

# † The Rod and the Staff †

A bimonthly publication of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Whitehall (Egypt), Pennsylvania  
† January, February 2024 †

Vol. 2024, Issue 1

## PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Have you ever sat in the dark either by choice or maybe the electricity went off. What was your first reaction? We live in a world that is filled with light. From the LED and fluorescent lights that light up rooms to the flashlights on our phone that we use when we walk in the dark. We even have night lights to shine in the darkness so we can find our way. We need light!

Why do we need light? Psychologists say that we are affected by the early darkness and the dreary days during this time of the year. We become more depressed and we become more anxious as the darkness of the day lingers on.

As children of God, though, we can find peace even in the midst of the darkness. The True Light, Jesus Christ, brought light into a dark world when he was born as a baby in the manger. He brings peace and tranquility in a world that is often chaotic and troublesome. Even when we sit alone in the darkness of this world, we know that Jesus Christ shines for each one of us who calls Him our own personal Lord and Savior. We start now a new year—a year of uncertainties. We know there will be times of joy as well as sorrow during 2024. We know there will be moments of gloom as well as contentment. There will be moments of darkness as well as light. Throughout the whole year we need to remember that the Light of the World is with us each step of the way. May we all have a blessed and Light filled New Year.

Peace,

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

9:00 am ONLY ONE SERVICE

Service of Holy Communion and  
Thanksgiving for Baptism

4:00 pm - Holy Communion and  
candlelight

7:00 pm Holy Communion and  
candlelight

10:00 pm The 4 pm Service will  
be streamed on  
Facebook and our  
website

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31**

**9:00 AM ONLY ONE SERVICE**

**LESSONS AND CAROLS**

## THE ANNUAL MEETING of SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

will be held on **Sunday, January 21, 2024**  
**immediately following the second**  
**service.** All members are invited and  
encouraged to attend.

## YOUTH SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

Our youth will lead our 8 and 10:15 a.m.  
service. Come and support  
our young  
people.



On **February 12** we will be  
collecting for those less  
fortunate than ourselves so they will have  
food to eat. Please give to this great cause.  
The proceeds will be sent to the local food  
bank.

*Ash*   
*Wednesday* February 14, services at  
noon and 7 pm.



*This issue of the Rod and the Staff is sponsored in thanksgiving for all of God's Blessings by the Habern Family.  
This issue of the Rod and Staff is sponsored in honor of our daughter Brooke's birthday by Jean and Craig Marsteller.*



On **January 28th**, at both services, the Youth will lead us in worship.



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church gratefully acknowledges memorial donations given in memory of **Karen K. Becker** by Mary Young..

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church gratefully acknowledges memorial donations given in memory of **Jeffrey Deutsch** by the Herb Family .

*In Loving Memory*

**WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY**

**Our Continuing Resolution of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran church states that all cancellations or delays for Worship Services and activities at the church will be posted on TV -WFMZ Channel 69 and also Radio WAEB 790 AM. The Resolution is on display on the bulletin board.**

**SOTHLC Signs of Our Faithfulness**

*"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"*

**End of Prior Month (as of October 31, 2023)**

Monthly Stewardship Income: \$15,722	YTD: \$155,627
Monthly Operating Expenses: \$25,942	YTD: \$175,787
Stewardship Income includes Benevolence Envelopes:	
October \$ 553	YTD: \$ 4,617 (Budget for 2023 - \$18,174)
September Electric \$ 265	YTD: \$ 8,918

**ANNUAL REPORTS**



**Deacons please submit your reports to the office by January 7 2024.**

**Save the date**



**Scuba Vacation Bible School will be held June 24-28, 2024! Registration forms will be mailed in April.**



**The Times News for January 2024** is sponsored by the Habernern Family wishing everyone a year filled with love and good health.

**The Times News for February 2024** is sponsored in memory of loved ones by Rozelle Higgins.

**A winning pattern for the New Year**

Some anonymous wise person penned the following directions for living without bringing pain to others or oneself:

“You will never be sorry — for thinking before acting, for hearing before judging, for forgiving your enemies, for being candid and frank, for helping a fallen brother, for being honest in business, for thinking before speaking, for being loyal to God and the church, for standing by your principles, for refusing to participate in gossip, for holding your words when tempted to demean another, for not entertaining impure or hateful thoughts, for sympathizing with the afflicted, for being courteous and kind to all.”

**Free Community Dinner**



The Whitehall Copley Hunger Initiative and Shepherd of the Hills Church will be serving a Free Community Meal on Sunday, January 16, 2024. If you are interested in helping with this meal, please contact Karen Habernern at 610-730-3184.

