


Food Pantry Volunteers Needed

The Food Pantry of our church is a very active ministry serving over 160 individuals within 67 families. The need is great in our community and requires an abundance of dedicated volunteers to shop, pack, distribute and deliver food to our growing number of clients. Additional volunteers are needed, especially to shop, deliver and distribute food. Please consider becoming part of our volunteer group to help those who depend on our services to feed their families. The time commitment is minimal but the joy of helping others is a blessing! Please call Liz DiPietro at 412-279-4592 for information on how you can become involved. Thank you!

Poinsettia and Food Pantry Fund Christmas Memorials

Make a donation to the Food Pantry or purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of friends or loved ones. The red poinsettias cost \$12.50 and will be on display during the Christmas Eve morning and candlelight services. You may pick up your plant after 11 pm Christmas Eve service or after Christmas Day. Then, spread the cheer by volunteering to deliver the poinsettia to a shut-in, or ask the church to deliver. The deadline for ordering flowers is Sun., December 10.

 **Christmas Memorials 2017 Order Deadline Sunday, Dec. 10.**
 Make check payable to MLUMC. Mark the memo line *Poinsettia* or *Food Pantry*.
 Donation to MLUMC Food Pantry \$ _____ Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of :

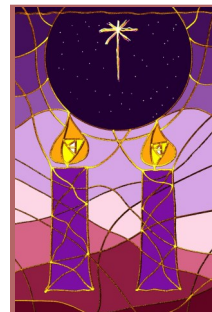
Purchase poinsettias (number) _____ @ \$12.50 each = _____ Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of :

I will pick up I will deliver to a shut-in Church to deliver to a shut-in

Donor Name _____ Phone _____

December 10, 2017

ANNOUNCEMENTS



WELCOME ! If you are a visitor or new to Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church—we're glad you're here. Please sign the attendance sheet in the pew. Worship at our church is a joyful, prayerful, music-filled, traditional experience. We worship to glorify God and build up the community of believers to live in this world as followers of Jesus Christ.

The **8:30 am** service meets in Sanner Chapel, immediately inside the front entrance of the church, and the **10:45 am** service is in our beautiful sanctuary. Kids Praise, a special worship service for ages 3 - 3rd grade, takes place during our 10:45 Sunday service. More information: www.mlumc.org or 412-531-7131.

Today is Teddy Bear Sunday

Thank you for donating teddy bears and stuffed animals to outreach charities and services. The UMW Faith Circle will be distributing the teddy bears and in the past has been able to include our church's food pantry, Family Promise, Mt. Lebanon Hospice, Angel's Place, Chartiers Valley MHMR, Asbury Heights and more.



Your donated teddy will bring love and joy to others.



This afternoon, 4 pm at St. Bernard's RC Church

A Service of Lessons & Carols

*with MLUMC's Chancel Choir and St. Bernard's Choir
 The birth of Christ told through readings and music*

TODAY is the deadline for ordering poinsettias and food pantry donations. (see back cover)

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

OPEN HEARTS OPEN MINDS OPEN DOORS
 3319 W. Liberty Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15216 412-531-7131 mlumc.org
 Reverend Thomas Q. Strandburg, Pastor tstrandburg@mlumc.org



Dormont Fire: Thank you, MLUMC Congregation, Community and Friends

You may remember the tragic fire in Dormont this past October. Just down the street from MLUMC, on Peermont Avenue, one person died and several people were injured in a fire, including children and family members. This congregation and church friends and neighbors have responded generously.

This week, Pastor Tom sent the family who suffered this tragedy a check for \$2,8451.86. The financial gift represents the proceeds of our community fall festival, a contribution from our Family Fund, as well as individual donations from many parishioners.

In a letter to the family, Pastor Tom wrote, "Your family has continued to be upheld in our thoughts and our prayers, ever since the tragic fire of this past fall. We pray that God's peace has surrounded you in your time of grief, and that God's healing power has helped to heal the physical wounds that have been suffered by your family members. We also hope that your family is well on its way to resupplying the material necessities of life, after such a devastating loss."

