



Business Meeting

REMINDER: Joint Council

The Joint Council of the New Centerville Lutheran Parish will meet on **Tuesday, November 8th at St. Paul @7pm**. Please note we are meeting a week later than normal because of a conflict in the pastor's schedule. Please be thinking about nominations for 2012. And finally, please do your best to be in attendance as we will be discussing and voting on our spending plans for 2012.

Also, please remember to read Chapter 6 of Unbinding the Gospel.

Treasurer's Reminder – please remember that the parish treasurer and congregational treasurers are meeting on **Sunday, November 6th** immediately after late worship @M to go over our spending plans for 2012.



Looking Ahead: Congregational Advisory-- Annual Meeting

Reminder

Mark Your Calendars: The Annual meeting of our congregations will be on Sunday, December 11th immediately following worship and before our annual Advent/Christmas program. Annual letters will be going out in the mail later this month, included will be our proposed annual spending plan and matters pertaining to council elections.

Your Pastor's Ponderings

I was reading my devotions this week and I came across a passage from Paul and he was speaking to the church in Thessalonica about leading a life worthy of God. And it occurred to me that this time of the church year, this month of November, and this upcoming holiday that we will soon celebrate resonates with aspects of living a life worthy of God.

On All Saints, we remember that we and all the faithful who have gone before us are still part of the body of Christ – today, tomorrow and forever. And we lift up and remember those saints who have taught us how to live a life of faith – our mother, our father, our grandmother, our grandfather, our aunt, our uncle, our neighbor, our friend of the family, our Sunday School teacher, our pastor. It was my mother who instilled in me a place for God and the need to be in worship and part of our faith community. All Saints reminds us that when it comes to living a life worthy of God that in Christ we belong – belong to a place, to a community and to a God who wants us to be

worship and be involved, not half-hearted but with our whole lives, not just on Sunday but every day.

On Music Sunday, we remember the gifts of faith that God has given us, in particular those musical talents. Although not forgetting that God also gives each of us different gifts like the ability to preach, to teach, to lead, to build, to farm, to care for children, etc. These gifts are not only gifts to be used on Sunday but throughout our week and our lives. Martin Luther says, if you are going to be butcher, be the best butcher you can be as long as you do it to the glory of God and with integrity. (In other words, use your gifts to live a life worthy of God).

On Christ the King Sunday, we remember the gift of risen Christ, his promise to return, and the gifts he gives us in the meanwhile – gift of hope, healing, and new life (to name a few). For this king comes not to rule over us a tyrant but rather to hold sway over our hearts so that our lives might be to others examples of his hope, healing, and new life, that our lives might be a gift of love and service to others. For that is what our Christ and King does for us. He loves us enough to die on a cross for us. He serves us through sharing his word and being an example of what it means to live a life worthy of God.

Which brings us to this day of days in November –the Day of Thanksgiving. But really Thanksgiving shouldn't be just a single day devoted to family, football, feasting, and remembering our blessings in a short prayer before dinner. It's a great day for sure and fitting to celebrate and honor it. But for a life worthy of God, thanksgiving should be a daily thanks living. As Jacqueline Winspear once said, grace isn't a little prayer you chant before receiving a meal. It's a way to live.

God calls us to this way to live – to a life worthy of God. And that worthiness includes remembering we belong to and are expected to be an active part of a place where God dwells and love is active and present in the world (not just once a month or week but every day). That worthiness includes remembering that God has given each us of gifts/talents/treasures to use in service to his name and in love of others (whether it be serving on council, teaching youth or children, studying his word, doing maintenance work, helping the needy, or caring for the stranger). And that worthiness (through

belonging, serving, and recognizing and using one's gifts) culminates in an attitude of thanksgiving – an attitude that recognizes that all we have, all we are, all we will ever be comes from the one who created us, loves us, saves us, and longs to be in relationship with us.

My prayer for each and every one of us is that we find our own ways to live a life worthy of God – ways that including belonging and worshiping, loving and serving, sharing and using our gifts, and being thankful and doing it all for the glory of God every day. When we do, the whole world will see how God's word is at work in us and how together we are doing the work of the kingdom. And then we might just catch a glimpse of that which we are waiting for – a glimpse of heaven on earth. Imagine being part of that.

That's what I think.

Pastor Will



Worship Planning Team – Meeting in November

Looking at my calendar, I see its time to begin planning for Christmas and the New Year and the same goes for our worship planning team. It's time to plan worship themes and hymns for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. We will meet on Tuesday, November 15th at 7pm @Messiah.

