



# THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN

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## PALM DEVOTION

by The Reverend Dr. Douglas H. Spittel, PALM President

### “Christmas and the Christian”

The traditional Bible readings on Christmas Eve, the first of the three Divine Services for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, are familiar to us. The prophecy of Isaiah proclaims that *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.”* Of course, we hear the Nativity account from St. Luke where St. Mary *“brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”* But the Epistle reading seems to get lost in our memories. Maybe this is because we emphasize the historical narrative that God came in the flesh long ago in the little town of Bethlehem. The Christmas narrative evokes a religious nostalgia that places the scene at the manger into a “once upon a time” sort of context.



But the Christmas Eve Epistle reading from St. Paul’s letter to St. Titus brings the meaning of the events in Bethlehem on that day long ago into our lives here and now:

*Dearly Beloved: The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Titus 2:11-15a*

St. Paul is telling us on Christmas Eve what the birth of Jesus means for us. He says that the grace of God is not an empty promise but that it brings salvation and has appeared to us in the flesh. The incarnation of our God for us means that we need not live in darkness and despair. Rather, we cast off the worldly lusts that can never satisfy us and instead live in hope. St. Paul assures us that our God, Jesus Christ, has been born to give Himself into death to redeem us and give us new life.

This Epistle reading tells us the true gift and meaning of Christmas, namely that Jesus gives us a new life and that He has made us His own special people. Your Christmas gift this year and every year is that you are so precious in the sight of God that He has given Himself to save you and bring you out of death into a new life of light and hope. This gift is so magnificent that it is not just for you but for everyone you meet. Your family and loved ones, as well as the stranger on the street. It is a gift to be given in word and deed. We live sober, righteous, and godly – that is, hopeful – lives in Christ.

As a child, you may have proudly shown off a shiny new toy you were given on Christmas Day. As a child of God in Christ Jesus, you get to show off the shiny new you that Jesus made you when He came on that first Christmas in Bethlehem, went to the cross on Calvary, rose from the dead in the garden, and ascended from the mountain. Jesus is your gift, and He has made you His gift to all your neighbors. This is our Christmas joy and our Christian zeal!

The PALM Board of Directors and I wish you a very Merry Christmas!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

December

10. 10th Annual Live Nativity, Concordia at Cabot Haven II, 148 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023.  
Times TBA

The Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus is presenting “A Festival of Lessons and Carols” during the month of December. Please see the flyer in this issue for more information on times and places.



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### All Saints Campus Ministry

*by Vicar Zachary Wessel*

#### What Methods Work for Outreach?

Having stepped into the campus ministry at All Saints fairly recently, I have had lots of opportunity to learn and lots of opportunity to reflect: what actually works? How is it that connections are made and fostered that can bring students in and give us the chance to share Christ with them? In one way or another, this is a question that any congregation has to ask, regardless of whether or not they have a specific ministry or outreach, like All Saints does with campus ministry. How is it that people are concretely and effectively drawn into the congregation?

As easy as it is to ask the question, the answer is much more difficult. There are certainly a lot of things that can and should be done to help reach out to people. Visibility and accessibility are both key, and there are so many ways to strategically approach these questions about how to let people know that you are there. This ranges everywhere from signage, to website layout, to involvement in community events, or the like. Note here, that I am not speaking about gimmicky attempts to replace the gospel of Jesus Christ with some kind of marketing scheme or trying to attract people to the church for any other reason than Jesus Christ crucified. I am instead thinking about the mode, or the manner in which we can give ourselves opportunities to share Christ with people.

I have certainly learned to appreciate and think about all of these means of creating opportunities and extending invitations. They are all important ways of getting people familiar with the congregation, and can be avenues through which people are brought to the church. But at the end of the day, there is nothing that is nearly as effective as a personal invitation. Above all else, that is what works for outreach. There is nothing that can compare to a flesh-and-blood person interacting in real time and real space with another person to invite them in.

This should not be a surprise to us at all. While there are certainly sociological explanations for why this may be the case, it should also grow clearly out of our theology. Our salvation is found in the real, flesh-and-blood person of Jesus Christ. The eternal Son of God took on flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary to accomplish our salvation. He gave His flesh and shed His blood on the cross and bodily rose from the dead three days later to conquer sin, death, and Satan for us. He puts His Word in the mouths of ordinary people to preach. He tangibly gives us His forgiveness, life, and salvation through the physical elements of the Sacraments. Christianity has a very distinctly bodily character to it. There is no salvation apart from the body of Christ.

By faith we understand that we, the Church, are the body of Christ. And so, it makes perfect sense on a theological level why the most effective means to outreach is through personal means, working within our varied stations in life. This applies, of course, to those publicly serving the church. They need to be physically present to those they minister to in any but the most un-ideal situations. But this also applies to all Christians. God has given us our stations in life and it is altogether fitting that we use them for His glory.

I have seen a lot of this over my past couple months as the new guy at All Saints. In spite of all the helpful supports we may have and develop, the end of the line is that God works through the means He has established, and those means are physical, flesh-and-blood means. The best outreach possible is not going to take place through signs and websites and advertisements, though those things most certainly have a good and right use that should not be neglected. The best outreach is when the members of the body of Christ are personally present to those around them to invite them in to the congregation. Jesus Christ in the flesh, our crucified and risen Savior is the center of our outreach.

