

† The Rod and the Staff †

A bimonthly publication of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Whitehall (Egypt), Pennsylvania
‡ January, February 2025 ‡

Vol. 2025, 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,

Reverend James Schlegel

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

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 29 9:00 AM
SERVICE OF LESSONS AND
CAROLS**



There will be no Sunday
School or Confirmation Classes.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 5
INSTALLATION OF CHURCH COUNCIL
MEMBERS FOR 2025**



EPIPHANY

**MONDAY, JANUARY 6
EPIPHANY SERVICE
7 PM**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 19
THE ANNUAL MEETING of SHEPHERD
OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH**
will be held immediately following the
second service. All members are
invited and encouraged to attend.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 26
YOUTH SUNDAY**

Our youth will lead our
9 AM service. Come and
support our young peo-
ple.

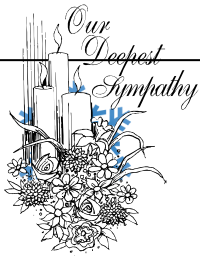


*This issue of the Rod and the Staff is sponsored by Todd and Melissa Sassaman.
Blessings to our Shepherd of the Hills family in the New Year.*



The Times News advertising for January 2025 is sponsored by Denise and Bob Smith, praising God for a New Year of Blessings!

The Times News advertising for February 2025 is sponsored by Todd and Melissa Sassaman, with thanks for God's enduring love.



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



The church office will be closed during The Christmas Holiday from December 25th through January 1st.

ANNUAL REPORTS



Deacons please submit your reports to the office by January 6 2025.



In Loving Memory

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church gratefully acknowledges memorial donations given in memory of **Doris Weaver** by Denise and Bob Smith.

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church gratefully acknowledges memorial donations given in memory of **Lance Ziegenfuss** by his family .



On September 22, 2024, **Arieana Mei Cummings**, daughter of Michael Edwin Cummings and Jamie Lynn Stepp was welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Welcome, Arieana. We wish all of God's many blessings on Arieana's family and on her sponsors, April Stepp and Brian Kester.

On November 30, 2024, **Vanessa Lilly Saul**, daughter of Scott Daniel Saul and Taylor More Saul was welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Welcome, Vanessa. We wish all of God's many blessings on Vanessa's family and on her sponsors, Nathan Mohler and Jennifer Mohler.



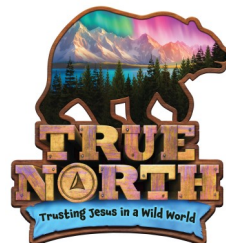
I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

Bruce L. Evangelista entered into eternal rest November 8, 2024. We commend Bruce into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to the family.

Truman R. Brandt entered into eternal rest December 2, 2024. We commend Truman into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to the family.

Bradley M. Gaspar entered into eternal rest on December 5, 2024. We commend Bradley into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to the family.

SAVE THE DATE FOR TRUE NORTH VBS— JUNE 23-27, 2025





YOUTH GROUP NEWS



On October 23, 6 youth members volunteered at the **Miracle League Trick or Treat**. We dressed up as the Scooby gang and we handed out candy and helped the trick or treaters play games. It was a beautiful night and we had a lot of fun with the Miracle League kids!

We sold 161 nut rolls and made a profit of \$654. **Thank you** to everyone who purchased from us!!

On November 2, 5 youth members went to **Parkland CARES Food Pantry**. We helped unload trucks, set up tables and put out food for their monthly distribution. We also filled bags with vegetables, meats, dairy products and other goodies. **Thank you** for all of the food donations. We donated 175 cans of chicken noodle soup, SpaghettiOs, Chef Boyardee products and tuna!

On November 17, 4 youth group members filled **82 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, which were sent to South Africa!** The boxes were filled with items that were donated by the VBS families and the congregation. This was the largest number of shoeboxes we have ever sent!! **Thank you** so much for your generosity!

We need to rebuild our shoebox collection since we filled so many boxes this year. If you have any **empty shoeboxes** that you don't want, please bring them in and put them downstairs in the Sunday School room next to the bathrooms on the right side of the hallway.

Our gift card program was a **HUGE** success. We made a profit of \$1,586.77. **Thank you** to everyone who ordered gift cards from us!!

On Sunday, December 8, 6 youth members helped to **decorate the Christmas tree and sanctuary**. While we wish more congregation members would have stayed to decorate with us, we had a fun morning and we finished by sharing lunch.

