

Lehigh Presbytery News

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December 22, 2016



The First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem PC(USA) warmly welcomes you to celebrate Christmas Eve with them.

The Rev. Dr. Bill Hess will be preaching and music by the Hill to Hill Brass Quartet and David Macbeth leading the First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem PCUSA Chancel Choir.

We look forward to celebrating with you!

7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary of the
First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem PC(USA)
2344 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NOVEMBER STATED MEETING OF LEHIGH PRESBYTERY

The Stated Meeting of the Lehigh Presbytery took place on November 15, 2016 at the Community Church of Mt Bethel-Portland. The meeting was opened with prayer by Ruling Elder Jack Felch, Moderator of the Lehigh Presbytery.



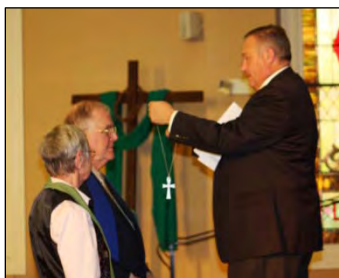
*Nicole Vogel & Christy Potter-Kass
moved to candidate status*

Teaching Elder Tim Dooner, chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, presented Inquirers Nicole Vogel (under care from the First Presbyterian Church of Allentown) and Christy Potter-Kass (under care from the First Presbyterian Church of Easton). Both young women shared information about themselves and their class work at Moravian Seminary. They were then asked questions from the floor. The Lehigh Presbytery approved the recommendation to move both inquirers to candidate.

Judy Steinberg, Chair of the Committee on Shared Gifts presented the slate of nominations for the committees. Dr. Jack Felch was elected Moderator and the Rev. Carol Brown as Vice Moderator of Lehigh Presbytery for 2017. William Bryson (College Hill PC in Easton), Rev. Ruth Ann Christopher (Faith UPC Pen Argyl) and Rev. Ed Freeborn (East Stroudsburg PC) were elected to the class of 2019 on the Kirkwood Camp Board of Trustees. Rev. Greg Palmer (Validated Ministry), Rev. Ed Freeborn (East Stroudsburg PC), and Rev. Susan Tindall (College Hill PC, Easton) were elected to the class of 2019 on the Committee on Ministry and Rev. Tillie Chase was elected Chair until June 2017 when the Rev. Sue Marie Baskette will take over as chair. Gail Watts (First PC Bethlehem PCUSA) and Daniel Brashler (College Hill PC Easton) were elected to the Class of 2019 on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Jim Robinson (Faith PC Emmaus) and Ben Hooper (Catasauqua PC) were elected to the Class of 2019 for the Committee on Shared Gifts. Alexis Green (Washington PC Reading) was elected to the Class of 2017; and Rev. Kari Olson (Hope of Christ PC), Frank Brooks (Faith UPC Pen Argyl), and Rev. Dave Duquette

(Pennside PC) were elected to the Class of 2019 of the Presbytery Lead Team. There are still many vacancies and we encourage you to prayerfully consider placing your name for nomination to one of these.

Treasurer, Marianne Kitzmiller offered the Treasurers Report which included reading of the **Operating Budget for 2017** and the **Mission Budget for 2017**. It was noted that the Mission Budget is on the conservative side in order to support the 2017 programs and the ministry that God has called us to do. A power point presentation set to music was shared showing how our Mission donations were used in 2016.



Installation of Elder Jack Felch as Moderator and the Rev. Carol Brown as Vice Moderator

A very special Worship service planned by the Rev. Kari Olson (Hope of Christ PC, Summit Hill) followed. **The Rev. Dr. Nancy Lammers Gross**, from Princeton Theological Seminary, provided a sermon on **“Hope”**. During the service the 2017 Moderator, Ruling Elder Jack Felch and Vice Moderator, Teaching Elder Carol Brown were installed and the Futuring Process Team was Commissioned.

The Necrology of Teaching and Ruling Elders was read. Participating in the Worship Service were the Rev. Tim Dooner (Faith PC Emmaus), Rev. David Duquette (Pennside PC Reading), Rev. Ed Freeborn (East Stroudsburg PC), Ruling Elder Ron Henderson (United PC Slatington), Ruling Elder Jack Felch (First PC Allentown) and Ruling Elder Jenny Miller (Newton Presbytery). Lisa Sandt, organist from Community Presbyterian Church in Mt. Bethel provided music throughout the service.



Teaching Elder Ruth Ann Christopher spoke about the improvements made to **Kirkwood Camp**. She presented a power point showing the improvements that were possible with the donation from Lehigh Presbytery – Camp Brainerd. Some of the special items at Brainerd have found a new home at Kirkwood Camp and there were two new cabins built to honor the Brainerd legacy. Tommy Campbell, Camp Director thanked the Presbytery for its generosity and for making the camp a very special camp. He has already begun working on next year’s program.