On October 25, 3 youth members volunteered at the **Miracle League Trick or Treat**. We handed out candy and helped the trick or treaters play a game. It was a beautiful night and we had a lot of fun with the Miracle League kids!

We sold 158 nut rolls and made a profit of \$642. **Thank you** to everyone who purchased from us!!

On November 4, 2 youth members went to **Parkland CARES Food Pantry**. We helped set up tables and put out food for their monthly distribution. We also filled bags with vegetables and other bags with dairy products. **Thank you** for all of the food donations!

On November 5, the youth group filled **55 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child**. The boxes were filled with items that were donated by the VBS families and the congregation. **Thank you** so much for your generosity!

**Thank you** to everyone who came to our Roast Beef Lunch! We had a great turnout and we hope you enjoyed the meal. Thanks to Mike for cooking, Joe and Colleen for helping in the kitchen, our fantastic bakers and all the parents for their donations of supplies and time! We made a profit of \$1,479!!

Our gift card program was a huge success. We made a profit of \$1,308.97. **Thank you** to everyone who ordered gift cards from us!!

On December 3, we did some **community service projects in the kitchen**. We cleaned and organized the 2 big closets, the storage space, the little closet and the refrigerators.

Come and join us on **January 28 as the youth group leads both services for Youth Sunday**.

Our **clothing drive** continues until June 15, 2024! We are collecting new or gently used men, women and children's clothing, shoes, purses, belts, bed and bath linens, and stuffed animals. All items should be bagged or boxed and brought to the church. Please put any shoes in separate bags! The bags and boxes will be stored downstairs in the last Sunday School room on the LEFT (the original clothing room is filled!!) The clothing that is collected is distributed to local thrift shops and in areas in need of clothing. The clothing will NOT be shredded!!! All clean wearable clothing and shoes are reused by less fortunate people and families. The clothing does not end up in landfills which helps to keep America green and clean.

Our **hoagie sale** begins on January 21 and delivery will be on February 11, which is Super Bowl Sunday. Call the church office at 610-262-1600 or Lisa at 610-262-4053 to place an order.

Our **nut roll sale** begins on February 18 and delivery will be March 17.

**Save the date!** Our Penny Party will be on April 21!

Thank you for your continued support of the youth group!! Only 7 months until we head to New Orleans for the ELCA Youth Gathering!!



First quarter 2024 envelopes are available in the narthex.

Your 2024 envelope number may be different from your 2023 envelope number. SOTH is reassigning numbers that have not been used in the past few years.

Please be sure to use envelopes dated 2024 for all your donations beginning January 1.

Thank you for your help.

**IMPORTANT**  
**ANNOUNCEMENT**



On November 12, 2023 we welcomed **Charlotte Elizabeth Marushak** into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Welcome Charlotte. We wish you, your sponsors and your parents God's Blessings.

## THE WORD OF THE LORD

Come and join us for weekly Bible Study.

- ◆ Mondays at 10:00 am as we discuss the scripture lessons from the previous day.
- ◆ Wednesdays at 10:00 am. We will continue to discuss the book of Romans.



