist Scott financially, please take advantage of the white envelopes and select the Seminarian Fund. Congregational support (whatever is given through Mellingers) is matched, dollar for dollar up to half of tuition cost, by supporters of the seminary.

PRAYER CORNER

Interested in receiving or making prayer chain updates throughout the week? Visit our website at www.mellingers.org. The links to sign-up are under the Resources tab.



Thank you to our Mellingers Church family for all your prayers, cards, and support. We felt your prayers through your cards as you cheered us on to fight this battle. We felt your prayers through Pastor Tim as he brought God's word and light to us in the darkest of times. We felt your prayers in your generous financial support through GoFundMe and church boxes to give us the means to fight the cancer. It is so awe inspiring to see Jesus work in this congregation.

The Hartings,
Jeremy and Megan
Tim and Greta

Social Ministry,

Thanks you for the lovely plant you gave me for Thanksgiving. I really appreciate it.

Thanks again, Betty Wolf



- ❖ Brittany Hartlove asked if there was a breakdown on donations via e-giving yet. Reporting has not been set up yet.
- ❖ We need to promote the sign-up of e-giving.
- ❖ The council approved the disciple resource allocation as revised to present to the congregation.
- ❖ A neighbor volunteered to take care of trees and limbs near the shed. They cleared the area and chipped the wood saving the church money and time.
- ❖ We received a notice from West Cocalico Township that we need to complete an onlot sewage inspection prior to June 2019.
- ❖ The dehumidifier is doing a great job keeping the moisture in the basement under control.
- ❖ Our HVAC contract with Vertex was renewed.
- ❖ An anonymous donor came forward to cover the cost of a new air conditioning unit for the Fellowship Hall based on the quote from JSL Mechanical.
- ❖ Additional security measures will be employed during services.
- ❖ Pastor Tim will purchase a modem in order to have internet connectivity in the sanctuary in order to stream services in the future.
- ❖ The council voted to purchase a copyright license in order to move forward with contemporary music.
- ❖ Dave Weidman is researching elevator inspectors and will provide a report at a future time.



WITHIN OUR
COMMUNITY



685 GOOD DRIVE
P.O. BOX 4125
LANCASTER, PA 17604-4125

PHONE: 717-295-3900 FAX: 717-391-9582

Current program information is available in the narthex and at the hospice [website](#).

Christmas Open House Sunday, December 2, 2018 2pm-5pm

- ❁ Tours of the Victorian Italianate Connell Mansion
- ❁ Refreshments
- ❁ Santa Claus
- ❁ Storytime for the children throughout the day

Celebrate the beginning of the holiday season with us and see some of the fabulous history of the Cocalico Valley.



**HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF THE COCALICO VALLEY**

237-249 West Main Street, Ephrata, PA

(717)733-1616 www.cocalicovalleys.org

Parking available in the rear, and on street parking.

The Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania

December 2018

- [Advent Day Apart](#) at The Wittel Farm - December 8

January 2019

- [Winter Youth Retreat](#) at Kirchenwald - January 4-6
- [Winter Fun Day](#) at Kirchenwald - January 20
- [Chicken & Waffles](#) at Nawakwa - January 20
- [CampPerson Meetings](#) at Kirchenwald & Nawakwa - January 20

2018 Advent Retreat

"Biblical Images of man and Christ"

Two lectures given by the Reverend Adam Morton, Assistant Pastor of The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Lancaster PA and PhD candidate in Systematic Theology

at The University of Nottingham, United Kingdom.



Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Saturday, December 8, 2018 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Schedule:

- 9:00am Welcome
- 9:05am Service of Morning Prayer
- 9:20am Fellowship/Coffee
- 9:30am Lecture #1 "Let us make Adam in our image: the human being in the Old Testament"
- 10:20am Fellowship/Coffee
- 10:30am Lecture #2 "Conformed to the image of his Son: Jesus and restored humanity"
- 11:20 Break/Questions
- 11:30am Service of Holy Communion
- 12:05 Catered Lunch
- 1:00pm Departure

RSVP to the Church Secretary Office@salemephrata.org
or 717.733.6646

by November 26, 2018. Space is limited.

