

Nativity Lutheran Church

Allison Park, PA 15101

Caring, Witnessing, Serving
January 2022



The winter can be a beautiful time of year. Colder temperatures and warm houses give us the opportunity to slow down and reflect on our lives. The winter also brings darkness and a bitter chill in the air. During the wintertime, many people experience a sense of sadness and lack of motivation; we may even shy away from socialization that usually brings us joy. Some people are more sensitive to the “winter blues” or a condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). People may feel sad for a myriad of reasons. Whatever the reason we may be feeling down, we look for something to lift us up. Where can we find hope, comfort, and light in the midst of despair?

We look to the one who brings light out of the darkness. The one who is the hope of all nations. The rock to which we cling. We look to our friend and Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord!

Jesus says: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (*Matthew 11:28-30*)

Whatever burdens we may be carrying, Jesus promises to walk beside us, and ease our burdens. In him we find hope and rest for our weary souls. In our despair, we cling to the hope we find in Jesus. Jesus is our salvation, fortress, and refuge. He is the answer to every question, concern, fear, and need.

We not only find solace in the promises of scripture, but also in the words of many of our hymns, inspired by scripture and God’s love. One hymn in particular that has brought me comfort in painful times is “You Are Mine.” As I listen to this beautiful song, I am reminded that God claims us and calls us beloved. In the darkness that surrounds us, Christ brings light. We have nothing to fear – for God is always with us and loves us forever. What a wonderful promise that is so evident in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord; who came to tell us, show us, and embody God’s love for us.

“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.” (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)

God’s peace,

Rev. Jennifer Soltis

WOMEN OF THE ELCA NEWS

All women of Nativity and their friends are welcome to join our weekly meetings which will be held in person. Our schedule for **January** is as follows:

Tues., Jan. 4, 10:00 a.m. - Project Day – Quilting

Tues., Jan. 11, 10:00 a.m. - Business Meeting

Tues., Jan. 18, 10:00 a.m. - Bible Study – *The Kingdom of God, Session 1*
“Beautiful Feet: Announcing the Reign of God”

Tues., Jan. 25, 10:00 a.m. - Book Review: The Other Einstein By Marie Benedict

Church Council Highlights from the December Meeting

1.) We discussed who we would ask to replace Rev. Brian Bennett on council. We will vote and appoint them at our next meeting in January.

2.) Given the rising numbers of Covid cases, an increase in hospitalizations, and another new variant, Omicron; council voted to continue our current mask policy. We will revisit this discussion each month, as things are always changing. We thank everyone for their understanding and for continuing to mask out of respect and love for one another.

Council meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of the month. The next council meeting will be on January 11, 2022 at 7:00pm. All members are welcome to attend.

Notes from the Church Office

I would like to take up a few lines in this newsletter to let everyone know how excited I am to be serving as Nativity’s Administrative Assistant. I am grateful to Jane Dolhopf, the Mutual Ministry Committee and Council for giving me this opportunity. At times, the tasks and responsibilities of this position can be overwhelming but I have been patiently guided by many helping hands. Over the coming weeks I will gradually pick up more responsibilities and Pastor Jen and I will prioritize various projects to be tackled. I appreciate everyone’s patience as I learn the ropes!

I can appreciate now the wonderful job Nancy Coon did for our church over the years. I hope she enjoys her well-deserved retirement!

My thanks and appreciation to Pastor Jen and Kim Brandt for helping me complete the bulletin and this newsletter. Kim did an amazing job over these past few months and has spent many sessions tutoring me over the phone. Also, many thanks to Tom Beecher, Charlene Ott, Rev. Cyril Hurnyak, Heather Johnson, Ruth Kiefer, Donna Heyne, Linda Ryan and Sharon Schmitz for patiently answering my questions and especially for forgiving my mistakes.

