

Lehigh Presbytery News

710 N. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, PA 18104
610-391-9020 * office@lehighpresbytery.org * http://lehighpresbytery.org



December 31, 2015

Letter from Kirkwood Camp

*I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ~Isaiah 43:19~*

Dear Friends,

We are grateful that you have been a part of this new thing in Christian camping in the Philadelphia and Lehigh Presbyteries. The coming together of Camp Brainerd and Camp Kirkwood is a reality that honors traditions and looks ahead to a new thing together. A really wonderful new thing this 2015 camping season is an overwhelming number of campers. We have enjoyed tremendous success in our first season together as you can see from what our campers and counselors have to say:

- Ⓢ "Of course it was rewarding, God never disappoints."
- Ⓢ "I had to explain my faith and that made it stronger."
- Ⓢ "Bible study is a great way to strengthen your faith."
- Ⓢ "It was rewarding to see the campers so influenced by their time at camp."
- Ⓢ "Worship was energetic and fun."
- Ⓢ "I saw Jesus at work."
- Ⓢ "My favorite activity this year was worship because I got to sing my heart out."
- Ⓢ "Everything was really fun! I'll be back next year."
- Ⓢ "I love this camp!"

This year held many new experiences. Those who have known Kirkwood in years past enjoyed a sense of community around the new circle of swings. They found worship at the new Gorman Roof chapel to be a splendid addition, and many hands eagerly took part in ringing the Brainerd Bell each day. Those who joined us from Camp Brainerd enjoyed the sense of adventure found in walking across the swinging bridge for the first time. They rushed to explore the wonders of the caboose and excitedly tested their mettle on the high ropes. As this new thing unfolded, memories were made, friendships forged, and faith deepened.

There are many things you can be excited about and you can see the fruits of your participation in this new thing, a special ministry that honors the past while looking toward a healthy, Spirit-filled future. We are experiencing a beautiful partnership. Observing the campers, one could not distinguish which camper was from what presbytery.

So we want to thank you in advance for supporting our year-end campaign, which helps to determine the success of next year's camping season. In this year-end campaign, we are looking to raise \$55,000 (checks can be mailed to 127 Kirkwood Rd, Stroudsburg, PA 18360.) We celebrate the joy and growth our campers experienced at camp this summer, we rejoice in our successful

camping season and we celebrate our partnering with you, without whom all this would not be possible.

Your Kirkwood-Brainerd Transition Team

Carter Lester and Ruth Ann Christopher, Co-Moderators

For a glimpse into this summer's camp, there's a great video at: <https://youtu.be/mCPURbMdT98>

***Kirkwood Camp needs our help to successfully close the financial year.
Checks dated by December 31, 2015 and deposited before
January 10, 2016 will be applied for the 2015 Budget Year
to close the gap. Can you help?***

Thank you

Highlights from the November 17, 2015 Presbytery Meeting

The Stated Meeting of the Lehigh Presbytery took place on November 17, 2015 at Pleasant Valley Presbyterian Church in Brodheadsville, PA. The meeting was opened with prayer by Teaching Elder F. Leon Morgan. Ann Campbell, Clerk of Session, delivered greetings from the Pleasant Valley congregation, shared some of the church's history, recent changes in the layout of the church, and details to help navigate the church building. Ann also shared about their mission in the Dominican Republic.

Ruling Elder Sally Heimbach, Chair of the Committee on Shared Gifts, presented the 2016 Nominations for the Slate of Officers, Committee Members and Commissioners for the 2016 General Assembly which were approved. Rev. Susan Bennetch was elected Moderator of Lehigh Presbytery and Ruling Elder Jack Felch, Vice Moderator. Commissioners to the 222nd General Assembly of the PC(USA) were elected. They were Rev. Tim Dooner, Rev. Sue Bennetch, Elder Alicia Shussett, Elder Ben Hooper, and YAAD Mary Lazar. Elder Heimbach announced that there are still vacancies open on the Committee of Shared Gifts, the Permanent Judicial Commission, Committee on Ministry, and the Camp Kirkwood Board of Trustees. Please contact her if interested.

Teaching Elder Tim Dooner introduced Christy Potter-Kass, member of the First Presbyterian Church of Easton, who was received as an Inquirer under care. Christy is a student at Moravian Theological Seminary. Christy shared her faith journey stating that her faith as grown and deepened as she has aged.



