

Pastor Carl's Castings

New Year

God has blessed us so wonderfully these days. We have a new, and full, Church Council. Our Advent has brought us new Christmas joy. We have greater readiness and expectation for our Lord to return again to make all things new. All this comes at *just the right time*, as we need to know God's interest and power over the things that bring us and others hardship and doubt in these days. So may we all have a blessed New Year.



As we continue in these twelve days of Christmas, 'Merry Christmas, still!' May your faith burn brightly and your home's external

signs of celebration fill these twelve days with the light and life of Christ. As staff we are grateful for your greetings and express that in a SPIRE card (following).

As we prepare Annual Reports and take account of God's grace among us, we remember we are God's and rejoice in this ministry we have with our Lord as disciples and servants to our neighbors. Many exciting things are in the works for future announcement. Please keep your family in Christ in your daily prayers. May we each grow our listening for God's Spirit's leading, so that we may more faithfully serve our God in our neighbor, and perhaps know God's greater joy (than our own).

Did you ever wonder why some churches are growing? Please join me Sunday mornings beginning January 9th in the sanctuary for conversations from 9:15-10:15 am. On January 9th we will ask about a growing church—and begin a study of its God-given gifts for its members and the community. If you're interested but unable to attend that day, drop me a note/email about your interest, even questions.



As past and current Church Council members exchange their ministries for new ones, and are installed at worship January 9th, I hope you will give each one your thanks for their willingness to step forward into God's call for leadership in

these exciting times. Please also enjoy greeting our young members who gather on break for worship with us January 2nd. How good it is to care for them, and receive their ministry in worship leadership roles.

What are you excited about? What gives you hope? Let's tell these stories and more as God works in wondrous ways among and through us.

May God fill this New Year we share, and bless us.

Pastor Carl Wenzel



Operation Snowflake

Kutztown University's Off Campus Advisory Council is looking for volunteers to help with Operation Snowflake. Operation Snowflake brings together volunteers to shovel snow for the disabled and elderly. The program is currently underway and will run until March 5th. If you are interested in volunteering, please email OCAC@kutztown.edu or call at (610)-683-1524. Happy Holidays from the Off Campus Advisory Council.



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

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

As the cold of winter is upon us, let us be ever mindful of the hungry people in this world. Give to ELCA World Hunger. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Additional envelopes are available in the church overflow area.

Thank you for your continued support of our Hunger Market for Friend, Inc. Because of your generosity we are delivering twice per month. Keep up the good work and maybe we will need to deliver weekly!

Thank you and God Bless,

- *The Service Team*

A PASTORAL NOTE

Please call the church office or Pastor Wenzel if you would like to schedule a home visit or receive communion at home. If you need to contact him in the event of an emergency, Pastor Wenzel's cell phone number is 610-223-6555, (please note: he will not be able to answer the cell phone when visiting in the hospital).

**St. John's Bible Study group meets Thursdays
at 9:30 AM in the Council Room**

We're always looking for new people to join us, so as your schedule allows consider meeting us as we study God's Good Word, fellowship, and pray together.

Applying Bible Principles

A debt simply represents a promise to pay. Nothing more. Nothing less. Whether the debt is to purchase a car, a house, braces for the kids' teeth, or to facilitate a purchase by using a credit card, the issue is the same. By creating a debt, we also create simultaneously an obligation and promise to pay.

The Scripture does not forbid debt or borrowing. Nor does it in any way encourage us to borrow or to go into debt. In fact, debt in the Bible is frequently referred to in a negative connotation.

But the Bible is very clear in describing how we should deal with debt. Simply stated, we are to pay our debts. Psalm 37:21 uses an old-fashioned word to describe borrowing money or creating a debt and then failing to repay it. The Psalmist describes such behavior as “wicked.” But on a positive note, this same verse also says that the person who is righteous shows mercy by repaying debts and by giving to the needs of others.

One of the most important questions to ask when considering creating a debt is whether or not we have the ability to repay it. To go into debt without the ability to repay or a plan for repayment is actually presuming upon the grace and goodness of God.

Honesty and integrity — especially concerning our debts — should be the hallmark of every Christian. How we handle our financial obligations can and does speak volumes to our family, friends, and business associates. There is simply no way we can expect to receive God's full hand of blessing in our lives when we have failed to show His love to others by paying what we owe them.