Christ works through His body the Church. This past All Saints Day, our congregation had the opportunity to especially celebrate God working through the means of the congregations of His Church



REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Oakmont / Penn Hills



The fall athletic season has come to a close at Redeemer. Our high school girls' volleyball team lost in the championship final after finishing 1st overall in the regular season. Pennie Stotler, Anika Vanwyk, and Michelina Andrae were named to the all-league team. Our middle school girls' volleyball team and middle school soccer team each lost in the first round of playoffs after seasons of excellent growth and development. Several high school athletes took part in the annual WPIAL Sportsmanship Summit downtown, representing Redeemer during seminars for leadership and character in high school sports. Thank you to our athletic director Mrs. Eureka Vanwyk, and to all of the coaches and families that worked to make the season such a success.

On to basketball! RLS elementary students enjoyed a special Reformation Day, studying Martin Luther, the 5 Solas, and even making some pretzels and learning a little German! Thank you to RLS teacher Mrs. Dana Tews for organizing the event, as well as all the teachers and parent volunteers.

Redeemer celebrated Homecoming Week during the final days of October. Students enjoyed special dress up and event days all week, culminating with Reformation Bowl and a high school dance. Middle and high school students raised over \$400 for Lost and Found Pharmacy in Penn Hills, a local nonprofit pharmacy run by a Christian couple that assists many people with the cost of their medications.

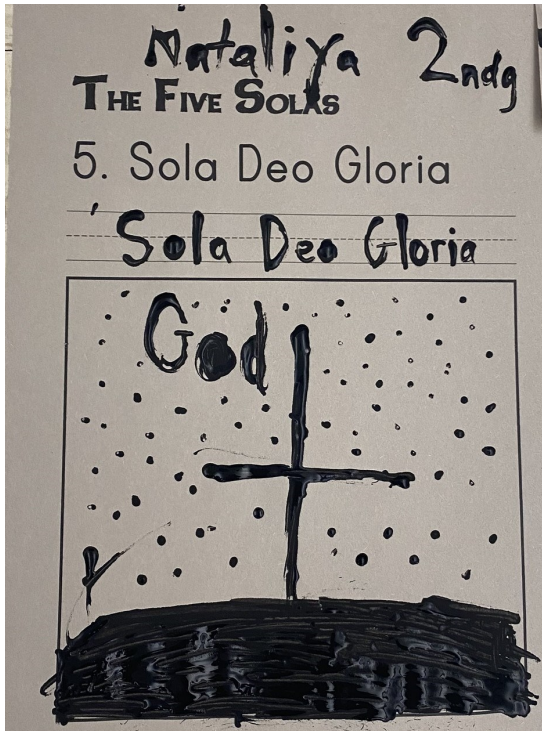
The annual Redeemer Veterans Day service was held on Friday, November 10th. The service was held in the sanctuary at the high school campus for the first time, providing a large, well-lit space to gather and honor those that have served in our nation's military. High school students and veteran guests enjoyed a light brunch and helped pack gift bags to send to active military around the world through Operation Troop Appreciation. Thank you to all who attended and donated items for the gift bags.

Prayers for a blessed 2023 Advent and Christmas season for all. We look forward to seeing you in 2024!

Right: Redeemer high school girls named to volleyball all-league team

Left: RLHS athletes attend WPIAL Sportsmanship Summit





Reformation Day 2023

Honored guests for Veterans Day 2023



RLS teachers enjoy Mismatch Day for Hopecoming

RLHS students get creative for No Backpack Day for Hopecoming



## HOUSES OF WORSHIP

### Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

233 Thirty-Seventh St.

Pittsburgh, Pa, 15201

412-621-2720

zionevangelicallutheran.org

Rev. Donn Woolweber, Pastor



*By Shirley Freyer*

*Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church congregation praises our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for preserving it for 155 years. Throughout the years, the Lord has showered His grace upon the members through His Word and Sacraments. The gift of dedicated pastors and congregational members who proclaimed and taught the truths of the Scriptures in purity and clarity of doctrine has been a priceless blessing.*

Those who wanted to bring a church together began documentation in 1868 with the first constitution, which was translated from German into an English version. A number of articles were written stating rules and regulations of the governing church body.

The congregation officially titled itself the Third German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Pittsburgh, Pa. Members decided that the services would be held in German. Rev. C. Engelder accepted the call to be Zion's first minister in 1868, and Zion also called Mr. A. Mueller to be the first schoolteacher for the school.

The men of the congregation purchased a deed, dated April 16, 1868, to secure land on which to build a Lutheran church. A small wooden frame church building and a school were erected, but within a few years the congregation had outgrown the church structure, and they decided to purchase an adjacent lot with a house. On March 8, 1874, a new brick church was completed and dedicated to God. This is the building in which worship takes place today. Around 1886, side balconies and an organ loft were installed in the church to gain more seating. A day school, which started with 60 pupils, also prospered. In 1886, a brick building was erected to house the school, and the year 1897 boasted the highest enrollment - 155 children. This Christian day school continued to operate for 55 years. In 1880, Rev. Martin Hein was installed as pastor and assisted with teaching, serving almost 26 years, the longest tenure of any of Zion's pastors. August Schumann was installed as teacher on the same day the school was dedicated, August 19, 1886.