Ruling Elder Sally Heimbach presented on behalf of Treasurer Marianne Kitzmiller the report of the Mission Budget. Elder Heimbach reported that the Presbytery Lead Team has been listening to the congregations concerns. The 2016 Mission Budget is to support congregations and aid them in becoming more vital. A motion to accept the Mission Budget was moved and approved.

Teaching Elder Tim Dooner continued the mission conversation. The Mission Budget is to provide funding for churches to be inspired to create new ideas and possibilities to make a difference in their churches. Rev. Dooner explained that the hope is to provide matching funds so all small churches can have called and installed pastors by creating a relationship between two or three congregations. Applications will be made available for these grants. Teaching Elder Lindsey Harren-Lewis expressed her excitement and joy for this proposed plan to reach out and support our smaller congregations.



A Service of Worship was performed by Moderator David Duquette for the Installation of the 2016 Moderator Teaching Elder Sue Bennetch and Vice-Moderator Ruling Elder Jack Felch. The changing of the Stole took place and the Moderators cross was presented to Moderator Bennetch at the close of the ceremony.

Ruling Elder Marsha Heimann, Stated Clerk read the 2015 Necrology. May these 27 faithful Elders find peace in the companionship of God.

Ruling Elder Donald Brown provided an update on the PET (Presbytery Engagement Team) for First Presbyterian Church, Reading that has been working with the church as they go through the gracious dismissal process of the Lehigh Presbytery.

Teaching Elder David Duquette provided an update on the PET for First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem. The PET with First Bethlehem is in the early stages of the discernment process.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Teaching Elder Barbara Smith and as the custom of the Pleasant Valley Congregation "Blest Be the Tie that Binds"

Newly Installed Moderator Bennetch declared the meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.

Marsha Heimann, Stated Clerk

PART-TIME SECRETARY NEEDED



The First Presbyterian Church of Hokendauqua, Whitehall, is seeking a part-time Church Secretary. Hours required are four days of three hours a week. Knowledge of Microsoft Word and Access needed. Interested parties may call the church office at 610-264-9693 to set up an interview with the Personnel Committee.

The next Stated Meeting of Lehigh Presbytery will be held on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church of East Stroudsburg.

RULING ELDERS AND TREASURERS



Reverend Ted McCulloch - Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) - Louisville

Back in the days when circuses traveled the land, there was a strongman as one of the sideshow acts that would demonstrate his power before a large audience. Toward the end, he squeezed the juice from a lemon between his hands. He then said to the audience, "I will offer \$200 to anyone in the audience who can squeeze another drop from this lemon."

A thin, scholarly looking elderly woman with glasses on a chain around her neck, came forward, picked up the lemon, squeezed it hard, and managed to get a drop of juice out of the lemon. The strongman was amazed. As he paid the woman the \$200, he said, "I've got to ask, 'What is the secret of your strength?'"

"Practice," the woman answered. "I was the treasurer of First Presbyterian Church for thirty-two years and have always had to squeeze something out of nothing!"

Often the task of our church treasurers seems to always be to try to make something out of nothing. The task of the church treasurer is not easy. Sessions, not to mention pastors or even congregations, often ask treasurers to find ways to pay for the things they want or believe the church needs to fund. Almost inevitably, this can lead to tensions between the session and the treasurer. Sessions can be perceived by treasurers as spending without regard for the church finances and treasurers can be perceived as unreasonably standing in the way of the session's funding of church ministry.

So how should ruling elders and church treasurers relate?

The *Book of Order* only provides one reference to treasurers. The Form of Government, G-3.0205, says "The session shall elect a treasurer for such term as the session shall decide and shall supervise his or her work or delegate that supervision to a board of deacons or trustees." But from that one sentence, we see a couple of important things about how ruling elders on a session and treasurers are to relate.

This declaration is a reminder that it is the session that elects the treasurer. The treasurer is not chosen by the pastor or even by the congregation as a whole. The session elects the treasurer. That's also why the session shall decide and shall supervise the treasurer's work. To put it another way, the treasurer's ultimate responsibility is to the session. This is the reason that the full text of G-3.0205 includes that sessions shall make sure certain procedures are followed regarding the counting and recording of offerings; the keeping of financial books and records that are also open to inspection by church officers (which is what session members are); and at least annual reports of all financial activities.

One other important note is that G-3.0205 says that the session shall elect the treasurer to "such term as the session shall decide. ..." Treasurers are not elected for life though sometimes it probably feels that way. Instead, they are elected for a term—that term can be one year or ten years or any length set by the session—as long as there is a specific term length.

That term length can actually be a great opportunity for the ruling elders and treasurer to relate. When the end of a treasurer's term is approaching, a session can be helpful to treasurers, especially treasurers that the session wants to have to continue, to not only ask if the treasurer wants to continue but to really listen to the treasurer's answer. Many times, out of love for their congregation, a treasurer will say something similar to, "Well, if no one else will do it, I guess I can do it again." And a session will leap on that as all the answer they need. But what if ruling elders really listened to that answer as an opportunity to have a meaningful conversation with the treasurer about whether she or he wants to continue and what, if any, adjustments can be made. The work is difficult and stressful enough without feeling like you can never step away from it.

Treasurers are a valued and necessary person in every congregation. The task may often seem like squeezing out one more drop of juice from a dried up lemon but the vast majority of treasurers never quit trying to do so. In that way, ruling elders and treasurers are exactly alike—they both love their congregations with all their hearts and all their souls. That may be the most important thing of all to know.

New Vacation Bible School curriculum explores clean water as mission

'Water All Around the World' designed for children K-5, with preschool inclusion

[Living Waters for the World](#) (LWW), a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [Synod of Living Waters](#), has produced a Vacation Bible School curriculum that repackages many of the key concepts from the ministry into child-friendly learning units and activities. "[Water All Around the World](#)" is the latest LWW effort at spreading the message that clean water is an essential component of health and human development.

This Bible school takes our children around the world to visit children in other countries to see how they live and how they deal with limited access to safe water."

Each day of the 5-day curriculum focuses attention on a single country. The curriculum journeys to Honduras, Cuba, Mexico, Haiti and Ghana with stories of children in each country to set the stage for understanding the specific clean water needs they have. Bible study, mission stories, crafts, games and songs all combine to shed light on the mission needs and opportunities of the day's country.

Designed to be inexpensive and to use the creativity of the people in the church teaching Bible school, Lukins says the curriculum is "impactful and respectful of children."

A music CD is included with the printed materials, along with a flash drive containing the entire VBS in electronic form in addition to several PowerPoint presentations with photos and maps.

The curriculum costs \$49 and is available for order at the Living Water for the World website and at <http://livingwatersfortheworld.org/vbs.php>.

To find out more visit <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2015/11/30/new-vacation-bible-school-curriculum-explores-clea/>

Presbyterians Today -- 2016 Lenten Devotional

Lent is a holy journey with God, but what exactly does it mean to be "holy"? For some, it's all about following a set of rules and not messing up. But what if holiness is not good marks on a chalkboard but a gift from God?

Pastor and author Brian Coulter has put together a series of brief daily reflections, paired with a short, ancient form of praise and petition called a breath prayer, to explore what holiness means for Christians today. He invites us to receive from God this blessed gift that makes our lives more compelling, more enjoyable, and more faithful. Bess Reynolds's original artwork brings this holy Lenten journey to life.



Perfect for congregations, families, and individuals, *Be Holy* provides a Scripture reading, meditation, and prayer for each day of Lent.

2016 Lenten Devotional Discount Pricing: 1 copy, \$4.50 • 2–9 copies, \$3.50 each • 10–99 copies, \$2.50 each • 100+ copies, \$1.95 each. Shipping: 10% of order, \$5.25 minimum. Order by phone at 800-524-2612 and ask for PDS 17116-15-010.

[Order copies for your congregation now to ensure delivery before Lent](#)

Presbyterian World Mission names new associate directors

Presbyterian World Mission has named Tamron Keith as associate director for administration and Rachel Yates as associate director for programs. Keith and Yates are currently staff members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

“I am thrilled Tamron and Rachel have accepted this call to greater leadership on the World Mission team at this time,” said World Mission director Hunter Farrell. “Tamron is a solid and competent professional and a person of deep integrity and Rachel brings strong leadership skills and a passion for God’s global mission. They will inspire trust across the church.”

To read more about them go to <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2015/11/30/presbyterian-world-mission-names-new-associate-dir/>

Presbyterian World Mission director offers 2015 year-end video message

Hunter Farrell reports on organization’s work, appeals for support
Presbyterian Church (USA) – Louisville

In a year-end video message from the Rev. Hunter Farrell, director of Presbyterian World Mission for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), he says, “In 50 countries around the world, and in your community as well, Presbyterians are gathering hope—bearing witness to the hope we have in Jesus Christ.”

“As we look across the events of the last year—as we think about the wars and random acts of violence all of us have seen—it makes us wonder, ‘What is it that holds us together as the human family?’” he asks, answering by citing examples of Presbyterian World Mission work around the world.

Two places where Farrell sees significant progress are Egypt and South Sudan. In Egypt, the government is asking Presbyterian partners in the country to build churches and schools “so that we can encourage people in the values that we’ve always stood for: tolerance and respect for all people.” Education programs run by Presbyterian partners in South Sudan are providing schooling to 40,000 students.

Farrell concludes his message by making an appeal for financial support, saying, “We’re at a crossroads. We won’t be able to continue the life giving work that our mission co-workers and global partners together are doing in the name of Jesus Christ without your special gift.”

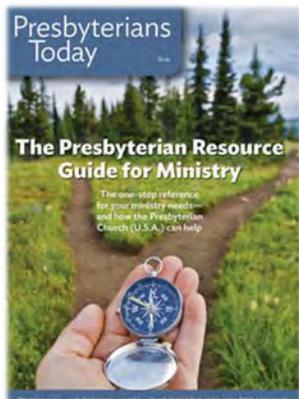
Musical accompaniment in the video is provided by Sera Chung, PC(USA) associate for Gender and Racial Justice, performing “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.”

View the video at:

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2015/12/17/presbyterian-world-mission-director-offers-2015-ye/>

Presbyterian Resource Guide for Ministry

A comprehensive reference handbook for congregations



At last, here's an easy-to-read, in-depth guidebook that puts loads of vital ministry information at your fingertips. The Resource Guide covers dozens of subjects, including disaster response, fundraising and stewardship, the ins and outs of building a website and using social media, children's/youth/collegiate/young adult ministry, church planting, grant and scholarship sources, evangelism, worship... and much more. Packed with practical and useful tips, stories, articles, and contacts, this comprehensive, one-stop reference is an essential asset for congregations, presbyteries, and individual Presbyterians looking for creative ways to improve their ministry.

For more information or to order visit:

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/resource-guide/>

2016 Standard Mileage Rates for Business, Medical and Moving Announced

IR-2015-137, Dec.17, 2015

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today issued the 2016 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, 2016, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 54 cents per mile for business miles driven, down from 57.5 cents for 2015
- 19 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes, down from 23 cents for 2015
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The business mileage rate decreased 3.5 cents per mile and the medical, and moving expense rates decrease 4 cents per mile from the 2015 rates. The charitable rate is based on statute.

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. These and other requirements for a taxpayer to use a standard mileage rate to calculate the amount of a deductible business, moving, medical or charitable expense are in [Rev. Proc. 2010-51](#). [Notice 2016-01](#) contains the standard mileage rates, the amount a taxpayer must use in calculating reductions to basis for depreciation taken under the business standard mileage rate, and the maximum standard automobile cost that a taxpayer may use in computing the allowance under a fixed and variable rate plan.



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary is pleased to announce that we will be offering nine online courses for Commissioned Ruling Elders in our CLP/CRE lay ministry program, scheduled from **February 1 to May 13.**

OUR TRADITIONAL EIGHT SPRING CLASS OFFERINGS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Introduction to Old Testament – Rev. Martin Benckhuysen

Introduction to New Testament – Dr. Jim Gunn

Christian Education – Dr. Bonnie Sue Lewis

Pastoral Care – Dr. Beth McCaw

Reformed Theology – Dr. Gary Eller

Introduction to Preaching – Dr. Robert Hoch

Presbyterian Polity – Dr. Scott Nesbitt

Reformed Worship & Sacraments – Dr. Robert Hoch

NEW SPRING COURSE OFFERING: Christian Leadership Ethics – Dr. Richard Shaffer

For the 2015-2016 academic year, we have added two new courses to our CLP/CRE course lineup. During the **Fall 2015 semester we offered Church Administration and Finance with Dr. Phillip Jamieson, and in the Spring 2016 term we are offering Christian Leadership Ethics which I am teaching.** Christian Leadership Ethics will examine topics like sexual misconduct, confidentiality, boundaries, money, youth programs, volunteers, etc. and the implications for ministry. Both are essential for anyone who is preparing for successful service in the church.

Please pass this information on to and encourage anyone you may know with gifts for ministry to consider applying to our lay ministry program. Application and course information for our CLP/CRE program can be found at <http://udtslearning.net/> and then click on “CLP/CRE Info” in the “Welcome” box under the news feed. I have also attached our CLP/CRE flier for additional information.

As always, current students can register by going online at <http://udtslearning.net/mod/page/view.php?id=15076> or by contacting Carla Gibbons, Distance Education Coordinator (CGibbons@dbq.edu or call 563-589-3630 / 1-888-207-8218), to pay by credit card or check. The tuition rate is \$380.00 per course.

Feel free to contact Carla or me if you have any questions. In addition, please check our continuing education website at <http://udts.dbq.edu/academics/continuingeducation> for upcoming events.

Yours in Christ,

Richard J. Shaffer Jr.

Associate Dean and Assistant Professor of Ministry

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**A one-day seminar at Princeton
Theological Seminary
Monday, January 11, 2016**

Is your congregation's practice of stewardship stuck in a rut? Are you prepared for the challenge of raising money for ministry today? Discover how to cultivate a culture of generosity in your congregation at this one-day seminar for pastors and church leaders. Learn to revive stewardship and grow a community marked by gratitude and generosity.



Rick Osmer



Bob Norris

**Fee: \$70
Leadership**

Richard R. Osmer, Ralph B. and Helen S. Ashenfelter Professor of Mission and Evangelism, Princeton Theological Seminary and **Robert S. Norris**, pastor, Royal Poinciana Chapel, Palm Beach, Florida

[Learn More](#)



PRESENTATIONS AT LUTHER CREST

The public is cordially invited to attend the following free presentations in Crest Hall of Luther Crest, 800 Hausman Road, Allentown, PA 18104:

- Marla Sell and Janet Panning of Lutheran Children and Family Service on "Lutheran Social Ministry for Newcomers, Past and Present": Tues., Jan. 5, 2016, 2:30 p.m.
- Rev. Dr. Manfred Bahmann on "Angels": Tues., Jan. 19, 2016, 2:30 p.m.
- Dr. William Jennings on "A Critical Look at the Ten Commandments": Tues., Feb. 16, 2016, 2:30 p.m.
- A panel discussion and responses with Rev. Dr. Manfred Bahmann, Dr. William Jennings, and Rev. Dianne Kareha on "Why Bad Things Happen to Good People": Tues., March 15, 2016, 2:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact Rev. Dianne Kareha, Diakon Chaplain for Luther Crest (610-391-8210).

SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

Luther Crest has a variety of speakers available to speak to congregations, adult Sunday School classes, organizations such as women's and men's groups, Bible studies, seniors groups, and youth groups. Topics include: Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia, Depression, Elder Care, Caring for the Caregiver, Senior Housing Options, Continuum of Care, Living with Loss/Grief Support, Communicating during Times of Conflict, Prayer, Scripture Studies. For more information or to schedule a speaker, please contact Rev. Dianne Kareha, Diakon Chaplain for Luther Crest (610-391-8210).

SESSION RETREAT OR MEETING AT LUTHER CREST

We invite your congregation's Session to hold a retreat or one of its meetings at Luther Crest. To learn more or to schedule your Session retreat or meeting at Luther Crest (with meals optional), please contact Rev. Dianne Kareha, Diakon Chaplain for Luther Crest (610-391-8210).



February 29 - March 2, 2016
San Antonio, TX
Hilton San Antonio Airport



Keynote
Karl Travis
Pastor/Head of Staff
First Presbyterian Church
Fort Worth, TX



Keynote
Grace Duddy Pomroy
Financial Education
Specialist
Portico Benefit Services



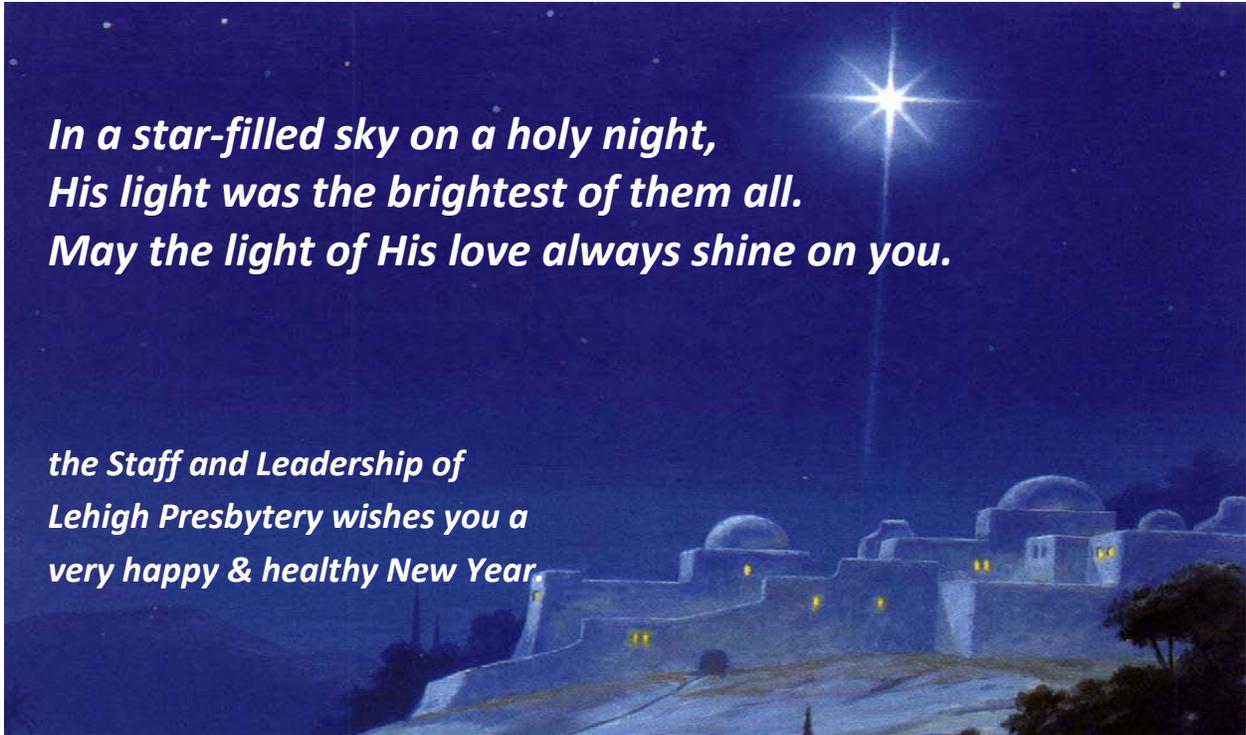
Worship Leader
Cynthia M. Campbell
Pastor/Head of Staff
Highland Presbyterian
Church
Louisville, KY

Plus over 35 workshops covering topics such as annual stewardship, planned giving, theology of giving, current trends in stewardship, capital campaigns, and generosity

For more information or to register, visit their website at:
<http://stewardshipkaleidoscope.org/>

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **Tuesday, January 5, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. – Lead Team Meeting** in the Conference Room of Lehigh Presbytery, 710 N. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, PA.
- **Monday, January 11, 2015 at 9:15 a.m. – Helping Hands Care Team** in the Conference Room of Lehigh Presbytery, 710 N. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, PA.
- **Tuesday, January 19, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. – Committee on Ministry** – place to be determined.
- **Wednesday, January 20, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. – Worldwide Ministries Care Team** in the Conference Room of Lehigh Presbytery, 710 N. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, PA 18104.

A night scene with a bright star in the sky and a building with domes in the foreground. The star is the brightest, with a long vertical beam of light extending downwards. The building has several domes and small yellow lights. The sky is dark blue with some faint stars.

*In a star-filled sky on a holy night,
His light was the brightest of them all.
May the light of His love always shine on you.*

*the Staff and Leadership of
Lehigh Presbytery wishes you a
very happy & healthy New Year.*