In his instructions to Christians at Thessalonica, the Apostle Paul urged them to walk in an honest manner, especially with respect to those outside the church. When we pay our debts, when we live lives marked by integrity and honesty, then we literally fulfill Matthew 5:16. Our good works (including paying our debts) shine as lights in the world, which men see and in turn glorify our Father who is in heaven.

Or as Larry Burkett put it, “Money merely reflects to the outside world what is going on inside each of us.” And that is nowhere more apparent than in how we deal with our debts.

Do people know you’re a Christian by how you pay your bills and by how you give to others? John Wesley summed it up this way: “Earn all you can; save all you can; give all you can.”

- *Stewardship Committee*



In Memory of Judith Tice

Lunch Group Friends at Harleysville Insurance:

Carol Offner

Sandy Olesky

Jeanne Palmer

Janice Pietruch

Doris Texter

Shirley Texter

Louise Wuebber

Tim and Diane Haring

James and Merry Schlegel

KUTZTOWN COMMUNITY CHOIR TO BEGIN SPRING AND FLAG DAY CONCERT REHEARSALS

With another successful Christmas concert “under our belts,” the Kutztown Community Choir is looking forward to spring and warmer weather and the beginning of a new choral season. Rehearsals for the spring and Flag Day concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. on January 17, 2011, in the music room at Trinity Lutheran Church in Kutztown. The choir rehearses each Monday from the above date until the spring concert, which is tentatively set for Sunday, May 15, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. at Trinity Church.

The program will consist mostly of selections from Broadway shows, beginning with Irving Berlin’s “I Love a Piano” from STOP! LOOK! LISTEN! and continuing thru to the movies with a medley of tunes from Randy Newman’s THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG, filmed by Disney Studios. Along the way will be another medley from the music of Lerner & Loewe taken from three Broadway shows. Also included will be some classic pop in the form of “Dream a Little Dream of Me” and AN ELLINGTON JAZZ TRIO.

As previously announced, the 2011 Flag Day concert has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the Kutztown Park bandshell. We again wish to thank Dr. Frank Siekmann for his many services in helping to plan and present these concerts for 35 years and wish him well in his retirement. After much encouragement to continue this popular community event, we are looking forward to working with Dr. Willis Rapp, chair of the music department at Kutztown University, who is assisting with planning and will conduct the orchestra.

Membership in the choir is open to singers who have had previous choral experience. Anyone interested in joining the choir is asked to call choir director Dick Wagner at 610-683-3437 before coming to the first rehearsal.



Preschool News

The Preschool hopes everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We were very busy in Preschool this month. The halls are decorated with the children's artwork. The trees are decorated with special ornaments made by the children. Hanging from the lights are "Candy Cane Reindeer" which the children made on Candy Cane Day.

The letters we covered were K, L and M. The number was 4 and the special color was red.

The children did a Christmas performance for the residents at Grand View Manor in Fleetwood. This is an assisted living facility where my Mom (86) resides. The residents were so happy with the songs the children sang. After the performance the children handed goodie bags to everyone. We learned that there are sometimes better gifts than presents. We gave them the gift of song!

Yours in Christ,
Jane Leibensperger



Esther Will Be Here to Tell Her Story
- Lois Wenzel (aka Esther)

In Fellowship Hall - Thursday, Jan. 13th
7 PM Fellowship prior to 7:30 PM meeting

Mrs. Lenich's 3 Year Old's

December was a special month. The children were busy all month. We made gifts for our families and friends. We were learning how enjoyable it is to give to others. The children enjoyed baking cookies and making Christmas ornaments to hang on the tree, but the favorite thing was making gingerbread houses. If you have time you should stop upstairs to see them.

Our library trip was special. We had a visitor in a red suit. Every child was happy to see him, not one child was afraid of him this year.

Mrs. Johnson and I have been trying hard to teach the children that Christmas is not just about receiving presents. I believe if we teach our children at an early age to be more giving and kind, it may last a lifetime (hopefully).

Maybe it's working because this was a wonderful month.

Jan Lenich

Redner's Save-A-Tape Program

St. John's participates in the Redner's Save-A-Tape Program. By collecting receipts and sending them to Redner's Corporate office, we can earn 1% of the totals. Each person should stop by the store office or Customer Service area to get a Save-A-Tape card. Each time you shop at Redner's with your card, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape receipt. Please place receipts in the box in the coat area. We appreciate the funds raised through your efforts in saving your Redner's receipts!