Come and join us on **January 26 as the youth group leads the service for Youth Sunday**.

Our **clothing drive** continues until June 14, 2025! Get rid of all that old stuff to make room for the new things you received at Christmas!! We are collecting new or gently used men, women and children's clothing, shoes, purses, belts, bed and bath linens, and stuffed animals. **NO** blankets, pillows, quilts, or comforters this year. 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 right. 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 re-used 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 12 and delivery will be on February 9, which is Super Bowl Sunday. Call the church office at 610-262-1600 or Lisa at 610-262-4053 to place an order.

Save the date! Our PENNY PARTY will be on April 27!

Thank you for your continued support of the youth group!!

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 explore God’s Word.



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

Please Keep In Your Thoughts and Prayers:



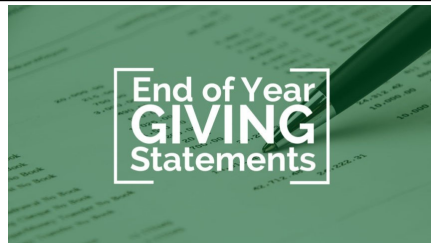
- A. Ron Anglestein,
- B. Bill Beidleman, Jacob Braido, Marianne Blocker, Bonnie Brown, Janice Buckwalter, Carol Bennecoff, Ann Borell, Alana Bird, Angela Bressler, Sandra Bressler, Pat Budd, Mark Buresh
- C. Verna Chandick, Beth Cherry, John Clark, JoAnn Coppola, Charles Church
- D. Nancy Dietz, Pierre DeRagon
- F. Beverly Fekula, Gloria Fischl, Donald Fister, Annie Frack, Carl France, Kay Fronheiser, Patrick Foran
- G. Teri Gerney, Jeff and Carol Gilbert, Ronald Gerlach, Maxine Gantz
- H. Brandon Heichel, Betty and Lamont Hontz, Barbara Horvath, Shelley Hanson, Elsie Huber, Dot Hartman, Al Herman
- K. Alex Katana, John Kotze, Adele Kunkle, Keith Kramer, Barbara Kuhns
- L. Scott Lazarus, Wayne Lazarus
- M. Diane Masonheimer, Debbie Messinger, Carole Mickley, Doris Miller, Richard Miller, Christopher Moakley, Kevin Moyer, Russell Myers, Feryl Miller, Tara Morrow, Mason Moriarty, Heather Markulics
- N. Cathy Nelcoski, Ava Nolan, Aiyana Nederostek
- O. Russlene Ouldcott
- P. Sandra Phillips
- Q. Linda Quinn
- R. June Reifinger, Jean Reinert, Jan Reinik, Wayne Remaly, Dee Renner, Jean Roth, Tonie Rothdeutsch, Mary Royer, Scarlet Randolph, Corey Rapchak, Carolyn Ruch
- S. Ruth Saadi, Michael Saraceno, Irene Scherr, Gloria Schmidinger, Helen Sefcik, June Sell, Jim Shope, Sue Sill, Sean Skelonis, Sherry Smith, Bonnie Schneck, Donna Strawbridge, Corey Seese
- T. Rosemarie Thrash,
- U. Paul Unger
- W. Bill Weighknecht, Jennifer Wentling,
- Y. Daniel Yakubecek,
- Z. Mary Zader, Bob Zarrizski

ALTAR FLOWER POLICY



The Altar flowers each Sunday will be placed on the table at the top of the stairs. 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 2024, 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.**



Pastor Schlegel will be on vacation January 12-18.

If you are in need of Pastoral Care, please call the church office.

- The Family of Brad Gaspar
- The Family of Keith Grim
- The Family of Bruce Evangelista
- The Family of Mike Churetta



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 at we gather together in the House of our Lord.

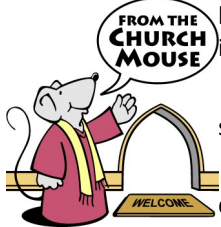
The Service Committee: Reach out to those in need! **WHITEHALL COPLAY FOOD PANTRY is asking for the following items:** Pancake mix and syrup, Soups: vegetable, chicken noodle, chicken rice and tomato, Cereals: all kinds, Pasta: rotini, farfalle, frisilli, penne, and elbow (no spaghetti), Crackers: saltines, 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 Monday through Thursday at 7 PM on our Facebook page and on our website. If 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 Tracy Tacker 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 are considered by the full Council).