Directory Changes: Directory updates are underway! Let Dottie know of any new addresses, cell phone numbers or email addresses. You can email us at NativityLC@Verizon.net, leave a phone message (412-487-1071) or just write a note for Dottie and leave on the secretary’s door. Deadline for any changes: January 31, 2022

Flowers: If you would like to provide altar flowers for your special Sundays in 2022, please sign the flower chart on the bulletin board across from the nursery.

Reverse Advent Grocery Collection Results

Members of the congregation donated 37 bags and 6 cases of groceries for the Reverse Advent Collection. This was the largest amount of groceries ever for one month. Thanks for your generosity.

Worship Attendance and Offerings for December

Sunday, 12/5/2021	51	\$ 7,287.50
Sunday, 12/12/2021	45	\$ 7,291.50
Blue Christmas, 12/16/2021	10	
Sunday, 12/19/2021	46	\$ 2,926
Christmas Eve, 12/24/2021	62	\$2,913
Sunday, 12/26/2021	20	\$255

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Tom Beecher	3
Kelsey King	5
Adam Mitchell	6
Robert Bessemer	9
Emily Werner	10
Shaine Coon	11
Gayle Henne	13
Olivia Messner	16
Brody Bukauskas	20
Tyler Coon	20
Laura Richardson	20
Mary Heyne	24
Alan Wolfe	26
Jack Brookman	29
Jean Chantz	29
Cheryl Kilbert	30
Jim Kiefer	31

JANUARY BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Jean C. Amstutz	1//55
Charles T. Brandt, Jr.	1/13/02
Andrew L. Brandt	1/13/02
Erin M. Brandt	1/13/02
Richard A. Edmonds III	1/13/19
Laura Hazelton	1/29/84
Taylor A. Radebaugh	1/27/91
Joshua D. Rembe	1//04

Prayer List: You may use this prayer as you pray for those on our prayer list, and all those for whom you wish to pray....

Almighty and merciful God, you are the source of health and healing; you alone can bring calmness and peace. Grant to our siblings, an awareness of your presence and a strong confidence in you. In their pain, weariness, and anxiety, surround them with your care, protect them by your loving might, and grant to them once again the gifts of health and strength and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

(Prayer from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Occasional Services for the Assembly. Copyright 2009 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Published by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers)

Need to submit a Prayer Request? You can do so on-line. Visit our website's home page [Nativity Lutheran Church – Nativity Lutheran Church of Allison Park, PA \(nativitylutheranchurch15101.org\)](http://NativityLutheranChurch.com) and click the link for the Prayer Request form. Your request will be automatically sent to the church office and the Outreach Committee!

Also, there are Prayer Request forms in the Narthex. Complete the form and leave on the church office door. You can also call the church office and leave a message. Please don't forget to leave YOUR name so we can follow up on the prayer request.

Our On-going Prayer List:

Mary Pataky
Ken & Jean Johnson
Pat Brick
Lorraine Howell
Joe Lambert
Eric Holsinger
Rachael Faulkner
Carol Gustafson
Allen Kirkland
Connie Whittiker
Sharon Greer



Service Personnel:

Sarah Foster



We remember in our prayers those who have recently lost loved ones. We pray especially for the family and friends of: George Francis and Loretta Jones.



January
2022
Kantor's Korner

On December 10, 2021, I watched Senator Bob Dole's Funeral Service at the National Cathedral in Washington. I was most happy to hear the Gathering Hymn, "Lift High the Cross." I don't know if it was chosen by him but if you live for 98 years, you have a lot of time to plan your own funeral.

This hymn has been a favorite of mine. So much so that back in 1976 I submitted this hymn to the "Hymn Text" commission as well as the "Hymn Tune" commission of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. In my seminary days, I once found it in an Anglican Hymnal, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. I was so impressed with it that I was on a mission to have it included in the new *Lutheran Book of Worship*, so I submitted it for inclusion. I like to tease my fellow pastors by saying "it was my greatest contribution to American Lutheranism."