**Please put the dates in your calendar and come and join us.**

## Please Keep In Your Thoughts and Prayers:



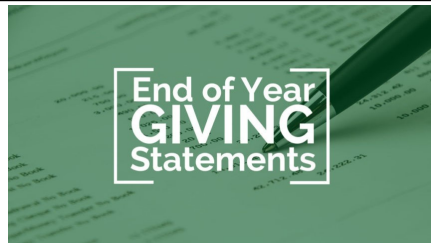
- A. Louis Albright, Laurie Andrew, Ron and Theresa Anglestein, Carol Ayers
  - B. Bill Beidleman, Jacob Braido, Marianne Blocker, Angie Breasure, Bonnie Brown, Rosebelle Brown, Janice Buckwalter, C. Mitchell Carl, Verna Chandick, Beth Cherry, John Clark, D. Nancy Dietz, Rick Dotter, E. Michael Ehst, F. Beverly Fekula, Gloria Fischl, Donald Fister, Bill Fonzone, Annie Frack, Carl France, Kay Fronheiser, G. Lea Gabryluck, Aaron Gaylord, Teri Gerney, Jeff and Carol Gilbert
  - H. Ethel Harakal, Bradon Heichel, Brad Heintzleman, Chris Henry, Betty and Lamont Hontz, Barbara Horvath, Ann Hricinak, J. Becky and Kyle Jones and son Adam, K. Alex Katana, John Kotze, Carolyn Kramer, L. Scott Lazarus, Mary Kay Lewis, Valerie Long,
  - M. Agnes Marsh, Diane Masonheimer, Mitchell Masters, Denise Mensinger, Debbie Messinger, Carole Mickley, John Mikovitz, Doris Miller, Mark Miller, Richard Miller, Sharon Minnich, Christopher Moakley, Kevin Moyer, Taylor Moyer, Russell Myers, N. Cathy Nelcoski, P. Sandra Phillips
  - R. June Reifinger, Jean Reinert, an Reinik, Wayne Remaly, Dee Renner, Steve Roman, Jean Roth, Tonie Rothdeutsch, Mary Royer, S. Ruth Saadi, Michael Saraceno, Irene Scherr, Cindy Schlegel, Gloria Schmidinger, Joy Schwentner, Mike Schwentner, Helen Sefcik, Michael Sefcik, June Sell, Sue Sell, Wayne Serfass, Jim Shope, Sue Sill, Sean Skelonis, Sherry Smith, Allison Steventon, Ann Stibitz
  - T. Rosemarie Thrash,
  - V. Karen Voorhees,
  - W. Cheryl Warmkessel, Doris Weaver, Bill and Anna Weighknecht, Maryann Weiss, Jennifer Wentling, Patricia Wong Chong,
  - X.
  - Y. Daniel Yakubecek,
  - Z. Mary Zader, Bob Zarizski,
- The families of Barbara Shook, Barbara Schussler, Talil Hadid, Ed Shelly, Shirley Burke, Earl Dreas*

## ALTAR FLOWER POLICY



The Altar flowers each Sunday will be placed in the back porch. If you sponsor the flowers, you should pick them up by noon on Monday. Any flowers that remain after noon on Monday will be taken to a sick or shut-in member. This was approved by the church council.

If you need a copy of your Annual Statement of giving, for 2023, please call the office and one will be mailed to you.



**The Mutual Ministry Committee:** If you have any concerns regarding the Church Staff, you may speak to any member of the Mutual Ministry Committee about praise or concerns you are feeling. This committee meets on a regular basis with Pastor Schlegel.

Members are: **Jan Masonheimer, Linda Schock, Joe Kroboth and Karen Zimmerman.**

## Assistance Fund

Our Church has an Assistance Fund to help those in our congregation who need assistance. During the months of January and February envelopes will be available in the Narthex to give toward those in our church family.







# COMMITTEE NEWS

**The Worship Committee Morning Prayer** Each Thursday morning at 9:30 AM we are meeting in our church sanctuary to pray to the Lord.

Come and join us as we gather together in the House of our Lord.

**The Service Committee:** Reach out to those in need! *WHITEHALL COPLAY FOOD PANTRY is asking for the following items:* Pancake mix and syrup, Soups: vegetable, chicken noodle, chicken rice and tomato, Cereals: all kinds, Pasta: rotini, farfalle, frisilli, penne, and elbow (no spaghetti), Crackers: saltines, Ritz, and cheese crackers

**Toiletries** They are in need of shampoo, toothpaste, bars of soap and deodorant. Second Harvest supplies the Food Pantry with the many food needs, but does not include toiletries.

We are also collecting soap and shampoo for the ministries of Pathways and Daybreak.

Please reach out in God's love to those in need. God's Work, Our Hands. Please place your donations on the table in the narthex.

You can find Pastor Schlegel's **Daily Reflection** on God's Word everyday at 7 PM on our Facebook page and on our website. you would like Daily Devotions emailed to you, please contact the church office.



The Church Council meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 except in July and August when it holds a single, summer meeting. Special meetings are held on rare occasions when it is determined that an issue requires immediate consideration.

All meetings are open to members of the congregation. Much of the council's agenda is generated from the six ministry teams which administer most of our congregational programs.

If you have an item to be considered by our Congregation Council, contact President Keith Moyer at least ten days in advance of the meeting so that your concern can be placed on the Council agenda (some concerns will be referred to a ministry team for study and a recommendation before they

## The 2024 Congregation Council

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>President:</b>            | Keith Moyer                |
| <b>Vice President:</b>       | Tracy Tacker               |
| <b>Secretary:</b>            | Melissa Sassaman           |
| <b>Treasurer:</b>            | Colleen Ehst               |
| <b>Financial Secretary:</b>  | Carl France                |
| <b>Learning Team Deacon:</b> | Lisa Kroboth               |
| <b>Witness Team Deacon:</b>  | Norma Hrozencik            |
| <b>Worship Team Deacon:</b>  | Denise Smith               |
| <b>Service Team Deacon:</b>  | Tara Henry-Morrow          |
| <b>Support Team Deacon:</b>  | Gary Easton                |
| <b>Youth Deacon:</b>         | Drew Null                  |
| <b>Youth Representative:</b> | Alivia Deemer              |
| <b>Pastor:</b>               | The Rev. James W. Schlegel |



Thank you to Scarlet Randolph and Paige Tacker for serving on Church Council. Thank you to Thank you to Norma Hrozencik, Carl France and Denise Smith for agreeing to serve their coming term.