It is uncertain when the church changed its name from Third German to Zion and discontinued services in German, according to church historian, Rebekah Johnston Wudarczyk, who authored the bulk of Zion's history. A lifelong member, she and her husband, a historian in his own right as a leader of the Lawrenceville Historic Society, developed an Annual History Day, begun at the celebration of Zion's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Each September since 2018, they coordinate a themed historical presentation portraying Lawrenceville artists, musicians, hospitals, cemeteries, and streets.

Rev. Carl Grahn was installed as pastor in May 1930, but the following years were difficult ones because of the Depression. During World War II, many of the young people, both men and women, were in the service of their country. There was a joyful occasion in fall 1946 - the Returned Service Men's Reunion.

On Christmas Day, 1948, Pastor Grahn was called to his heavenly home after having proclaimed the wonderful news of our Savior's birth in the morning service. At the evening Children's Program, a stunned congregation learned of his death. A six-week period of mourning was observed. Pastor Grahn will always be remembered for his fatherly kindness and leadership. The Grahn family presented a pair of brass altar vases and a pair of candleholders for the altar in memory of their beloved husband and father. A bronze plaque honoring his memory hangs in the church narthex.

## HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Rev. Arnold Gross accepted the divine call and was installed on June 5, 1949. During his ministry, the congregation adopted new Articles of Incorporation April 16, 1950, and a new constitution in 1952. Pastor Gross was seriously ill for some time during his pastorate at Zion, and during his illness, student Herman K. Dietrich, Jr. was asked to assume many of the pastoral duties. In February 1955, the Lord called Pastor Gross to eternal rest from his labors.

Rev. Arthur M. Bicker, who was serving a parish in New Haven, Ind., accepted the call to succeed Rev. Gross and was installed July 10, 1955. During the pastorate of Pastor Bicker, renovations were made to the parsonage and church. In 1962, Pastor Bicker accepted a call to St. John's Lutheran Church the Cove in Accident, Md. Rev. Samuel W. McCune, a native Pittsburgher from the North Side succeeded Rev. Bicker and was installed September 8, 1963.

In May 1970, an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation was made to allow women's suffrage. In June, 30 women registered as voting members and in 1972 the first women held office. In 1976, female acolytes participated in the church services. In October 2017, another amendment was made to permit women to hold any elected office other than that of an elder, and the first woman vice president, Karin Legato, was elected. She inherited the position after her beloved father, Bob Kuepper, was carried into the arms of Jesus. Another lifelong member, she is a Chatham College graduate with a BA in political science, and along with her late husband, James, is co-founder of Emphatics - a luxury boutique specializing in avant-garde fashion.

Currently, the church council is composed of all women except for the chairman ... and that has been the custom for generations. Today's members are the legacy - grandchildren and great grandchildren of Zion's forefathers. And all are lifelong members - baptized, confirmed, and married in this sanctuary.

"For me," explained Karin, "Zion is a sense of family. It's my Christian home."

She continued, "I grew up here, I feel my family roots - mother, father, grandparents, every time I walk through those red doors." She says she feels safe, calm, and grounded, knowing she is in God's house.

Her sister, Pam Rosko, serves as stewardship chair. Her work experience provides a strong background for her role at Zion. Her husband Bill joined Zion just before they married, and that's a story told again and again at Zion by lifelong members. Zion's organist for 48 years, Ruth Molkenthin Miller, serves as financial secretary; her husband, Terry as congregational chairman. Again, the same pattern ... he joined prior to their marriage. Her sister, Shirley Freyer, council secretary, records the identical prototype with husband Bill. Treasurer Sandy Owens was baptized, confirmed, and married at Zion. Her husband, Rich, always worshipped with her and joined during Rev. C. Ronald Rafferty's tenure.

And they all agree, its family and its tradition.

"Those who come to worship services regularly are like family and you know and care about them," Pam described.

Sandy concurred, "The members of Zion treat everyone like family and enjoy fellowship with one another."

Born as the next to last of six children in one of Zion's largest families, Gretchen Greygor looked back at her life at Zion and agreed. "One word comes to mind - family," she said, "and although we have all come from our own individual families to worship at Zion through His love for us and guidance, we became one family. Even though we have lost our matriarchs and seen our own families grow and go their own separate ways, those of us who are still here are still family. This church has been there for us and helped us all withstand the trials and tribulations of life, good and bad," she maintained.

When she asked her husband what his feeling for Zion one word that quickly came to his mind was generosity - in love and support no matter what the need.

## HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Among the youngest of the lifelong members is Lynne Dickerhoff, who left Zion for a brief time to worship closer to home but came back and is leading the way for the return of her brother and sisters because she said, "it's like family away from family."

Current pastor for almost two-and-a-half years at Zion and Bethel in Glenshaw, Rev. Donn E. Woolweber was quick to see the tie that binds this congregation. "Zion has strong family histories and ties. It is a family of wonderful and caring followers of Jesus Christ, and it is most clear that God is with us always as we continue to grow in service to our Lord.

"There is a great 155-year tradition and history regarding this church. Many founding families have been and are attending Zion, which maintain the bonds developed over the years and provides a consistency few churches truly enjoy," he added.