Let us join with Pastor Tom in continuing to pray for the survivors and victims of the fire.

And thank you to the congregation of Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church, community members, and friends for showing such love for your neighbors.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH ADVENT STUDY
with Bishop George W. Bashore

Four Wednesdays
Beginning November 29
9:30 am Wesley Hall

Together listen to the oratorio
and explore the biblical texts.

All are invited!

FOR A CHILD HAS BEEN BORN FOR US,
A SON GIVEN TO US...
ISAIAH 9:6

Our Small Groups Continue to Grow

For the 2017-18 church year, our congregation is emphasizing spiritual growth through small study groups. For the next two Wednesdays, December 13 and 20, Bishop George Bashore will continue his Advent study on The Messiah. Already 20 people have enjoyed this class and others are still welcome at 9:30 in Wesley Hall.

On Saturday morning, January 13, 2018, a men's group under the leadership of Matt Baker will begin holding monthly meetings. More details to follow.

During this advent season, Peter beacons us to attend to the prophetic proclamation that Jesus is the Son of God. We were not first-hand witnesses to God's declaration, but as followers of Jesus Christ many of us have had repeated experiences of confirmation that Jesus is the Son of God. Perhaps advent would be a good time to attend to the ways in which we, through our words and actions, bear witness to Jesus as the Son of God. Perhaps advent would be a good time for us to entreat the Spirit of God to help us bring this prophetic message of light and hope into the world, using words only when necessary.

Bishop Harald Rückert, Frankfurt/Main

Two years ago I was on a hiking trip with a few friends in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. We were exploring an area far away from civilization, with rugged mountains at dizzying heights of almost 6000 meters. I saw there the clearest, starriest night skies of my life, but also some of the blackest. I was experiencing some problems with my health and those nights were grim; the unremitting black like a prison around me. The worries would surge, my thoughts darken. The night seemed endless, a torment. Only as the morning dawned did I breathe a little more easily. The world was still dark, but there was at least a perception of light. The constrictions in my chest began to ease.

As Christmas approaches, the nights become longer and darker. It is a time when many people feel their personal strictures just a little more intensely. Hatred and misogyny, terror and blinkered violence, ruthlessness and injustice - the darkness of our world gets under our skin more than usual. We can feel the threatening grip of darkness. Our longing for light to transform the dark deepens.

Today's verse reminds us of our Morning Star, Jesus Christ. In Him, God reaches out to us and will redeem our world. This redemption of the world began with the new-born child and will be completed with Christ returning. The brightness of this future already casts its light onto our own present. In a German Advent hymn we sing: "*Yet nights will bring their sadness and rob our hearts of peace. And sin in all its madness around us may increase. But now one star is beaming whose rays have pierced the night: God comes for our redeeming from sin's oppressive might*". We may often feel that the struggle for humanity and love is in vain. Suffering and sickness still appear overwhelming. Hatred and terror are still posturing like victors. But we need to look at the promise of the Morning Star: God's day is dawning. This is a prophetic message which holds true. Something we can truly rely on.

Christmas Season Worship Services



Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve Morning Worship - 10:45 service only, in Sanctuary

Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Service for Children & Families, 5 pm

Traditional Christmas Eve Services with Chancel Choir, harp and oboe, 8 and 11 pm

Wiggle room for children provided at 5 and 8 pm services

Sun. Dec. 31, New Year's Eve Morning Worship - 10:45 service only, in Sanctuary



Second Sunday of Advent

Each year the WPA Conference and Eastern German Conference create daily Advent and Christmas devotionals for use in our homes and churches. We have chosen devotionals from each week.

Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, WPC

We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 2 Peter 1: 19 (NIV)

Peter was an eyewitness to the honor and glory given to Jesus at Jesus' baptism when God declared God's parenthood of Jesus. For Peter, the prophetic message that Jesus is the Son of God was confirmed repeatedly. Peter urged the early Christians to be attentive to the ways in which they confirmed their faith in Jesus as the Son of God because in the prophetic proclamation that Jesus is the Son of God, there is light and hope for a dark world.

Clark Remington will begin leading a New Testament study on January 8 in his home. This group will meet monthly through May in the evening for a light dinner, viewing a DVD and discussion.

Rob and Jane Spicher will also lead a monthly Bible study in various homes beginning in January. More details to follow.

Looking further ahead, Cindy Biery will lead book discussions in May during four consecutive weeks at noon that will include a brown bag lunch.

Hopefully, many of you will select a small group in which to grow your faith. Sign ups will begin soon.

Food Pantry Donation Program for December

Please donate children's lunch items (non-perishables)

Drop-off box near entrance to Food Pantry

Ward Home Angel Tree

Thank you all so much for fulfilling the wishes of our kids at the Ward Home. Your gift cards will spread good cheer to the kids for a Merry Christmas. Please bring your angels to the church office by December 12 so they can be delivered to the Ward Home.



Today: Mission Sale



The Sunday School children have been working hard to create crafts and treats to sell. Please come to the Narthex after services today and have a look at the small gifts and stocking stuffers available! All proceeds are used to sponsor a child at the Home of Hope Orphanage in Nyadire, Zimbabwe. Thank you!

Packaging & Delivering Christmas Gifts at the Allegheny Co. Jail

Thurs. Dec. 14, 8 am - 12:30 pm (packaging)

5:30 - 9 pm (delivering)

Restrictions: All volunteers must be
21 or older

RSVP: Call Marci at 412-350-2057 or email
marci.burkhart@alleghenycounty.us



Volunteer to help pack and deliver
Christmas Care packages to inmates
separated from their families and traditional
holiday activities.



Community Christmas Caroling and Dinner

Gather to sing Christmas carols at homes in the church
neighborhood and nearby apartments on **Sun. Dec. 17th**. It
starts with dinner at 5 pm in Asbury Center, then caroling at
6, and back to Asbury Center at 8 for hot chocolate and
cookies. Don't forget to dress for the weather and bring a
flashlight. Register with Kim Rhoton, krhoton@mlumc.org.



Sunday, Dec. 17 10:45 Worship Nativity Scene Tableaux with Lessons & Carols

A Lessons and Carols service will
feature a live nativity scene on Sunday,
Dec. 17. The Chancel Choir will be
accompanied by harp and oboe.



Christmas Meals

Reach out to members of our community who may be in need of a good meal or are alone
on Christmas Day. Help provide a holiday ham dinner, held from 1 to 4 pm at Castle
Shannon Presbyterian Church on Poplar Ave. The meal is free of charge and is served at
the church as well as delivered.

Ways you can help: 1) Volunteer on Christmas to serve meals. Call Bob Stokes at the
church to tell him you are coming. 2) Make a cash contribution. Checks should be made
out to FPCCS with "Christmas Dinner" in the memo line and sent to the church.
3) Donate a fruit pie which you should deliver directly to First Presbyterian and not to
MLUMC. For safety reasons, please do not donate pumpkin pies or pies with egg or
cream filling. Pies may be delivered on Christmas morning or prior to that, but you
should notify the church so workers are able to keep a count and receive the pies.

Volunteer contact phone # - Bob Stokes, 412-760-3574

Pie donation phone # - First Presbyterian Church, 412-561-0401

Check donation mailing address:

First Presbyterian Church of Castle Shannon

3636 Poplar Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15234

**If you know someone who needs a place at the table of a Christmas meal, or who needs
a meal delivered, contact First Presbyterian Church: 412-561-0401 between 8 am- 4 pm**

Thanksgiving Meal Ministry 2017

*Thank you to all who helped make the 2017 Community South Hills Thanksgiving Meal a suc-
cess. Without your help such an outreach to our community would not be possible. Our partner
Bethany Ev Lutheran Church, served 470 meals while 430 meals were delivered from
MLUMC. We had 37 teams of drivers who made this possible.*

*This year, the remaining turkeys and trimmings, were delivered by the Food Lift to St Paul's
AME Church in Beltzhoover, where 50 additional families were served.*

Again, thank you so much to all who participated.

Blessings, Bonnie Lawson