What Has God Been Up To?

Come & share “What’s God Up To”
an informal chat for the “building up”
of the Body (“of Christ”).

We will sit in the sanctuary from 9:15-10 AM.

Hope you will join us even to hear others
“Good News Sightings”

What is: Theology With A Twist?

Hot topics, refreshing conversation with friends old and new.

Kutztown Tavern, 272 W. Main St., Kutztown

Tuesday, January 11

Jim Siburt, Director of Technology LTS

The Wired Podium: Visual Culture and the Signs of Our Time

Annual Reports Due in Early January

If you are a team, committee or organization leader, then please be sure to prepare and submit a report to our bookkeeper, Jen Malik, on or before January 15th. All reports will be included in the Annual Report booklet for 2010. If you have any questions, contact Jen at 610-683-3140 weekday mornings.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather please check WFMZ TV or online, or on WLEV or WEEU radio stations.



Thank You!



Dear St. John's,

Thank you for the package that you sent me for my birthday. It really means a lot to me.

Tommy Parkes

Dear St. John's,

I would like to thank Shirley Herring and Mary Krumanocker for the recent visit. Also, a thank you for Pastor Landis for giving me communion.

Catherine Kramer

Dear St. John's,

Thank you for the beautiful altar flowers I received. Also thank you to Pastor Wenzel for his visit, prayer and communion.

Linda Delp

HOSPITALIZED

Here are the appropriate codes assigned to us by the respective hospitals in Allentown and Reading. Lehigh Valley Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital – 282; Reading Hospital – 512; St. Joseph's Hospital – LU 60. You can use these codes if you are undergoing elective surgery or you can call the chaplain's office at each hospital and ask them to list you under our congregation's code for that institution.

January Sponsorships

The following people are scheduled to sponsor bulletins, candles and flowers during January:

BULLETINS

1-2	Open
1-9	Ron Delp
1-16	Open
1-23	Walter Eck
1-30	Tomasi family

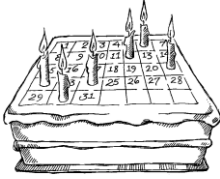
CANDLES

1-2	Open
1-9	Karen Hartman
1-16	Fern Kerchner
1-23	Open
1-30	Open

FLOWERS

1-2	Verna Spohn
1-9	Open
1-16	Open
1-23	Cronrath family
1-30	Open

Please complete the sponsorship form and submit it along with your payment to the office at least one week before the date of your sponsorship. To ensure proper credit on your giving statement, please submit a form to the office.



January Birthdays

January 1	Beulah Adams	January 21	Mary Heffner
January 2	Audrey Miller		Malcolm Eidle
January 4	Allen Krause		Jean Miller
	Diane Mertz	January 22	Eric Hartman
	Donovan Hertzog		Ian Shade
January 5	Karissa Zimmerman	January 23	Marcia Rohrbach
January 6	Dorothy Leshner	January 24	Sarah Smith
January 7	Brennan Miller	January 25	Katie Danner
January 8	Tammy Haring		Linda Schwartz
	Joshua Hartman	January 26	Heather Kulp
January 9	Bonnie Yurvati		Melvin Reitz
January 11	Marvin Savage		Doris Schappell
January 12	Myrtle Dietrich	January 27	Katelyn Remp
	Amy Lindenmuth		Dominick Tomasi
January 14	Verna Spohn	January 28	Deborah Jordan
January 16	Amber Burian		Peyton Kauffman
January 17	Lester Kerchner		Danielle Kauffman
	Ruth Reitz	January 29	Eleanor Leimbach
January 18	Ryan Riegel		Lee Trout
January 19	Timothy Haring		Joshua Hamm
	Timothy Seyler		George Weida
	Chadwick Mittl	January 30	June Fenstermacher
January 20	Sarah Cronrath		Kim Herber
	Zebulan Oswald		Susan Hillman
	Kati Vanek		Michele Moyer

If you notice that your birthday or the birthday of someone you know is not listed among those in The Spire, which means that the birthday information is not entered in the church's computer. Please contact the church office and let us know of anyone missing from the birthday list. We want everyone to be included.