The 2025 Congregation Council

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| President: | Tracy Tacker |
| Vice President: | Jan Masonheimer |
| Secretary: | Melissa Sassaman |
| Treasurer: | Drew Null |
| Financial Secretary: | Carl France |
| Learning Team Deacon: | Tara Henry-Morrow |
| Witness Team Deacon: | Mary Lou Young |
| Worship Team Deacon: | Denise Smith |
| Service Team Deacon: | Barry Wexler |
| Support Team Deacon: | Gary Easton |
| Youth Deacon: | Lisa Kroboth |
| Youth Representative: | Dylan Rapchak |
| Pastor: | The Rev. James W. Schlegel |



Thank you to Keith Moyer, Colleen Ehst, Norma Hrozencik and Alivia Deemer for serving on Church Council. Thank you to Jan Masonheimer and Dylan Rapchak for agreeing to serve their coming term and to Mary Lou Young and Barry Wexler for completing the Witness Team Deacon and Service Team Deacon terms.

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- ♥ **To Pastor Schlegel** for shepherding our flock at SOTHLC over the past 25 years.
- ♥ **Pastor and Cindy Schlegel** would like to thank everyone for their Christmas cards and gifts given to them this season.
- ♥ **To Grace Siegel**, who retired in September after serving as church secretary for eight years.
- ♥ **To Lucy Messinger**, who is retiring as church sexton at the end of 2024 after many years of faithful service.
- ♥ **To all the people who decked the halls.** What a wonderful 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 Greg Scheirer, Ed Palansky, Carl Kocher, Russ Kramer and Ryan Kramer** for patching the front driveway as part of the drainage project.
- ♥ **To Greg Scheirer and Dale Ott** for restoring the office paper folding machine to working order.
- ♥ **To Barbara R. Scheirer** for directing her Thrivent Choice Dollars to Shepherd of the Hills in December.
- ♥ **To everyone** who helps with the Newsletter.



The Ingathering Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in the 2024 Christmas Collection. We collected for three organizations: Kids Peace, Ripple and the Allentown Rescue Mission. Congregational members generously donated a vast assortment of food, toiletries, clothing, toys, tote bags and gift cards. The Joyful Noise collections were used to purchase Christmas gifts and other small items to assist in filling 200 gift bags for Kids Peace. In addition, each of the participating churches donated \$25.00 to the

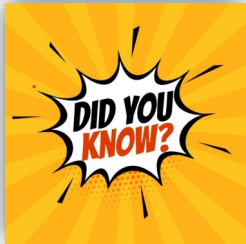
Allentown YMCA Warming Station, which provides food, shelter and a safe environment for those experiencing homelessness in our community.

Your gifts and financial contributions have richly blessed others during the Holiday Season. Thank you for your overwhelming support and generosity.

The Ingathering Committee
Linda Forand, Laurie Andrew and Karen Zimmerman



**To our new church sexton, Ryan Kramer.
Ryan will begin serving as sexton in January 2025.**



The Whitehall Lions Club meets at Shepherd of the Hills on the first and third Mondays of each month at 6:30 PM. You are welcome to join them as they plan and execute service projects to benefit the Whitehall community.

If you'd like more information about the Lions Club, see Joe Ebner, Judy Ott or Melissa Sassaman.

Remember our special friends. Send them a Christmas greeting.

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

Verna Chandick
2107 Dewey Ave.
Northampton PA 18067

Lamont and Betty Hontz
6043 Lower Macungie Rd.
Legend Assisted Living Apt. 103
Macungie PA 18062

Jean Roth
Fellowship Manor
3000 Fellowship Manor
Rm 227B
Whitehall PA 18052

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

John Clark
Country Meadows of Bethlehem
4025 Green Pond Rd. Rm. 42
Bethlehem PA 18020



Daniel Yakubeczek
Sterling Heights Gracious
Retirement Living
3500 Fairview St.
Bethlehem PA 18017

Sandra Phillips
4 Pine St.
Lehighton PA 18235

Scarlet Randolph
Independence Court of
Quakertown Room 104
1600 Park Ave.
Quakertown PA 18951

Jean Reinert
8435 Sensinger Rd.
Germansville PA 18053

Janis Beidleman
85 Archery Ln.
Retirement Living
Tamaqua PA 18252