Synod Transitional Executive, Teaching Elder Sue Wonderland presented the Mission Consultation and explained the Presbytery Lead Team had reached out to the Synod and asked for help. A plan was proposed to walk with the Synod to get an idea of what we needed and how to make it happen. Synod Stated Clerk, Wayne Yost came up with the Mission Consultation of **who God is calling us to be**. We have created a **Futuring Process Team** and Consultant Phil Bergey from Design Group International will be taking this walk with us to help us look ahead. The Synod has provided a 2016 New Initiative Grant to cover the expenses. David Oyler (Erie Presbytery Executive) and Kathleen Sillman (Huntingdon Presbytery), Vice Moderator of the Synod of the Trinity, will serve as advisors to this Team. We are all **hopeful** of what Christ will reveal. We will be using the previous Mission studies and Church assessments, and all data collected from our churches to evaluate as we move forward.



Sue continued by bringing information regarding the kick off to the **300th Anniversary of the Synod of the Trinity**. The theme for the coming year will reflect around stories to tell, and to share gifts. It is a yearlong celebration with gifts of abundance focusing on World Mission, freedom grants, task forces on Hate Groups, Trinity Tales, revealing hope and John Calvin’s Trinity explorations. Sue encouraged all churches to participate and be a part of the celebration. She asked that we contact Michael Givler at the Synod offices with our stories.

Committee on Ministry Chair, Teaching Elder Tillie Chase introduced **Elizabeth Utley** from Salem Presbytery in North Carolina who has received a call from the First Presbyterian Church in Stroudsburg.

Beth shared her background. She graduated from Union Seminary in N. C. Beth professed she will be **“living into the hope at Stroudsburg”**. Beth is a candidate under care of Salem Presbytery who requested that Lehigh Presbytery examine her for Ordination. Lehigh Presbytery approved her for ordination and voted to receive her as a member when the way is clear. The terms of call were then approved and the Moderator was granted permission to appoint a commission to Ordain and Install Beth at the First Presbyterian Church of Stroudsburg, when the way is clear. Beth’s husband Rev. Carl Utley was introduced. Carl currently serves as an Interim minister in Salem Presbytery, N.C. and will be making the move to Stroudsburg with Beth. Tillie Chase called members from the First Presbyterian Church in Stroudsburg forward to offer a prayer to welcome Beth Utley as the new pastor of their church.

The presbytery approved the dissolution of the call between Rev. Tim Dooner and Faith Presbyterian Church in Emmaus. Tim has received a call to the Valley Forge Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania. The Presbytery wished him well and will miss his leadership.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Vice Moderator Carol Brown.

Marsha Heimann, Stated Clerk

Expecting Hope

It’s Advent once again, a time that is pregnant with hope and expectation as we anticipate the coming of Jesus. Our presbytery is also filled with hope and expectation as we look to our future and discern the way forward. A team of ruling and teaching elders, now known as the Expecting Hope Team was commissioned at the November Presbytery meeting to work with a consultant (hired with grant money from the Synod of the Trinity) to do this work of discernment.

One of the images of Scripture that resonated with this team is from Galatians 4:19, where Paul writes, **“My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...”** What if the pains the Church is experiencing aren’t dying pains, but labor pains? Paul speaks of himself as being in labor with (expecting) the Galatian Christians.

I’d like to offer a few observations about this metaphor and how it relates to our work as the Expecting Hope team.

- Labor is hard and agonizing work.
- Once labor begins, there is no going back. The baby is coming. You cannot go back to life before the pregnancy.
- While there is joy over the new life being born, there can be grief about the loss of the old life.
- While the person in labor can (and should) cooperate with the process, it is ultimately beyond our control. We participate in the work God is doing among us.
- Paul twists the metaphor: Although Paul is in labor with the Galatians, the end result is not that the Galatians are born, but that Christ is formed in and among the Galatians. Likewise, our goal is not for a new presbytery to be born; our goal is that Christ would be formed in and among us.

Because we believe that this work of Christ being formed among us is ultimately a work God does, we are asking you to pray with and for us. If you would be willing to serve as a dedicated prayer partner, praying regularly and specifically for our team’s work, please contact Rev. Kari Olson (pastorkariolson@gmail.com). Our team would be glad to keep you informed of our work so that you can pray for specific aspects of the discernment process.

**Kirkwood Camp and
Conference Center**

127 Kirkwood Rd
Stroudsburg, PA 18360

www.KirkwoodCamp.org

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**First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem PC(USA)
Celebrates with a Thanksgiving Eve Service**



On November 23, 2016, the members of the First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem PC(USA) gathered for a Thanksgiving Eve Service in gratitude for God's blessings throughout the year. Nearly 190 worshippers were in attendance that evening.

David Macbeth, their new music director, led the choir and the Main Street Brass in filling the sanctuary with wonderful music. Their pastor, Dr. Bill Hess, preached on the importance of

thankfulness during life's trials. He asked the congregation to look back on their lives, on their experiences of justice and injustice, of kindnesses and of cruelties, and say "*O thank you, God*" because we believe in God's providence that does not fail. Assisting Dr. Hess in leading worship were Rev. Elizabeth Goudy, pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of Lehigh Valley, and Lehigh Presbytery teaching elders Tillie Chase, David Duquette, Joyce Smothers, and Laura Stone.

Join Our Youth Ministry Team and Share Your Skills and Talents While Experiencing Ministry in an Established Youth Ministry



LOOKING FOR TWO SUMMER INTERNS:

College students or seminarians

May 31-August 12, 2017

Full-time, Paid Internship

SUMMER INTERNS:

- ✦ minister with 6th through 12th graders in various settings including Sunday worship, Middle School and High School fellowships, Mission Mornings, Workcamps, and other special summer events
- ✦ actively participate in team planning and leadership of the Summer youth Ministry and more!

Check out the full job description and application online at www.fpcallentown.org

Application deadline is March 15, 2017

For more information, contact:

The Rev. Stephen T. Emick

Pastor, Spiritual Formation and Discipleship

Stephen.emick@fpcallentown.org

610-395-3781, Ext. 19

*Thank
you*

My family and I want to thank you all for the prayers, warm thoughts and cards following the passing of my sister Kathleen. When folks ask me why I spend so much of my time doing "church stuff", this is the reason why. The love that enfolds you at times of need is powerful.

With grateful appreciation to all,
Sally Heimbach & family



REVEALING HOPE



The Synod of the Trinity is celebrating its 300th Anniversary in a special way. Unveiled at the Synod Assembly meeting was a new feature called “Revealing Hope,” which will tell the stories of hope and resurrection of the people within the Synod. The Synod is seeking ideas for subjects of these videos and stories that will be available on the Synod’s website, newsletter and social media.

They have received a few suggestions and are working on moving forward with them, but they need more. Do you know of someone who is living out a life of hope?

The video example shared, featured David Bailey’s story of hope in the face of a brain cancer diagnosis. These stories of hope do not necessarily revolve around illness or trauma, they can be about people who approach their day with a special and unique joy, who see a day as being half full instead of half empty, who can tackle a situation with a smile or determination because of their belief in God.

If you know of someone who fits this description or has a special story of hope to tell, please send an email with some details about them to Mike Givler at the Synod (contact information is listed below). Attached you will find the bulletin that was handed out at the Synod Assembly as you consider someone for this special series.

Mike Givler

Communications Coordinator
The Synod of the Trinity, 3040 Market Street, Camp Hill, PA 17011
717-737-0421, ext. 233 MGivler@syntrinity.org

NEXT GENERATION MINISTRY



The Synod of the Trinity is currently beginning a process to discover and develop a network of leaders within the next generation area of ministry (which covers birth through graduation and even college-age ministry).

In our first phase we want to find out more about what is happening in the areas of children's and youth ministry across our synod - whether it is a small church, large church, in between, or on the community or Presbytery level. The ultimate goal is to develop a network of leaders throughout the region who can provide resources and support for others within the Synod. If you (or someone you know) is committed to this area of ministry, please contact our NextGen networker, Rev. Brian Wallace.

Brian has spent more than a decade working in youth ministry and recently joined the staff of Pittsburgh Presbytery. He is excited to work with others who are passionate about the spiritual growth of children and youth and to see a network evolve that connects and encourages leaders with one another.

E-mail Brian: nextgen@syntrinity.org

2016 Presbyterian Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study

The 120 year old *Presbyterian Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* has transformed to a new digital-only resource. By offering this as a free resource through our website, we are able to broaden its reach, share inspiring content in a timelier manner, and demonstrate better stewardship.

Click the link to read the daily Mission Yearbook article.
<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/yearbook/>



The new Presbyterian Giving Catalog will be arriving in mail boxes soon! To begin your holiday shopping now, visit presbyteriangifts.org.

We have been working hard to ensure that Presbyterian Giving Catalog resources are easy to access and understand. Please visit our updated resource page (<http://specialofferings.pcusa.org/pgcresources>) for downloadable resources, stories from congregations, and examples of

how gifts like yours can impact an entire community.

Join us to see how a small gift can make a big impact.



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

From our sleigh to yours:

Joy and Peace

Wayne, Chantal, Gwenn, Mike, Catherine & Sue



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:1

In this season of hope, expectation, promise and birth... we send warm greetings and prayers for blessings now and into the New Year! It is said that through Mary's womb God was "smuggled" into the world as Emmanuel.