He saw firsthand how this kinship operates. "I had my left hip replaced and I was not able to lead services for over three weeks. The cards and well-wishing were incredible. When I returned, I received such a wonderful welcome from all that I know I will never forget. There really was not a specific or solo revelation that hit me but more of a growth period that clearly led to our unifying as one in Christ. When I began to see our congregants caring so deeply for each other and showing a desire to be true followers of Jesus Christ, that was a great encouragement to me."

His predecessor as a pastor of two congregations, Rev. C. Ronald Rafferty, was invited as guest pastor for the 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary on November 5, having served Zion and Immanuel in Braddock for six years prior to its closure in 2011. First and foremost is that fact that at Zion, Word and Sacrament ministry is still the important key for all worshippers, underlining Karin's comment that Zion has always been very German Lutheran and unwavering in its ways, even as the matriarchs and patriarchs of the congregation have all passed on. Pastor Rafferty too, emphasized the fellowship as well as the architecture of Zion.

"The church is beautiful and reminds people of European churches," remarked President Terry Miller. Pam noted the beauty of the little red church and related how amazed her husband was the first time he saw the interior. "Until then, I guess I took the beauty of it for granted, but not anymore."

As an architectural landscaper, Rebekah is specific in her description of the church buildings, so many of the updates were linked to the celebration of anniversaries. In 1918, while the Rev. W. C. Roeper was pastor, the church celebrated its 50th anniversary. Extensive renovation commemorated this occasion: electric lights were installed, the church was repainted, and beautiful art-glass windows replaced the old glass.

For the 60th anniversary in 1928, a new pipe organ was dedicated. Services were held in German and English.

For the 90th anniversary, an extensive refurbishing of the whole church structure included removing the side balconies, installing a new floor in the nave, covering the walls and ceiling, and rearranging the seating to form a center aisle.

The church basement was completely remodeled to accommodate large meetings and the Sunday school classes. A modern kitchen, which had previously been located on the second floor of the former school building, was also added.

During 1964, all of the chancel furniture was refinished in white and gold to match the altar and pulpit, and the massive, hand-carved wooden eagle lectern was moved to the narthex to hold the guest register. The first floor Sunday school room was redecorated with freshly painted walls, furniture, and vinyl tile floor. A year later, the second-floor rooms were repainted, and modern lighting fixtures were installed. Again, the work was done entirely by the members. To add charm to the grounds, a post-top lantern was installed in the courtyard.

The members of Zion chose to rebuild, restore, and improve the almost 40-year-old pipe organ so that they might enter the second century of Zion's existence prepared to make an even more joyful noise unto the Lord. Siedle Organ Company of Bridgeville began work on the organ in August 1965, with a cost of rebuilding at \$9,135.



## HOUSES OF WORSHIP

On November 6, 1977, Rev. Robert Bentz was installed as Zion's new minister and remained at Zion for 17 years. Rev. Allen Kramp was called from Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Fort Wayne, and was ordained and installed June 26, 1994.

Zion received a completely different appearance for the commencement of its second century. In place of the elaborate decoration of past years and strong colors of recent years, the nave was painted colonial white and the chancel a "Himmel Blau," heavenly blue. The ends and back of the pews, as well as the organ case, were also painted white. Custom radiator covers were installed; special lighting was provided behind the altar and a recessed overhead light was placed in the ceiling of the nave to brighten the chancel; new candelabras were added; the robe of Christ on the altar-relief was changed from the traditional red to white; striking lanterns were added to the front entrance; and the sacristy was completely renovated.

A hand-carved wooden dove crafted in Italy was suspended from the ceiling of the chancel.

Terry recalled January 22, 1997, when the church organ caught fire. Fellow Christians across the street at Our Lady of the Angels quickly noticed the smoke and came with fire extinguishers to put out the fire before the fire company arrived. The organ console was completely destroyed, and the interior of the building was filled with smoke soot. A new organ console was commissioned from Luley, Inc.

Rev. Scott Kuntz was installed as minister of Zion in 1998 until September 2002. Again, Zion chose to call a seminarian, and Rev. Cullen A. Duke was installed July 24, 2011, and served until he and his wife, Deaconess Jackie, were called to serve as missionaries in Peru in June 2016. Rev. Art Litke, Bethel, and Rev. Dr. Daniel Hahn, St. John's in Millvale, together served the vacancy until Pastor Litke's retirement in June 2020. Zion called Seminarian Paul Morrison in 2018 but he was diagnosed with cancer and went to his heavenly home before he was able to preach even one sermon. Vicar Woolweber served under the supervision of Pastor Hahn until he was called by Bethel and Zion and was ordained and installed June 6, 2021.

In July 2011, a lightning strike on the roof of the sanctuary caused a leak in the roof over the choir loft, damaging the interior plaster. A new roof and new, modern rain-gutters were installed. The interior plaster was repaired, and the entire interior of the sanctuary was re-painted once again. In summer 2012, the exterior of the parsonage was restored, with extensive re-pointing of the brick and a new coat of paint. Around the same time, a handicap ramp was constructed, changing the entrance of our parish.