A suggested \$10 donation



Join us to ring in the
New Year with
**Akron's 2019
Shoe-In**

WHEN

Monday, December 31st
9:00pm - 12:15am

WHERE

Broad Street Park
700-799 Broad Street, Akron



SHOE COLLECTION

Bring a pair of new or gently used shoes to the event on 12/31/18 or drop off shoe donations at below collection sites - beginning December 1st:

- Akron Borough - 117 South Seventh Street, Akron
- Ephrata National Bank - 351 South 7th Street, Akron
- Weiser's Market - 805 Main Street, Akron
- Zion Lutheran Church - 435 Main Street, Akron

Donated shoes will be distributed to
Peter's Porch at Zion Lutheran
Church (www.zionakron.org)

For more information or opportunity to volunteer,
please contact Pastor Jim Kearsley (717.330.2023)

FREE
ALL-AGES
EVENT

FREE FOOD
with candy scramble

BONFIRE

DJ SPINNIN'
TUNES
with trivia & prizes

HAYRIDES
from 9-11:30pm

SHOE DROP
at midnight



Presented by
Akron's 2019
Shoe-In Committee
with major
sponsorship by
Good's Disposal
and
**Ephrata
National Bank**

2018



MESSIAH

Sing-a-long

Upper Octorara Presbyterian Church

1121 Octorara Trail • Parkesburg, PA

Friday, December 28 • 7:00 pm

Clair Leaman, Conductor

– Soloists –

Heidi Shannon, Soprano

Heidi Kurtz, Contralto

Timothy Bentsch, Tenor

Mark Moliterno, Bass

Choir & Orchestra

Sing or Listen

Carol Stevens & Grace McConkie

Signing for the Deaf

Music available to purchase

(\$11.00) or rent (\$5.00)

Marcella Hostetter, Choral Director at Lancaster

Mennonite School, will be the Guest Conductor

for the Hallelujah Chorus.

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS

messiahsingalong.com

— Free Will Offering —

Special dates

- First Sunday of Advent, *December 2, 2018*
- Second Sunday of Advent, *December 9, 2018*
- Third Sunday of Advent, *December 16, 2018*
- First day of winter, *December 21, 2018*
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, *December 23, 2018*
- Christmas Eve, *December 24, 2018*
- Christmas Day, *December 25, 2018*
- New Year's Eve/Watch Night, *December 31, 2018*

CHURCH AT LARGE



Lower Susquehanna Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

ELCA Presiding Bishop, Christian leaders issue statement on current U.S. policy toward Israel and Palestine

11/21/2018 11:10:00 AM
November 14, 2018

Current U.S. Policy, Israel/Palestine, and the Churches

A New Context

Forty years ago, the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel were signed and 25 years ago, the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) were signed. For many, these two events offered hope of movement towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict between Israelis, Palestinians, and other neighboring countries. While we recognize these anniversaries, the current situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories for most of the inhabitants is one of shattered hopes. Since President Trump took office in 2017, U.S. support for Israel over the concerns of Palestinians has become explicit instead of implied. As leaders of U.S.-based churches and Christian organizations with long ties and close connections with Palestinian Christians and churches, we are deeply concerned about these developments and urge our elected officials to consider the devastating impact of these shifts on those most directly affected, as well as on the possibility of positive, constructive, and credible U.S. engagement to work for a resolution to this enduring conflict.

President Trump and Shifts in U.S. Policy

At the start of his term, President Trump offered supportive words for the traditional peace process, even saying in late September 2018 that he "like[d]" a two-state solution. However, U.S. positions on key issues like Israeli settlements, the status of Jerusalem, and Palestinian refugees have shifted significantly. Publicly the U.S. has remained quiet on the issue of settlements since the start of President Trump's administration, tacitly endorsing Israeli settlements as new construction increases.

On Jerusalem, the Trump administration officially recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moved the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. President Trump has given no indication that the Administration remains committed to the international promise and policy that Jerusalem should be a shared city. While Vice President Pence told the Israelis that the

U.S. decision will not influence the final status of its borders, which he said was up to the parties, President Trump has declared that Jerusalem is now off the table as a subject for negotiations in a final agreement.

