



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

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Email: ParishMail@stpetersmiddletown.org Website: www.stpetersmiddletown.org

November / December 2022 Newsletter

A Letter of Welcome:

Emmanuel – God with us! As we fast approach the Advent season, we want to prepare our hearts for a time of anticipation of the Christmas season. It is a time of preparing meals, choosing the perfect gifts and sending greetings to all our family and friends. It is also a time of loneliness and loss of those who have gone before us – a reminder of the emptiness of that lost loved one. As a church, we embrace all of the emotions of the celebration of the light of Christ which carries us in our joys, sorrows and peace.

Together with the Renewed in Grace communities with Pr Chad, we will be offering some new faith formation (AKA bible study, etc) opportunities in a series called U of Faith. Congregational members, guest presenter, along with Pr Chad and I, will be offering a variety of study, practice and exploring our faith during the Advent season. Please find the section of U of Faith in this newsletter for more information. If you are interested in leading a session in the future, please contact Pr Molly so that you can be added to our Lenten opportunities.

Our Strategic Planning team has completed phase one of our mission and vision for St. Peter's ministries. At the Nov 20 th Congregational meeting, the team will present the direction the congregation brought forward through our listening sessions and has set them into goals. There are 5 pillars that surfaced and may be a spring board for our future mission as God's church. They are governance, ministry, property, congregational care and faith formation. Each group wants to



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ensure we care for our congregation, community and properties with all ages and interests in mind. We would love to engage each member of our congregation whether in person, on line or listening in through radio or letters. We want to use the gifts and talents of each and every person as we grow deeper in our faith and ways of worshipping together.

Tis the season to spread peace, hope and joy into the world and we are thankful to be a part of that together as a church family. Please extend the invitation to worship with us through out the Advent and Christmas season to friends and relatives near and far.

Peace and joy,
Pr Molly

U of FAITH in ADVENT

U of Faith is a variety of bible study, small group discussion and other faith formation opportunities open to all. There are a variety of options for people of all ages, including family activities. The presenters are lay and professionals who have a passion and expertise in an area of interest. They are from St Peter's Middletown, St Peter's Highspire and Trinity Steelton. We are offering several series during Advent.

Feel free to attend one or several of the trainings. Please review the schedule and RSVP by November 23, 2022 by emailing Pr Chad at cbutz678@gmail.com or Pr Molly at pastormolly.outreach@gmail.com or contact the church offices.



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U of FAITH SCHEDULE

- "Exploring the Social Justice teachings of Jesus" – **Sundays 11:30am at RIG Worship Location**, [see RIG website](#) – (Tom Lupkie)
- "Exploring Justice in the Old Testament" – **Tuesdays 6:30pm via Zoom only**. (Matt and Mary Hunt)
- "Advent: The Liturgical Practices through an altar guild perspective" – **Wednesdays at Noon** (Pastor Chad, Jill Hawkins, Grace Hoover)
- "Advent Mid-week worship video: Holden Evening Prayer" – **Wednesdays at 7:00pm**. (Pastor's Molly and Chad, Bennett Williams, Steve Strauss, Arthur Berg, Stephanie Strauss)
- "Hard Holiday Memories: Conversations on Grief/Loss" – **Thursdays 10:00am and 7:00pm – St. Peter's Middletown Café**. (Pastor Molly)
- "Mother and Child in Art: A Timeless Emblem of Advent, Christmas and our Humanity" – **Sundays, 11:30am, St. Peter's Middletown Café**. (Ellen Willenbecher)
- "Family Lunch and Fun: Retelling the Christmas Story" – **Sunday December 18th, 11:30am at St. Peter's Middletown Luther Hall**. (Alex Mabee)
- "Blue Christmas Worship" – **Wednesday December 21st, 7:00pm at Trinity**. (Pastor's Molly and Chad)

UPCOMING EVENTS



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SCHEDULE of EVENTS:

- Sun, Nov 6th 11:30am **NEW MEMBERS LUNCH** in Cafe (*aka Old Sundayschool area*)
- Sun, Nov 20th 10:00am **YOUTH LED WORSHIP** 10:00am. Congregational Meeting 11:15am with lunch (*more info below*)
- Wed, Nov 23rd 10:00am **THANKSGIVING WORSHIP & LUNCHEON** in Luther Hall (*more info below*)
- Sat. Nov 26th 6:00pm-8:00pm. **MIDDLETOWN TREE LIGHTING EVENT** outside of the Kierch (*more info below*)
- Sat Dec 4th 4:00pm **HARRISBURG AREA GAY MENS CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT** in Sanctuary (*more info below*)
- Sun Dec 18th 10:00am **CHILDREN'S LED WORSHIP on CHRISTMAS** in Sanctuary (*more info below*)

CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

- Sat Dec 24th 10:00am **TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP** in Sanctuary
 - Sat Dec 24th 7:00pm **FAMILY FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP** in Sanctuary
 - Sun Dec 25th **NO INPERSON SERVICE** - please listen on WMSS 91.1 @ 11:00am or on FACEBOOK/WEBSITE
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PENN STATE THON

There will be a craft fair with food trucks at the church on November 5th. Proceeds benefit THON, the largest student-run philanthropy in the world committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer! Their mission it to provide emotional and financial support, spread awareness, and ensure funding for critical research - all in pursuit of a cure.