THANK YOU

- ... **Pastor and Cindy Schlegel** would like to THANK everyone for the gifts, cards, and well wishes during this joyous season.
- ... **To all the people who decked the halls.** What a wonderful response and time. Thank you to all the strong people who put up the tree.
- ... **To** those who served on Church Council. Thank you for serving our church and our Lord.
- ♦ .. **To the five families** who provided food for Thanksgiving and gifts and food for Christmas to
- ♦ people who are in need in our congregation. Thank you for sharing Christ’s love.
- ... **To everyone** who helps with the Newsletter.
- ... **We received notes:**

I would like to thank everyone for all the cards, prayers and well wishes after my recent knee replacement surgery. Thank you also to the caring ladies for the beautiful prayer shawl I received. It was appreciated more than I can say.

Alison Steventon

Thank you for the beautiful flowers you sent to our house. We were blessed to have shared in Jeffrey’s life for 48 years. He was our angel.

Thank you,  
Ray and Kay Deutsch.

**Northern Valley Ingathering**

*John 15:13 This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you.*

Our congregation at SOTH has followed Jesus’ commandment that is shown above while bringing in food supplies, toiletries, clothing, totes, and many, many more items for others in our community.

Your generous Joyful Noise contributions made it possible to contribute a \$200 gift card to the Allentown Rescue Mission, \$150 to the Ripple Community, and \$150 in cards to Kids Peace. Along with those donations the youth supplied washable markers for individual treat bags for children and youth at Kids Peace. In those bags your monetary donations were used to help purchase a journal for each child there, along with fruit snacks, Rice Krispies squares and decks of playing cards.

These agencies are shown the love from our congregation that will be incredibly heart warming at Christmas time. Praise the Lord for making this happen with your kindness.



**The Prayer Shawl Committee** is looking for volunteers to make prayer shawls. If you can knit or crochet and would like to help, please contact coordinators Joyce Steigerwalt at 484-350-1679 or Brenda Benner at 610-844-5859. If you would like to learn to knit or crochet to help with this ministry, we will teach you. Meetings will be the first and third Mondays each month at 9:00 AM.

Our **Prayer Ministry** is a very important Ministry at our Church. If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Chain, please speak to the Pastor.



**4:00 PM - Holy Communion**

**7:00 PM - Holy Communion**

**10:00 PM - This service will be streamed on Facebook.**

**Holy Communion will be celebrated at all Services**

**Sunday, December 31 —There will be one service—Service of Carols and Communion at 9:00 AM**



**Remember our special friends. Send them a Christmas greeting.**

Gloria Fischl  
 Phoebe Home  
 1925 W. Turner St.  
 Allentown, PA 18104

Ethel Harakal  
 Alexandria Manor  
 313 S. Walnut St.  
 Bath, PA 18014

Lamont and Betty Hontz  
 Legend Assisted Living  
 6043 Lower Macungie Rd.  
 Apt. A103  
 Macungie, PA 18062

Jean Roth  
 Fellowship Manor  
 3000 Fellowship Dr.  
 Whitehall, PA 18052

Vera Chandick  
 2107 Dewey St.  
 Northampton, PA 18067

John Clark  
 Country Meadows  
 Unit 240  
 420 N. Krocks Rd.  
 Allentown, PA 18104

Irene Scherr  
 800 Hausman Rd.  
 Apt 379  
 Allentown, PA 18104

Scarlet Randolph  
 Room 104  
 1660 Park Av.  
 Quakertown, PA 18951

Ann Hricinak  
 PO Box 76  
 Taneyville, MO 65759

Daniel Yakubecek  
 Sterling Heights Gracious Retirement Living  
 3500 Fairview St  
 Bethlehem, PA 18017

Mary Zader  
 c/o Donna Leech  
 6376 Timberlakes Way  
 6326 Delray Beach, FL 33484

Doris Weaver  
 4117 Lehigh St.  
 Whitehall, PA 18052



Place your Christmas cards in a basket in a prominent place after the holidays and pick a card each Sunday and pray all week for the one(s) who sent it. Make it a family event at mealtime and perhaps you could send a short note at week's end letting them know you're praying for them. What a wonderful way to keep the love of Jesus burning in our hearts all year.