Terry explained that recent church renovations include restored pews with cushions, new flooring and carpeting, new flooring in the basement and kitchen, new cabinets, cupboards, and countertops with new appliances. After listing all of these he called himself the most expensive president at Zion, having been in that position for several decades.

Pastors Rafferty and Woolweber both mentioned the special dinners and the variety of musical programs that play a special role in the life of the congregation. "When Zion has a lunch or dinner, you can be sure you won't leave hungry," quipped Pam. The husband/wife team of Terry as co-chef and Ruth as organist, pianist, and director of the Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus, foster those events. Add to that the former career path of Pastor Donn as a music educator and his wife, Debbie, who worked for Disney.

Lifelong members enjoyed sharing their favorite memories. "I remember my mom arranging the altar flowers Sunday mornings. I loved watching her and was grateful to the Lord when my dad could cut some gladiolas from his garden to add to the vases," recalled Pam. Decorating the sanctuary for Christmas each year reminds all of the Kuepper family who crafted angels from corn husks as ornaments for the tree and embellishment on the wreaths.

Terry and Ruth enjoyed the wedding renewal of vows ceremony in 2005.

## HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Sandy shared a recent memento. "My son was leaving home for the first time for a job out-of-state for six months. Pastor Woolweber had a special prayer for him at the end of the service. The members came up before the altar and placed their hands on him while Pastor prayed. It was very emotional for me and at the same time so comforting. I will never forget the peace I felt when I left church that day," she recounted.

"When I was a Sunday School teacher, I find it ironic that my students, Sheila and Steven, are now full-grown members," Rebekah described. "All those years up through high school I always participated in the Christmas play. Ruth would have me reading Luke 2 and I always looked forward to reading that story to the congregation."

And the walk over to Arsenal Park was the highlight of VBS, she related.

Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries chose Zion to be the site for the Annual Reformation Service in 2013, a highlight in Ruth's memory.

Emphasis on outreach and missions has always been a focus for the people of Zion, accomplished through activities and programs such as Oktoberfest, Movie and a Meal, Family Fun Nights, Prayer Warriors, Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus programming.

Zion celebrated its 155th anniversary on November 5. Pastor Rafferty was guest preacher at the 3:30 p.m. service followed by a catered dinner including a wine toast for the 90 people in attendance. Pastors Woolweber and Hahn conducted the liturgy and lections for Divine Service One, including the distribution of Holy Communion. During the service, Zion's oldest lifelong member, Marlene Cameron at age 90 was recognized by the dedication of a new banner in her honor. Sainted sister Beth Schweitzer was remembered with a new candle snuffer as she was a faithful acolyte for the years she served Zion after First Lutheran closed in Sharpsburg. Lynne Dickerhoff was recognized for her generous donation that more than covered the cost of the new railings installed on both sides of the steps to the altar. The Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus, under the direction of Zion's organist, provided a rousing anthem titled "Rise Up, O Men of God." President Terry Miller nicely handled the role of emcee, especially when he surprised his wife with a plaque dedicating the organ to her 48 years "on the bench" - 48 years of donated time. Pastor Hahn read letters of congratulations from Rev. John Pingel, Eastern District president; Keith E. Frndak, president and CEO, Concordia Lutheran Ministries; and Rev. Dr. Douglas Spittel, president of PALM. The evening closed with three awesome vocal selections sung masterfully by Sheila Marie Adams.

Zion is the third-oldest LCMS congregation in Western Pennsylvania, and one of three remaining founding churches of Concordia Lutheran Ministries. It has been and continues to be an important part of the Lawrenceville community, one of two denominational parishes in the Bloomfield, Garfield, and Lawrenceville area. A native of Lawrenceville, Gretchen expressed its future, "Even though we are a small congregation now, we hope that God will hold Zion up and help us find a way to grow again."



*"By faith Abraham ... went out, not knowing whither he went," Hebrews 11:8. When the mysterious voice of God summoned Abraham to start his caravan over a road that he had never traversed, the great patriarch must have set out with the same uncertain feelings that grip us when we pause to envision the future with its untrodden pathways. None of us has ever gone that way before. We need the guiding star, the compass, the chart, that led Abraham along his unmarked road into the land of promise - his faith. When "by faith Abraham ... went out, not knowing whither he went," the mercies of God watched over him by day and night and brought him safely to the fulfillment of His promises, even though Abraham was sorely tried and repeatedly beset by dangers and disappointments. His unmarked path was anything but a smooth pleasant journey; yet it was always the true path and the right road.*

### Zion Lawrenceville Celebrates 155-Year Anniversary

ZION CELEBRATED OUR 155th ANNIVERSARY in grand style with 90 reservations. Former pastor, Rev. C. Ronald Rafferty was guest preacher at our 3:30 p.m. afternoon service followed by a catered dinner by Dave Beran from St. John's in Millvale. A lovely wine toast by Zion's first woman VP Karin Legato and specialty cakes were added attractions. Pastors Woolweber and Hahn conducted the rest of the pastoral duties for Divine Service One with the distribution of Holy Communion. During the service, Zion's oldest lifelong member Marlene Cameron, accompanied by her nephew Paul Hanlon, her great nephew Billy Hanlon and his wife and her niece-in-law, Darlene Hanlon, was recognized with the dedication of a new banner. We remembered



our beloved sister Beth Schweitzer with a new candle snuffer as she was a faithful acolyte for the years, she served Zion after the closing of First Lutheran in Sharpsburg. Her dear friends Audrey Newcamp and Karen Stauffer joined us for this dedication. Lynne Dickerhoff was recognized for her generous donation to more than cover the costs of the new railings installed on both sides of the steps to the altar.

The Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus under the direction of our organist, Ruth A. Molkenthin Miller provided a rousing anthem titled "Rise Up O Men of God." The pastors and cross bearer, Steven Dull processed and recessed to the glorious sounds of trumpeters Doug Brick and Luke Brand from St. John's as the congregation sang "Alleluia! Let Praises Ring" and "For All the Saints."

Pastor and Debbie Woolweber along with Donna Heintz from Bethel and Jonathan Breight from Christ in Forest Hills performed the praise song "Rise Up." A special addition to this milestone was the distribution of Holy Communion. All who enjoyed dinner received a favor of a homemade cookie molded in the shape of a cross, hand painted and cellophaned, thanks to the creation of Sandy and Rich Owens as well as a prayer square handmade by former member Diane Brown who currently resides with her husband in Florida. President Terry Miller handled the role of emcee nicely especially when he surprised his wife with a plaque dedicating the organ to her 48 years "on the bench." Letters of congratulations from Eastern District President Rev. John Pingel, Keith E. Frndak, president and CEO, Concordia Lutheran Ministries and Rev. Dr. Douglas Spittel, president of PALM were read by Pastor Hahn. The evening closed with three awesome vocal selections sung masterfully by Sheila Marie Adams.



## NEWS FROM AREA CONGREGATIONS

### GRACE

*Penn Hills, PA*

On Sunday November fifth, the Feast of All Saints, Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church celebrated Lynne Greenway's 50th anniversary as organist in the Lord's Church.

When the organist at St. John Lutheran Church in Brackenridge (pastored by her father, the Rev. George Dolak) left for college, the "next organist up" fell to Lynne even though she was only thirteen years old. She began a vocation that has spanned not only five decades but one in which she ably served the Church in various places across the country, from Pittsburgh, Florida and Delaware.

In a time when organists are difficult to find, Grace has been blessed for thirty years of those fifty to not only have someone, anyone to play, but even more with someone so proficient. Lynne is truly a great blessing. Thanks be to God and thank you Lynne for sharing your gifts!



### MT. CALVARY

*West View, PA*

Much to the dismay of everyone at Mt. Calvary, the annual Oktoberfest had to be canceled because of illness that befell the Hoover family. As the ones who host the feast, the Hoovers were not up to the hours of preparation needed to put everything together. But rather than abandon the idea completely, they decided to incorporate the meal into the annual church Christmas party, scheduled for December 3 after the Sunday service.

As they do every year, members of the Outreach Group passed out Halloween treats at the church, but this time they added a bonus. The treats were packaged in Rainforest Explorer backpacks that were left over from this summer's VBS, and also included some of the handouts from that week's activities.

The Christmas Blessing project this year is focusing on the Glade Run Foundation, an organization that provides health and behavioral services to individuals throughout Western Pennsylvania. In particular, its Christmas Angels program serves children and families in need. Glade Run supplied name tags with children's wish lists to Mt. Calvary, enabling those interested to purchase the items, or buy gift cards or make monetary donations.

Finally in December, organist and music director Sharon Pritchard wrote a family Christmas program called "Christian Christmas ABC." The program - a comedy! - will star members of the congregation and feature music by the voice choir. It is set for December 17 following the regular Sunday service.

Liam Kuntz and Mechele Hoover showcase the backpacks Mt. Calvary passed out for Halloween.



## UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

### Caregiver Support Group

The Caregiver Support Group on the Cabot campus meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m. Call Stefanie Dietrich for more information at 724-352-1571, ext. 8271.

### TOPS - Take Off Pounds Sensibly

Meetings every Thursday at the Cabot campus. Weigh-ins at 4:30, meeting at 5 p.m. Open to all staff, residents and community. Call or email Sara Beth Swain for details at 724-352-1571, ext. 8045 or [sswain@concordiavn.org](mailto:sswain@concordiavn.org)

### Bethel Glenshaw/Zion Lawrenceville

The dual parish will combine Advent services each Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. with a light supper to follow at 7:00 p.m. Bethel on Dec. 6 and 20; Zion on Dec. 13. Christmas Eve services will be held at Zion at 3:30 p.m. and Bethel at 6:00 p.m. Caroling from a horse-drawn carriage is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 23 at 3:00 p.m. on Scott Avenue in Glenshaw.

## Concordia Lutheran Ministries will host its 10th Annual Live Nativity on Sunday, Dec. 10



### Concordia Visiting Nurses and Good Samaritan Hospice Ask for Donations

During the holiday season, Concordia at Cabot, Concordia Visiting Nurses, and Good Samaritan Hospice are supporting the donation needs of The Lighthouse Foundation Food Pantry and Center for Community Resource's Bundle-up Butler. Both organizations provide services, support, resources and hope to families and individuals experiencing difficult life situations.

From Nov. 27 to Dec. 15, collection areas will be set up in the front lobbies across the Cabot campus and at Good Samaritan Hospice's Middlesex office location for employees and residents. Our member churches are invited to participate.

The Lighthouse Foundation: Help Stock the Food Pantry the Week of Christmas:

Greatest food needs: Cereal, Peanut Butter, Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Cans Fruits (pineapple), Cans of Soup (any), Canned Tuna/Chicken/Salmon, Canned Vegetables and Can Openers

\* For every item of food donated, Concordia will donate \$1 to The Lighthouse Foundation Food Pantry

CCR Bundle-up Butler Gently Used and New Coat Drive:

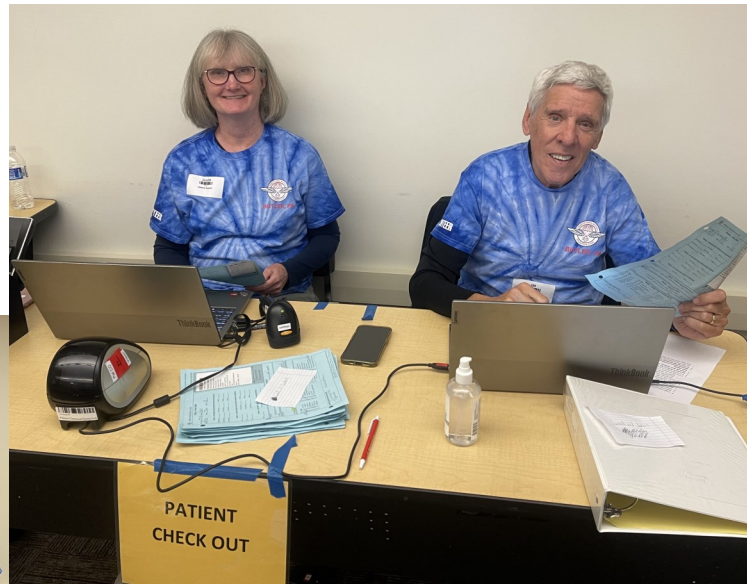
Child (boys and girls) coats from infants to size 16

Adult (men and women) small to 5X

\* For every coat donated, Concordia will donate \$5 to Bundle-up Butler



Pictured are Keith E. Frndak, President and CEO, CLM with Concordia physical therapist, Lynn McKinnis. CLM board member and resident of Butler County Don Olmstead and his wife, Diane, a teacher at Redeemer Lutheran School. Both are members of St. Luke in Cabot, Jim Wolf, Vice Chairman of CLM Board and member of Peace in McMurray.



## **Concordia Lutheran Ministries (CLM) Elects Five Board Members**

Keith E. Frndak, President and CEO, Concordia Lutheran Ministries announced the election of five board members on Sunday, Nov. 12 at the annual delegate meeting. Currently, 15 board members comprise the governing body and represent 27 Lutheran Churches Missouri Synod (LCMS) in the western Pennsylvania area. Installed by Rev. Jack Hartman, director of chaplaincy services, the newly elected members follow. Each will serve a three-year term.

### **Rev. Ronald Breight of Forest Hills**

Pastor at Christ for the last 16 years, Rev. Breight earned his M.Div. from Concordia Seminary St. Louis. An incumbent having served as a CLM Board member for the past three years, he has been a member of the Eastern District LCMS Board as a Pastoral Counselor, Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center and Pioneer Ministries Boards and a National Convention Pastoral Counselor. He and his wife Linda have four sons.

### **Rande Casaday of Canonsburg**

First Vice President of Investments for Stifel Financial, Rande has served as a CLM director for 10 years previously and held the position as chairman of the Finance Committee. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh Katz Graduate School of Business, he was also a former member of the CLM of Pittsburgh board. A member of Peace where he has been a four-time council president, Rande and his wife Vickie together have five children and five grandchildren.

### **Cindy Cwynar of Monaca**

A Benefits Analyst for Paragon Systems, Cindy earned her MBA from California State University East Bay and was elected to the LCMS Eastern District Board of Directors where she is chair of the Finance Committee. A member of Mt. Olive where her husband, Rev. Paul Cwynar serves as pastor, she was also a Lay Delegate and a Floor Committee Representative for the 2023 Synodical Convention. She has two children and four grandchildren.

### **Fred Heintz Jr of Shaler**

Incumbent who has served on the CLM board for nine years, Fred is a retired staff attorney for Neighborhood Legal Services and a graduate of Pitt Law School. Currently, serving on the Concordia at Sumner Board and as chair of the Governance Committee, he is a lifelong member of Bethel where he is currently an Elder and the Financial Secretary. He is married to fellow lifelong member and church secretary Donna.

### **Gail Holzer of North Huntingdon**

Executive Director and Administrator of Redeemer Lutheran School, Gail, is also an incumbent having served on the CLM Board for 10 years. She is also a director of the Concordia at Rebecca Residence and the Concordia of Monroeville Boards and has served as Nominating chair for several years. She and her husband Robert have three children and 10 grandchildren.

Chief Financial Officer, Michael Falbo, announced that Concordia Lutheran Ministries is one of only a few health care organizations in the United States which maintain a Standard and Poors AA rated.

A unanimous vote for the addition to membership of St. Peter and St. Paul Lutheran Church in Sharon was cast. Current Pastor, Rev. Jacob Deal and two delegates, Rev. Arthur Baisch and his wife Evelyn were in attendance. If three representatives are present at the 2024 annual meeting, they will be entitled to voting privileges the following year.