In a subsequent action, in early October, the administration decided to close the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem that had served as the diplomatic point of engagement for and with Palestinians. The move included demoting the U.S. Consul General. Instead of being responsible for Palestinian matters and answering directly to the Secretary of State, the Consul General in Jerusalem will now answer to the U.S. Ambassador, further diminishing the impression of U.S. respect for international convention.

The Trump administration has also proposed changing the definition of who is a Palestinian refugee. Currently, Palestinians and the descendants of Palestinians who fled or were driven out of historic Palestine during the 1948 war maintain their original refugee status. Some of these were uprooted a second time during the 1967 war when more Palestinians were displaced. The passing of refugee status to the descendants of those displaced in war is standard practice in situations of prolonged conflict. However, the U.S. seeks to strip refugee status from those descendants, meaning that most Palestinians who were born in refugee camps and who are currently considered refugees would no longer be considered as such. The goal of this change is to attempt to take the issue of Palestinian refugees' right of return off the negotiating table.

These policy changes were a direct affront to Palestinians. The U.S. Embassy opened in May to great fanfare on a day marked by Israel as its founding and by Palestinians as the nakba (catastrophe). While this move was being celebrated by Israeli and U.S. officials in Jerusalem, Palestinians were being killed by Israeli armed forces at the Gaza border during a largely non-violent protest that was part of the Great March of Return. No statement or condemnation of the killings has been issued by the U.S. government.

The Administration's Measures to Punish Palestinians

Palestinian officials have stated that they see the U.S. negotiating team as biased due to the team's history, current communications, and actions and therefore will not meet with U.S. officials or participate in U.S.-led negotiations. The U.S. in turn has said that since the Palestinian Authority is not taking part in U.S.-led negotiations, Palestinians should not receive U.S. financial support. The U.S. has also closed the PLO office in the United States, frozen the PLO's bank accounts in the U.S., and expelled the family of the PLO representative to the U.S.

In January, the U.S. withheld more than half of a funding installment to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Then, in August, the U.S. announced it would halt all U.S. funding to UNRWA and formally withheld \$300 million in funds that had been promised to the organization. This means UNRWA will need to heavily cut

back on the services it provides to 5.4 million Palestinian refugees in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank, and Gaza. Schools and hospitals may be forced to close, thus depriving Palestinians of education, health care, needed jobs, and hope for a better future.

In late August, the U.S. also cut all non-security related assistance to the West Bank and Gaza, over \$200 million in funds, and is also cutting funding for peacebuilding programs. The U.S. also is reported to be taking steps to discontinue funding to the East Jerusalem Hospital Network, which includes the Lutheran World Federation's Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives. Again, vulnerable Palestinians are suffering and will continue to suffer as a result of U.S. policy decisions.

Even as the administration has decided to pull humanitarian funding, the State of Israel remains the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid, receiving approximately \$3.8 billion in military aid each year. This funding helps the government of Israel maintain the occupation of the Palestinian territories, making the U.S. complicit in Israel's detention of Palestinian children in military prisons, violent repression of peaceful protestors, and demolitions of Palestinian homes and communities.

The administration is also taking actions to deny the freedom of speech to those who criticize the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinians. The Department of Education has adjusted its definition of anti-Semitism to include anti-Zionism and criticism of the state of Israel. Any person or group speaking at educational institutions who states their support for anti-Zionism, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement or is otherwise critical of Israel's policies is potentially at risk for investigation and sanction by the Department of Education.

While President Trump's administration is not the first to show its favoritism of Israelis over Palestinians, we are deeply troubled by its attempt to pursue a sweeping and coordinated set of policies designed to punish Palestinians and take away their human rights, dignity, and hope. By promoting these policies, the Trump administration makes it harder for peace to be realized and increases the chance that there will be new violence.

We support peace, justice, and human rights

As Christian churches and organizations in the United States, we strongly oppose this treatment of Palestinians. Most Palestinians have been peacefully protesting for 70 years in the hopes of gaining international recognition and their own state. We call on people of all faiths to stand up in support of human rights for both Palestinians and Israelis, including the right to self-determination. We urge the Trump administration to restore humanitarian funding to Palestinians through bilateral assistance and UNRWA, and to pursue engagement in honest, credible, and serious efforts with Palestinians, Israelis, regional parties, and the international community, to seek a just resolution to the conflict. We pray that we may soon join in celebrating a region where all are at peace and enjoy their rights and liberties without regard to race and creed.

Eddy Alemán
General Secretary
Reformed Church in America

Joyce Ajlouny
General Secretary
American Friends Service Committee

J Ron Byler
Executive Director
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Rev. Paula Clayton Dempsey
Director of Partnership Relations
Alliance of Baptists

Marie Dennis
Co-President
Pax Christi International

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer
General Minister and President
United Church of Christ

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Susan Gunn
Interim Director Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe, General Secretary
General Board of Church and Society
The United Methodist Church

Dr. Nathan Hosler
Director, Office of Public Witness
Church of the Brethren

Rev. Julia Brown Karimu
Co-Executive, Global Ministries
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United
Church of Christ

Rev. John L. McCullough
President and CEO
Church World Service

Rev. Dr. James Moos
Co-Executive, Global Ministries
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United
Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev. Teresa Hord Owens
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Rev. Reggie Smith
Executive Director
Office of Social Justice Christian Reformed Church of
North America

ELCA Church Council meets, addresses well-governed and sustainable church

11/19/2018 2:55:00 PM

CHICAGO – The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at The Lutheran Center in Chicago Nov. 8-11. The council, which serves as the ELCA's board of directors, centered its meeting around worship, Bible study and personal reflections on faith.

As it continues to focus its work around Future Directions 2025, the council engaged in discussions around a "well-governed, connected and sustainable church," as outlined in the plan's fifth goal. Addressing efforts toward governance and building consensus around a shared understanding of its roles and responsibilities, the council approved the Preface and Part 1 of the ELCA Church Council Governance policy manual. The policy manual development committee also led discussions on Part 2 of the manual, which will address how the council can best be equipped to fulfill the roles and responsibilities outlined in Part 1.

In other action, the council elected the Rev. Philip Hirsch to a four-year renewable term as executive director of ELCA Domestic Mission, beginning Feb. 1, 2019. The council also re-elected the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla to a four-year renewable term as executive director of ELCA Global Mission, beginning Feb. 1, 2019.

In other business, the council:

recommended to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly the adoption of the policy statement, "A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment;"

defined the symbols for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service as a deacon's stole and a cross. In addition, the council requested the ELCA worship team develop an appropriate rite and rubrics for the ordination of deacons, subject to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly approval of ordination as the entrance rite for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service;

formed a working group to draft a declaration to people of African descent to be presented to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. The working group will develop in this document a confession of this church's bondage to the sins of slavery, racism, discrimination, white supremacy and quietism, and a commitment to begin the work of repentance, which this church confesses to be "the chief topic of Christian teaching;"

extended the Mission Support experiment with five synods—Nebraska Synod, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, New England Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, and Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod. The council requested an initial report be brought to the April 2019 meeting and a final report and recommendations to the November 2019 meeting. Mission Support is the

financial offerings from congregations shared with synods and the churchwide organization;

received reports on the implementation of the strategy toward authentic diversity within the ELCA and the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. The reports are in response to actions taken by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly;

approved a 2019 fiscal year current fund spending authorization of \$67,164, 676; and approved a 2019 ELCA World Hunger spending authorization of \$21,500,000;

approved a Church Council designated fund representing the excess revenue over expenses from fiscal year 2018, estimated to be in the range of \$1.5-\$2.5 million, to be released toward funding the fiscal year 2019 operating budget;

recommended amendments to the constitution of this church for adoption by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly;

adopted revision to Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns;

revised the Alcohol Social Criteria Investment Screen; and

participated in a conversation on racial justice;

The council also received:

reports from the officers, its committees, the administrative team and the Conference of Bishops;

an update on Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA;

a report of the Theological Education Advisory Committee (TEAC);

an update on Lutheran Services in America;

presentations from Separately Incorporated Ministries;

congregational vitality learnings; and

greetings from ecumenical partners.