Anyone is welcome to join us as we look for various and exciting ways to praise and sing to God.



ANNUAL FOOD BAG PROJECT

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans of New Centerville Lutheran Parish is sponsoring their Annual Food Bag Project. The organization will prepare food bags for people of the community in need or shut in.

Please submit names for those who may benefit:

1. _____
2. _____

Name of person who submitted:

(anonymous requests may not be honored)

PLEASE PLACE IN OFFERING PLATE BY DEC. 11, 2011.

PS – If you would like to make a donation to help with this Food Bag Project, you may do so. Please make your check out to Messiah Lutheran and indicate that the donation is for Food Bags for Families. **(Also, please place in offering plate by Dec. 11th.)**



Come All You People – Come and Praise the Most High...WITH THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING WORSHIP – Tuesday, November 22
Join us for an evening of praise and thanksgiving as our Parish and the Lavansville-Bakersville Parish give thanks to God for our blessings in a joint parish worship service. Our Thanksgiving Service will be on **Tuesday evening, November 22nd at 7pm @Mt. Zion in Bakersville.**

You are also invited to bring along gifts of canned goods or dry foods as part of our thank offering for that evening.

Updates from Camp Sequanota



Camp Sequanota Fall Craft Day



- Saturday

November 5th 9:00 am to 4:00 PM. Come and join us at the Bowersox Enrichment Center for a fun day of crafts. The main craft will be creating gingerbread houses. All ages are welcome and no experience is needed, so we hope you will bring your friends! Costs cover lunch and your supplies: \$15.00 for adults ~ \$10.00 for children under 12. Please call or email the camp for more information or to register (deadline is November 1st). contact@sequanota.com or 814-629-6627.

Pangani Centre Newsletter Update (posted October 2011)

Our coworkers in the field of Jesus Christ; receive greetings from the PLCC family. As the Nation continues mourning the death of Prf. Wangare Maathai (*check out her story on Wikipedia if you want to know more*) we would like our greetings to come from one of her rich sayings which says that that; "It is a little thing a society does that makes a difference. My little thing is to plant a tree" At PLCC our little thing is removing 10 girls from the streets of Nairobi every year.

Pangani Lutheran Children Centre continues taking in street girls between the ages of 4 and 12.years. Most of the girls have never attended school and those who have are dropouts. Some of them have been subjected to beatings, sexual assault, and hunger, unclean and harsh conditions. Many have parents who are unable to care for them because of healthy problems due to HIV/AIDS or addictions; and all other things extreme poverty brings.

Education continues to be the most significant activity in different areas of the children's lives at PLCC. This includes Primary and secondary education, vocational training, recreation through educational trips, debates and camps.

Accommodation this year started off with a higher number of homeless children from the streets. Some of the children are housed either in the hostel or with a parent or relative and are supported by PLCC so that they may attend school. All of their nutritional and

medical needs are met. We are able to shelter 26 girls while approx. 90 girls live at home or with a relative.

PAWENA-- The weaving branch of PLCC now has a new and unique product. We are weaving liturgical stoles in the seasonal colors of red, white, blue, green and purple with African arts. We have many other items such as table runners, table mats, shawls, hand bags and purses for sale.

Building -- We have just completed the first building of a 5 phase building project. This building has four wings, each of which houses twelve girls and their "mother". This building is in the countryside and will remove the girls from the slum areas of Nairobi. We have not moved in as we still need to furnish the building but hope to move 48 girls before the next school term. This is a major accomplishment since we started with ten children in a church building.

Successes -- Since 1994, there have been many accomplishments but perhaps the most fulfilling has been the story of one girl who came to our centre in the early days at the age of **5**. Her parents had died and a neighbor brought her to us. She was sheltered, cared for, fed and educated and has returned to our centre as a teacher to help those who are in the same place she had been.

Also, a touching story of Mary who came to PLCC after struggling with her parents who are also street people. We took Mary to our hostel where we came to learn that she had never slept on a bed before. This touched us and we were eager to know whether she could talk because we stayed with her for a while without talking. When asked anything she would shake her head to agree or disagree. We knew she was suffering inside. But we did not know exactly the problem, though she looked relieved after joining other children in the centre. After some times, she started changing. These days she speaks, plays with others. She even leads the prayers, follows the instructions in informal education class and she is obedient. She will have an opportunity for a brighter future and a story to tell.

Our Current Need

The obstacles that stand on the way of a street child and a child from extremely poor family are greater than before .We are in need of \$14019.00. (USD) However, any grant you can give us will be appreciated and used in our ongoing project. No amount is too small.