A special thank you to the following directors who have served three years: Charlie Buttgerreit, Sherrie Purucker and Nell Wilson.

Twenty-two churches were represented and a total of 55 delegates as well as management staff and guests totaling 122 enjoyed a delicious dinner complete with wine. New delegates included Dee Moore and Nicole Yakemowicz representing Good Shepherd, Lois Thomson from Mt Calvary, Amy Stedila and Patty Taylor from Mt. Olive. Jack Jasneski from St. John's, Millvale, and Tracey Johnson from Zion, Bridgeville.

Keith E. Frndak, President and CEO, having served 40 years, is looking forward to acquisition opportunities and strong support of our mission of faithful caring.

**Concordia Lutheran Ministries (CLM) Elects Five Board Members**

Pictured left to right – Fred Heintz Jr, Rande Casaday, Rev. Ron Breight, Cindy Cwynar and Gail Holzer





Adopt a Concordia Resident at Christmas



A fun way for a church group to remember residents is the “Adopt-A-Resident” approach. As we approach the Christmas season, we ask that you also do what you can to support the residents at our Concordia communities. In these uncertain times, please consider helping our Activities Directors with gifts for our residents. If you prefer to send a general gift, we can suggest the following newly purchased items that our residents can typically use heated shawls or scarves. (battery operated, large or extra-large sweat suits; adjustable ball caps, socks, large or extra-large undershirts, Hair clips/combs/ barrettes, Stationery/stamps, Puzzle books, Word Search, Sugar free candy, Books on tape, large or extra-large size Dusters/loungers, Snack shop gift certificates, Door decorations, Puffs or Kleenex brand tissue, Watches with large numbers, Lotions and cologne, Tape players/ radios for rooms, Music CDs and cassette tapes, a gift box of chocolates, Digital clocks with large numbers, Seasonal sun catchers with suction cups, Large print books (no magazines), Large or extra-large cardigan sweaters or sweatshirts, Washable slippers with backs or slipper socks, Jewelry (not pierced), Gift certificates for beauty/barber shop, Decorative small pillows, Devotional books, Decorative throws/ blankets, Magnifying glasses, Picture albums/small frames, Lipstick, rouge, liquid makeup, loose powder, toiletries, Sports memorabilia, and Snow globes. Donated general items should not be wrapped and may be dropped off to the Lund Care Center, Building #4. If it is after hours or on the weekend and the administration area is closed, please leave items at a nurse’s station. Finally, monetary contributions are always appreciated and need to be sent to CLM Foundation, 134 Marwood Road, Cabot, PA 16023. If your congregation or individual members are interested in “adopting a resident,” please call:

CABOT- Jaime White (personal care): 724-352-1571 ext. 8302 (Donations are needed by Dec. 3)

ORCHARD- Jodi Macko (personal care): 724-285-4490 (Donations are needed by Dec. 3)

FOX CHAPEL - Kelly Ellena or Sharon Scott (Memory care): 412-767-5808 Please call for assistance with what to donate. (Donations are needed by Dec. 10)

MONROEVILLE/HARMONY -Janice Stavros (personal care): 412-373-3900-(3413). Diana McDade (skilled): 412-373-3900-(3463). (Donations are needed by Dec. 8)

CRANBERRY – Beth Schulz or Amber Kemper: 724-779-4300. Resident Wish Lists will be available after Thanksgiving. (Donations are needed by Dec. 12)

**Special thanks to:**

Ascension has adopted Concordia of Franklin Park and Concordia of Wexford again this year. Bethel, St. John’s and Zion, Lawrenceville will provide gifts for the residents of Concordia at Rebecca Residence and Grace helps with residents Concordia at Ridgewood Place.

# JOIN US FOR CONCORDIA'S TENTH ANNUAL LIVE NATIVITY

Sunday, December 10  
148 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023  
(Entrance #5, Haven II)  
Performances at 4:30, 5:15 and 6 p.m.

- *Featuring Concordia staff and residents*
- *Live animals*
- *Hot beverages and refreshments*
- *Gift for children 12 and under*
- *Live Christmas music*
- *Free admission*



This will be a "walk-through" nativity, so guests are encouraged to dress warmly. Parking at entrances 5 and 6. For more information, call 724-352-8268 or visit [www.concordialm.org](http://www.concordialm.org).



# A FESTIVAL OF LESSON & CAROLS



ALL LESSONS ARE BASED ON SCRIPTURALLY RECORDED INCIDENTS.  
PRESENTED BY THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN CHORUS

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1:30 & 3:30 PM**

Concordia at Cabot, Lund Care Center Chapel ~ 134 Marwood Road 16023  
Oertel Care Center Chapel ~ 613 North Pike Road 16023

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2 PM**

Concordia of the South Hills Harmony Room ~ 1300 Bower Hill Road 15243

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2 PM**

Concordia of Monroeville ~ 4363 Northern Pike 15146

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2:30 & 4 PM**

Concordia at Rebecca Residence ~ 3746 Cedar Ridge Road 15101  
HighPointe at Rebecca ~ 1871 HighPointe Lane 15101