ALL SAINTS DAY

Members can bring in pictures of their loved ones for All Saints Day. People who have passed this year will be honored with a candle. All Saints Day is November 6th.



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TOGETHER LEAF RAKING - Nov. 19th at 9am

TOGETHER YOUTH will be raking leaves at the Kierch starting at 9am. We would love to invite you to join us in this service project, if you can join us please let Alex Mabee know.

YOUTH LED WORSHIP

On November 20th, there will be a youth-led worship service followed by the congregational meeting and a community meal to welcome friends from the Congo. We are sponsoring refugee family from the Republic of Congo: the Ilunga family. There are 13 family members in need of household items, furnishings, bedding, and giant/walmart/target gift cards. Contact Pastor Molly or Dave Brown for more information or to contribute.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

YOU ARE INVITED to join us for a Thanksgiving Worship and Luncheon on Wednesday, Nov. 23rd . Worship begins in Luther Hall at 10:00am with a meal to follow.



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VOLUNTEER DRIVERS & COOKS NEEDED for our Wed, Thanksgiving Worship and Luncheon

Drivers are needed to bring our members on the visitation list to bring us together for community during the holidays.

MIDDLETOWN TREE LIGHTING EVENT

On **November 26th from 6:00pm-8:00pm**, we will have a tree lighting at the Kierch. Free pizza and soup will be offered by TOGETHER youth.

FAMILY PROMISE Nov 27th - Dec 4th

St. Peter's is dedicated to showing Christ's love to neighbors nearby and far away. Our church is a host site for Family Promise once each quarter. Three families in need will enter our church at 6pm, be fed a nutritious dinner, rest in the Sunday School wing, and leave at 7am with prepared breakfasts.

Volunteers are needed to serve these families during the week. Please Contact Pastor Molly or Sharon if you are interested in volunteering in any capacity! We will be hosting them November 27th to December 4th. We



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are collaborating with Renewed In Grace Ministries.

HARRISBURG AREA GAY MENS CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

On **Dec 4th at 4:00pm**, there is Harrisburg Gay Mens Choir concert which is free, but a will offering is welcome.

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

On **Dec. 10th**, TOGETHER will be hosting Christmas around the world for families from 4-6 pm in Luther Hall. Alex is looking for a few people to help with prepping and providing food. We will be exploring 4 or 5 different cultures and how they celebrate Christmas. Please let Alex know if you can help by calling or texting (832)752-6833.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOUSE TOUR

On **Dec. 10th**, the Kierch will be open 1pm-4pm, hosting music from churches of interfaith council (following the Christmas from Around the World Together event).



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On December 18th, we will have a youth-led interactive worship service and luncheon at 11:30am after the service concludes. Lunch and fun (part of U of Faith) is a family event where parents and children will work together to learn the Christmas story and do some crafts.

TOGETHER Program

TOGETHER NEEDS YOUR HELP!

The TOGETHER program needs some help while we figure out transportation with the schools. TOGETHER is looking for 2 or 3 drivers for Tuesday-Friday for our after school program. Please consider signing up for a day each week. Thank you!



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Are you interested in helping to prepare snacks from the food bank to share with our community? Times are available Tuesday through Friday from 3pm - 5pm. If you'd like to volunteer, please reach out to Alex Mabee.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

TREE 4 HOPE

Join us and our friends at Tree 4 Hope on a caffeine-fueled Advent Journey as we marinate in the patient moments provided to us during the time it takes our morning coffee to brew. Each grounded devotional is \$30 and includes four bags of freshly prepared coffee from Chica Bean in Guatemala; one for each week of the season. Proceeds support the work of Tree 4 Hope and Chica Beans Coffee in Guatemala. Sign up in the Narthex by November



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6th!

Do you have an interest in sharing ideas on a variety of social justice and equity topics that have come across your radar in recent months?

St. Peter's (Middletown) would like to invite you to share in a book discussion bi-monthly as we read and examine different authors' contributions on these topics. At this time, the discussion group meets on Wednesdays at 1:00PM on Zoom.

You can access the Zoom meeting on a tablet, computer, or smart phone.

Our plans are to begin reading and discussing Isabel Wilkerson's book, *Caste*, on November 9th. If you are interested, please contact Marianne Moore at 717-329-3892. You may provide your own copy of the book electronically or on paper, or check with Marianne Moore for a copy.



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We need volunteers to pick people up on the visitation list. Please RSVP by November 16th. For more information, you can call the church or email pastormolly.outreach@gmail.com.

MITTEN TREE: Each year, we help spread a little warmth to the children and families in Middletown through our Mitten Tree. Please bring in new or handmade hats and mittens for all ages and place them on the tree in the north narthex beginning November 20th. These items will be collected until December 10th.

GIVING TREE: We will continue our tradition of giving gifts to those in need of a little Christmas. Beginning November 20th, a paper ornament with the age, gender and wish list will be on a paper ornament on the Giving tree in the north narthex. Please purchase and wrap the gifts and place them back under the Giving Tree by December 10th for the TOGETHER Y.O.U.T.H. to deliver them. For questions, contact Alex Mabee at the church office.



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