That word "smuggled" has always intrigued me!

When I think of something being smuggled, I am aware that:

... there is a sense of "sneaking" in, so as to protect? hide? insure safe, unharmed passage?

... certain people are aware of what is being smuggled, others are not.

... for good or for ill, the smuggled item is REALLY IMPORTANT (at least to the smuggler!).

For the most part, God did emerge into this world as Jesus, at first ordinary and unknown — except for a few disreputable shepherds and wise strangers who might be suspect as outsiders! If God's plan was truly to "smuggle him in" — it worked! Only as time passed did the world come to know the wonder of Emmanuel.

And that is how the story goes.

Except, each Christmas, as WE re-member and the story finds new life in us, smuggled or not, we know who that precious baby is and will become. And we have confidence that the story will bear out our understanding — every time! We don't have to wait until the grown man Jesus is baptized and enters ministry to act on the message that will come. We know who he is and what the message will be — we know it in Advent, through Christmas and on into the New Year!

What God smuggles into the world on Christmas morning — that precious, protected, important GIFT in Jesus — is already a known to us!

And nobody told us that we had to keep that knowledge, that part of the story, a secret-even in advent!

In fact, we have been told quite the opposite, haven't we? Haven't we?

Indeed!

Merry Christmas... Happy New Year

Susan Faye Wonderland

Transitional Executive, Synod of the Trinity





thethoughtfulchristian.com

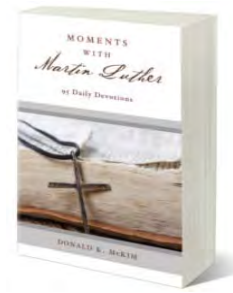
Moments with Martin Luther

95 Daily Devotions

Donald K. McKim

~~\$15.00~~ **\$9.00**

You Save 40%



As the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation approaches, take time to reflect on the writing and through of its founder Martin Luther. Inside, readers will find ninety-five entries, each with a passage of writing from Luther followed by a reflection by Reformed theologian and writer Donald K. McKim.



Make a gift to mission co-worker support now and double its value!

Gifts from individuals, combined with Basic Mission Support funds from congregations, enable Presbyterian mission personnel to work in approximately 50 countries.

As church wide mission funding continues to change, we cannot keep dedicated mission workers in service unless Presbyterians support us with gifts over and above their congregational giving. Presbyterian World Mission will send as many mission workers as the church will support. Your financial gift blesses our sisters and brothers in countries all across the globe by expanding World Mission's capacity to respond to urgent requests for mission personnel.

Some generous Presbyterians have agreed to **match all gifts** to Presbyterian mission personnel support ***up to \$56,000 between now and December 31, 2016***. This means your \$50 gift will double in impact and value by leveraging a matching gift for all mission co-workers. You can help alleviate poverty, hopelessness, and violence in every region of the word.

When you give, simply write matching gift E132192 in the comments filed.

WURLITZER ORGAN



Wurlitzer organ needs a new home. The organ works well and is FREE to any interested party who can haul it away. If anyone is interested, call Stephen Behun at 570-668-3070.

2017 Standard Mileage Rates for Business, Medical and Moving Announced

IR-2016-169, Dec.13, 2016

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today issued the 2017 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2017, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 53.5 cents per mile for business miles driven, down from 54 cents for 2016
- 17 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes, down from 19 cents for 2016
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The business mileage rate decreased half a cent per mile and the medical and moving expense rates each dropped 2 cents per mile from 2016. The charitable rate is set by statute and remains unchanged.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs.

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

A taxpayer may not use the business standard mileage rate for a vehicle after using any depreciation method under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS) or after claiming a Section 179 deduction for that vehicle. In addition, the business standard mileage rate cannot be used for more than four vehicles used simultaneously.



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FIRST FRIDAY

Luncheon Discussion

January 6 @ 12:00-1:00pm ~ ~ Literacy Transforms Lives

MaryAnn Przekurat, Executive Director & CEO, Literacy Center of the Lehigh Valley
Seegers Union, Rooms 111 & 112 (Muhlenberg College)

~Free and open to the public~ (Bring your lunch or buy lunch at Seegers Union)

Click [here](#) for upcoming First Fridays

Click [here](#) for the IJCU YouTube channel

MINICOURSE

(Four Tuesday evening sessions) **January 24 - February 14 @ 7:00-9:00pm**

Understanding Power & Prejudice: Building Bridges Across Difference

Jude-Laure Denis, Executive Director, POWER-NE

The Rev. Dr. Peter Pettit, IJCU Director

Seegers Union, GQ Annex (Muhlenberg College)

Click [here](#) for brochure.