In recent times it seems to have become a popular hymn in both Lutheran and Episcopal Churches. So, to say the least, I was overjoyed to hear it sung at Senator Bob Dole's funeral, for he was a man whom I admired. I am uncertain as to why the hymn was chosen. Maybe it was the words of the third stanza.

*All new born soldiers of the crucified
Bear on their brows the seal of him who died.*

Down through the years I have written many sermons comparing those who serve in the military and those who serve in the Church. There is something each group has in common. Both of them are held together by one word: SACRIFICE. It is the ability to be willing to give up who we are to attain the greater good. It is innate in the very words of Christian discipleship. "We must lose our lives in order to find them."

About a week before the funeral, I saw an earlier TV interview between Lester Holt and Bob Dole. Lester asked him: "Of all the things you have accomplished how would you like to be remembered?" Bob Dole's answer was so representative as to whom he was: "that I was a Veteran." Remembering his work in Civil Rights, his legislation for the inclusion of the disabled, his determination for the creation of a "Martin Luther King, Jr." Holiday, I found his answer reflective of a man who exuded humility. On Saturdays he would often be found at the World War II Memorial thanking other veterans for their service.

May the third stanza of "Lift High the Cross,"

*All new born soldiers of the crucified
Bear on their brows the seal of him who died.*

also remind us of our Baptism and join those who have gone before us in proclaiming the sacrifice of God's own Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

S. Cyril Hurnyak, Kantor

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 2, 2022 Second Sunday of Christmas

Readings and Psalm

Jeremiah 31:7-14 *Joy at the gathering of God's scattered flock*

Psalm 147:12-20 *Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:12)*

Ephesians 1:3-14 *The will of God made known in Christ*

John 1:[1-9] 10-18 *God with us: the incarnation of the Word*

Sunday, January 9, 2022 Baptism of Our Lord

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 43:1-7 *When you pass through the waters, do not fear, for I am with you*

Psalm 29 *The voice of the LORD is upon the waters. (Ps. 29:3)*

Acts 8:14-17 *Prayer and laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit*

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 *The baptism of Jesus with the descent of the Holy Spirit*

Sunday, January 16, 2022 Second Sunday after Epiphany

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 62:1-5 *As bridegroom and bride rejoice, so shall God rejoice over you*

Psalm 36:5-10 *We feast upon the abundance of your house, O LORD. (Ps. 36:8)*

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 *There are a variety of gifts but the same Spirit*

John 2:1-11 *The wedding at Cana*

Sunday, January 23, 2022 Third Sunday after Epiphany

Readings and Psalm

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Ezra reads the law of Moses before the people

Psalm 19

The teaching of the LORD revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

You are the body of Christ

Luke 4:14-21

Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah

Sunday, January 30, 2022 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Readings and Psalm

Jeremiah 1:4-10

I appointed you a prophet to the nations

Psalm 71:1-6

From my mother's womb you have been my strength. (Ps. 71:6)

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak without love, I am a noisy gong

Luke 4:21-30

Jesus says a prophet is not accepted in his hometown

January 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 
2 9 am – Sunday School 10:15 am - Worship	3 8 pm – AA Meeting	4 10am WELCA mtg Project Day - Quilting	5 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	6 	7 7 pm - NA Meeting	8
9 9 am – Sunday School 10:15 am - Worship	10 8 pm – AA Meeting	11 10am WELCA mtg Business mtg 7:00pm Church Council	12 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	13	14 7 pm - NA Meeting	15
16 9 am – Sunday School 10:15 am - Worship	17 8 pm – AA Meeting	18 10am WELCA mtg Bible Study	19 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	20	21 7 pm - NA Meeting	22
23 9 am – Sunday School 10:15 am - Worship	24 8 pm – AA Meeting	25 10am WELCA mtg Book Review	26 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	27	28 7 pm - NA Meeting	29
30 9 am – Sunday School 10:15 am - Worship	31 8 pm – AA Meeting					