Mary Mshana, Director PLCC



Thank you for your donations to Operation Christmas Child this year. We are nearing the date for packing the shoeboxes so get your last-minute items in now. We will be packing the shoeboxes all day, **Friday, November 11th, 2011 from 9am-6pm**. If you can help with the packing, come anytime and stay as little or as long as you like. It's fun and rewarding to place the items in each shoebox, thinking of the child who will be opening it at Christmas. This year we will be following the progress of some of our boxes. We'll let you know where the boxes end up- what country will be the destination of the shoebox. Come to the church basement at **Messiah** and join us on **Friday, November 11th**. All are welcome to help. **Thank You, Earlene and Louise**



CONFIRMATION Calendar for November

Sun, Nov. 6th – Class: 5:15-6:30pm @M (Session 5)
Nov. 11-13 – JR. HIGH RETREAT – NO CLASS
Sun, Nov. 20th -- Class: 5:15-6:30pm @M (Session 6)
Sun, Nov. 27th – THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS

Youth Stuff

Jr. High Retreat – Departure Info

We will meet on Friday, November 11th in the parking lot of **Mt. Calvary at 5:15pm** to carpool up to the Holiday Inn in Johnstown. Please note the departure location has changed from Messiah in the previous letter that was sent out. Please eat dinner ahead of time since we are only going a short distance. We will return after worship on Sunday between 12:30pm and 1pm.



Hoss' Community Night Results

Thanks to our hearty appetites and generosity the Sr. High Youth received a check from Hoss' in the amount of \$153.00.



A Can...ce to Give Thanks

Why do we leave our thanksgiving to one day a year? God blesses us every day with life, with love, with hope, with harmony. We too should thank God every day with our whole heart, body, and mind and our prayers. But as John F. Kennedy once reminded us “the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them”, so let us live lives of Thanksgiving in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

This month you are invited to give thanks in deed by bringing canned goods to place in our nathex to help fill the pantries and cupboards of our neighbors throughout Somerset County. All donated items will be giving to the Somerset Food Pantry as a sign of God at work in the world through our hands. God's Work, Our Hands, Give Thanks.

A Thought to Leave You With – The Pilgrims made seven times more graves than huts. No Americans have ever been more impoverished than these who, nevertheless, set aside a time of thanksgiving.



We ARE...A Mission Minded People

Jesus told his disciples to be witnesses of these things to the ends of the earth, proclaiming good news through word and deed. We have proclaimed God's goodness through our giving in the month of October – not just giving of funds but also of our time and resources.



PART III – Profiles of our Partners: Our Benevolence Dollars at

Work

A Look at the FACE of – **ELCMA-Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia**

The Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia (ELCMA) is a coalition of church wide units, synods, seminaries, congregations and individuals throughout the Appalachian region called:

* To support, develop and encourage the gifts of people of Appalachia, for ministry in Appalachia and to embrace the Appalachian heritage and culture in celebration.

*To connect people with human resources, to advocate for God's people and natural resources in a way that shows faithful stewardship

* To serve as a networking tool in the Appalachian Region, its churches, and beyond, becoming the primary network for the sharing of Appalachian ministries for the ELCA.

To date, some of the ministries that ELCMA has done include

- 1) Developing gardening sites in each synod where ELCMA-trained volunteers educate persons with food insecurities to plant, harvest, prepare, preserve compost and mentor others.
- 2) Offering the workshop "*Emotional & Spiritual Care in Communities*" to help with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. One such workshop was held in the Rockwood area.
- 3) Offering a summer transformation immersion targeting high school youth groups and focused on ending hunger in our region AND in home places.
- 4) Advocating legislatively for/against issues that impact the people of Appalachia.

ELCMA's ministries are far reaching and include synods and congregations in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Maryland, Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.



Wisdom in the Word Parish Bible Study –

Part of being a disciple and living a life worthy of God is diving into God's word for guidance, support and sustenance ala Bible Study. Join us as we meet this month to explore God's word and seek God's wisdom as found in the Book of Revelation. This month we move into Chapters Four and Five and examine the heavenly setting for this book.

This month our Bible Study meets on **Tuesday, November 29th at 7pm @Messiah.**



Shoebbox Scenes -- A Family Devotional Activity for Advent

Too often, it seems that we don't have time for family much less God during the rush, rush of the holidays. We have to buy this, decorate that, plan this, and participate in that so much so that family and faith gets a little left behind. But now we have an activity that combines family, faith, fun, God, devotions, and the holidays all in the same thing – a shoebox. That's right – a shoebox.