ELCA, Episcopal, and Catholic Church leaders issue statement on East Jerusalem hospitals

11/1/2018 10:00:00 AM

The Presiding Bishop and Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church on behalf of its House of Bishops, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committees on International Justice and Peace and Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs together wish to raise their grave concern that the Trump Administration has apparently decided to halt further U.S. humanitarian assistance to hospitals in East Jerusalem as part of a wider curtailment of U.S. funding that has been assisting the Palestinian people for many years.

The four medical institutions associated with us include: Augusta Victoria Hospital (Lutheran) St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital and Princess Basma Rehabilitation Centre (both Anglican/Episcopal), as well as St. Joseph's Hospital (Catholic), together with

Makassed Islamic Charitable Hospital, and Red Crescent Maternity Hospital, are providing invaluable medical care for the most vulnerable populations, including Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank. We consider them integral parts of our common commitment to ministry in the Holy Land.

These hospitals provide life-saving and, in some cases, unique forms of health care not available otherwise to Palestinians. For example, Augusta Victoria provides kidney dialysis for children and state-of-the-art cancer care. St. John of Jerusalem is the only charitable provider of expert eye care in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre provides services for children with a wide range of disabilities and has become one of the pioneering rehabilitation centers in autism treatment in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. St. Joseph's is a 73-bed general hospital serving the Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem. All of these institutions provide extensive outreach services throughout the West Bank.

Each has benefited from U.S. assistance for decades and, therefore, this decision to discontinue that funding leaves the patients, the wider Palestinian community, and us disappointed and perplexed. It is difficult for us to understand why this humanitarian assistance is being brought to a halt, given that lives are being threatened unnecessarily.

Calling the decision "a blow to the health of the city", more than a dozen Israeli doctors recently said, "a sudden and significant cut of support for medical services will cause imminent and serious harm to the health and wellbeing of those residents of the city who are well-served by these hospitals and medical centers."

In addition to being a morally correct thing to do, U.S. funding is key to paying pharmaceutical suppliers of medications, paying staff, and avoiding any interruption in the treatment of patients. We call on the President to restore this vital funding so that these patients will continue to receive the treatment and care they need.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Chair

The Rev. William O. Gafken
Bishop, Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Chair, ELCA Conference of Bishops

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry
Presiding Bishop
The Episcopal Church

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera
Bishop of Scranton
Chair, USCCB Committee for Ecumenical and
Interreligious Affairs

Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA
Chair, USCCB Committee on International Justice and
Peace

HOME CONNECTIONS

FRUGAL FAMILIES

Featuring a low-cost meal and a whimsical read. Relaxation and stress reduction are important to stay happy and healthy especially in tough economic or emotional times.

CHRISTIAN HUMOR

The 10 commandments

A Sunday school teacher was teaching the Ten Commandments to her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "honor thy father and thy mother," she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?" One little boy shouted, "Thou shall not kill."

New Potatoes, Green Beans and Ham



Ingredients

- 8 red potatoes, scrubbed and halved
- 1 (16 ounce) package **frozen green beans** (or fresh)
- 1 large **onion**, cut into about eight wedges
- 2 cups **ham**, cut into bite sized pieces
- **vegetable broth** or **chicken broth**
- salt and pepper

Directions

I cook this in a crockpot all day, but may be cooked in a dutch oven on the stove, also.

Add all the ingredients and cover, cook on low for 8 to 10 hours.

If cooking on the stove you may need more broth, but the crockpot makes broth as it cooks, so you shouldn't need any more.

Use your own judgement on the amount of broth.

Serve with fresh, sliced tomatoes and corn bread for a great Southern meal.

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2017/09/recipes-from-the-heart/>

How to Make Elderberry Syrup to Avoid the Flu

A simple elderberry syrup recipe made with dried elderberries, honey and herbs for an immune boosting and delicious syrup. Can be used medicinally or on homemade pancakes or waffles.

Author Katie Wells

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup dried black elderberries or 1 1/3 cups fresh or frozen
- 3 1/2 cups water
- 2 TBSP fresh or dried ginger root
- 1 tsp cinnamon powder
- 1/2 tsp cloves or clove powder
- 1 cup raw honey

Instructions

Pour water into medium saucepan and add elderberries, ginger, cinnamon, and cloves.

Bring to a boil and then cover and reduce to a simmer for about 45 minutes to an hour until the liquid has reduced by almost half.

Remove from heat and let cool until it is cool enough to be handled.

Mash the berries carefully using a spoon or other flat utensil.

Pour through a strainer into a glass jar or bowl.

Discard the elderberries and let the liquid cool to lukewarm.

When it is no longer hot, add the honey and stir well.

When the honey is well mixed into the elderberry mixture, pour the syrup into a quart sized mason jar or 16 ounce glass bottle of some kind.

Ta-da! You just made homemade elderberry syrup! Store in the fridge and take daily for its immune boosting

properties. Some sources recommend taking only during the week and not on the weekends to boost immunity.

Notes

Instant Pot option: Put all ingredients except honey in pot, seal lid, and set manually for 9 minutes on high pressure. Vent pressure and strain. When cooled to room temperature, stir in the honey.

Standard dose is 1/2 tsp - 1 tsp for kids and 1/2 - 1 tablespoon for adults. If the flu does strike, take the normal dose every 2-3 hours instead of once a day until symptoms disappear.

Nutrition

Serving: 1tsp | Calories: 6kcal | Carbohydrates: 1.7g | Fiber: 0.1g | Sugar: 1.5g

<https://wellnessmama.com/1888/elderberry-syrup/>

CLEAN CONSCIENCE

Environmentally sound and inexpensive cleaning tips and/or reusing tips.

Appliance Cleaner

Dry baking soda shines up small appliances and even removes bread wrappers burned onto the toaster. Try rubbing a teaspoon onto your grubby blender or food processor with a clean flannel cloth.

Oven Cleaner

Sprinkle oven with 1/2 cup baking soda (more if needed) and spray with water. Let sit for several hours or overnight before scraping up stains and spills. Rinse thoroughly with water.



Small packages, great things

The motto for Hershey's Kisses used to be "Big things come in small packages!" That also could be a motto for Bethlehem, for Baby Jesus and, indeed, for us. It's an important message to remember when we fear we're too weak to fix the world's problems, too small to fight the gigantic terror that threatens a loved one or too lacking in abilities we see in others.

"But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah," God declares through the prophet Micah (5:2, NRSV), "from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel." Bethlehem was a mere village. God's ruler for Israel started as an infant. His birthplace was a small stable, not a palace or temple. But size isn't everything. Big — that is, great — things can come in small packages. And thanks to the tiny baby who grew up to share immeasurably huge love with the world, God can do great things through you, too!

A merry balance

In Luke 10:38-42, Martha gets a bad rap. After all, we need Marthas to get things done and to show hospitality. (Note that Martha is the one who opens up her home to Jesus in the first place!)

Marthas are needed in December, but holiday preparations shouldn't shift our focus from the reason for the season. When we become "worried and distracted" as Martha did (v. 41, NRSV), we're tempted to trade God's "one thing" (v. 42) for the world's many worthless things. Yet if we're only like Mary, we may forget to let the world know who we're celebrating!

So this Christmas, keep a proper balance between your inner Mary and your inner Martha. Take time to "be Mary," kneeling at the manger, so that all the merry things you do as Martha have meaning and serve the newborn king.

The perfect gift

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said, "Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction." At Christmas we celebrate God coming to earth to look outward with us in the same direction, from our perspective and experience.

Jesus was an ordinary person: He learned to talk and walk like any toddler, learned a trade from his father and acquired the habits of faith from his family. In adulthood, Jesus experienced life as we all do: the challenge of hard work, grief at a loved one's death, heartache over oppression and the world's great needs — but also joy in celebration, fellowship with neighbors and deep friendship.

God personally knows our every experience, emotion and need — because Jesus, while fully divine, lived as a full human being. He has gazed at the world, life and even death from our direction, giving us the perfect Christmas gift: love.



**Somehow, not only for Christmas,
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others,
Is the joy that comes back to you.
And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to you glad.**

—John Greenleaf Whittier

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FACEBOOK: Please come check us out on Facebook.
We are listed under **Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church**. Check with your children or grandchildren if you do not know how to use Facebook.

DECEMBER RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS SUGGESTION

**LIFE CAN GET REALLY BUSY -
TAKE SOME TIME OUT TO SPEND
WITH A FAMILY MEMBER**



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