Starting this month in the narthex of each congregation, we will be placing a bunch of shoeboxes. Inside each shoebox is an Advent/Christmas hymn. Families from all our congregations are invited to take home one shoebox, read over the words of the hymn, and based on those words design a scene for the inside of the shoebox (much like the shoebox dioramas I often did for English class in my school days).

You can paint a scene, you can build a scene, you can simply write words. Whatever sparks your imagination – one man at Spring Hill (from whose pastor I got this idea) actually designed a scene with wooden cut outs. Let your imaginations fly – design you shoebox scene (based on the words or even a feeling from the hymn) –turn it back into church.

Then on each Sunday in Advent, we will display as many shoeboxes as possible throughout the worship space and narthex. The idea is to change shoeboxes each week. Then look to see if your hymn is played during the Advent or Christmas Season. If your imagination grabs you and there are enough shoeboxes, feel free to take another but for now, only one shoebox per family please.

Please turn in your shoebox scene by November 27th or earlier.



CHRISTMAS EVE PRE-SERVICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are planning to have 10-15 minutes of pre-service music/poems before the 7:30pm Christmas Eve service at Messiah. If you are interested in participating, please sign below and list what you will be doing. We encourage people from all 3 congregations to participate in this event. Please place the form in the offering plate. Last day to sign up is **December 11th, 2011.**

Thank you, Ann Sechler, Music Coordinator Messiah

NAME _____
MUSIC/POEM _____



Advent/Christmas Play – ARE YOU COMING?

Our Advent/Christmas play has been chosen. This year, we present a contemporary play for the Christmas season called...*Are You Coming?*

The cake is ready; decorations are up. A young boy excitedly waits for the guests to arrive at his birthday party. However, everyone is too busy to come. Just when he begins to despair that no one has remembered the importance of his birthday, a small boy arrives--his presence more of a gift than any package could be. Come be reminded of the true meaning behind Christmas and see how the best gift we give or will be given this Christmas won't be found in any store or mall. God has given us the greatest gift of all and invites us to be part of the party for now and all time, the only question that remains is....Are You Coming?

Join us and the New Centerville Lutheran Players as we present "*Are You Coming?*" on **December 11th immediately after late worship @M and our annual meeting.**

In addition to our play, we will have food and fellowship, a meal and merriment. This meal will be provided and all we need to do is...come.

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On the Horizon: Worship Happenings in November

November 6th – All Saints Sunday

Today we give thanks for the saints who have gone before us, for the saints still among us, and for the saints of God still to come. We give thanks for the examples of faithful living that the saints have given us as they navigated the stormy waters of life, and also for the faithful acts of service we are empowered by God's Holy Spirit to do in our own seas. We give thanks, too, for the fullness of eternal life in which the saints of God who have gone before us now partake and which we have yet to fully enjoy.

During worship, we remember the faithful who have died in the past year through the lighting of memorial candles, the ringing of bells, and the speaking of their names.

November 13th – Church Music Sunday/Awakening to God's Grace

Jesus' parable of the talents invites a full-hearted response to God's lavish gifts of faith and purpose: "Use 'em if you've got 'em!" The people of God are meant to be engaged, alert, and ready to share what we have received from our prodigally generous God. A careful reading spotlights the beauty of the faith-generated response to God's lavish grace.

Today, we respond to God's grace through the gift of music and hymns. We remember God's grace portrayed in the songs, psalms, and hymns we sing. We hear God's word in the lyrics and melodies we raise. We also remember all of those in our midst who God has graced with the gift of musical talent and we thank them for sharing it with us today and throughout the church year. We praise God for the gift of music ministry – for choirs, organists, pianists, directors, and other voices and talents. So let us make a loud noise of joy to the Lord this day.

November 20th – Christ the King Sunday

On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. Jesus' point here is to urge his disciples including us to share God's generous saving grace with all. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet awaiting the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

November 27th – First Sunday in Advent

The promise of Advent is that God is always at work in the world, bringing new beginnings and a new creation to people and powers long bent on destruction. Yet, because we live in the generation that exists between the "already" of Christ's resurrection and the "not yet" of God's full restoration of the creation, we cannot know when that final day will arrive. Instead of becoming preoccupied with the end times, we are counseled to live our lives in a state of preparedness—trusting that our home is God's home and that God is coming again to dwell with us. That trust is the strength that sustains us as we "wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ"