



# The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch

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## JANUARY 2017 News and Notes

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### EPIPHANY

The Eastern Orthodox Church in 361 AD began to celebrate what they called Epiphany. This word comes from the Greek *Epiphania* which means “to show, make known, or reveal.” This celebration was a commemoration of the birth of Christ, God’s revelation of himself in the incarnate Christ. However, as the church more and more observed the Nativity on December 25, there were 12 days between, hence the 12 Days of Christmas which ended with much revelry and merry-making on the Twelfth Night, January 5. Epiphany on January 6 then took on the observance of the arrival of the Three Wise Men – also called Kings or Magi – a story found only in the Gospel of Matthew. They followed an unusually bright star which led them from the East, across desert land, to the place where Jesus lay. This event is significant because Jesus is revealed as “Lord and King” and the Three Wise Men were the first Gentiles to publicly recognize this by their presence and symbolic gifts. Caspar’s gift of gold represents royal standing; Melchior’s frankincense – divine birth; Balthazar’s myrrh – mortality. We will celebrate the Festival of the Epiphany in worship on January 8th.

Epiphany later becomes a whole season when we learn how Jesus, the Light of the World, is revealed as God’s Son at his Baptism. Jesus then reveals himself by calling his twelve disciples, by preaching (in Matthew is found the Sermon on the Mount), and teaching. The Season ends with the glorious Transfiguration of Jesus into pure light.

Epiphany reminds us of our challenge as a church. We are called to reveal Jesus to all – to be the Light of the World. We are called to present our gifts of time, talents, and financial support. We are called to discipleship, to walk in his ways, and learn from his example.

### 2017 – A YEAR OF ANNIVERSARIES!

THIS YEAR THE Presbytery of Philadelphia, the first and therefore oldest in the country, will observe its 300<sup>th</sup> year of existence. To commemorate the occasion, it has commissioned “300 Days for 300 Years”, a unique hard-bound book of devotions for the days from Ash Wednesday, March 1, to Christmas Day. All 130 churches in the Presbytery were asked to contribute. The entries are “filled with the hearts, spirit, and voices of our communities,” and those representing Llanerch were written by David Stipp-Bethune (May 10) and myself (November 30). The cost is now \$32.99 with a \$5 shipping charge. They are obtainable from the Presbytery by phone 215-242-1400 or email [presbyphl.org](mailto:presbyphl.org). To honor Llanerch Church, I have purchased a copy for our library.

On October 31, 1517, in Wittenberg, Germany, Martin Luther posted a list of 95 Theses on the Castle Church door. This is considered to be the single act that began the Protestant Reformation – 500 years ago! This Fall, I will be offering more commentary and highlighting hymns, anthems, and organ works of that period. I am very much looking forward to this.

For me personally, October, 2017 is significant because it will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my service here at Llanerch. It seems like such a short time ago when I was so very specially honored for my 35<sup>th</sup> year. It has been a privilege to be your Minister of Music and I will continue to do so, God willing.

*Soli Deo Gloria*

Georgia Marshall Schrom

Minister of Music

## Worship in JANUARY!

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>CELEBRATION:</b>	<b>READINGS:</b>	<b>GOSPEL:</b>
January 1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas Day	Isaiah 63: 7-9 Psalm 148 Hebrews 2: 10-18	Matthew 2: 13-23
January 8 <sup>th</sup>	Baptism of the Lord	Isaiah 60: 1-6 Psalm 29 Acts 10: 34-43	Matthew 2: 1-12
January 15 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	Isaiah 49: 1-7 Psalm 40: 1-11 I Corinthians 1: 1-9	John 1: 29-42
January 22 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	Isaiah 9: 1-4 Psalm 27: 1, 4-9 I Corinthians 1: 10-18	Luke 2: 1-14 (15-20)
January 29 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	Micah 6: 1-8 Psalm 15 I Corinthians 1: 18-31	Matthew 5: 1-12

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### **A Note on pastoral leadership and care while we take the next steps in transition at the Presbyterian Church of Llanerch:**

We welcome Rev. Bill Searight as supply pastor in January. Bill Searight first preached for us this summer and we are grateful for his willingness to serve at Llanerch on short notice. Rev. Searight most recently served as Interim Pastor for the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield in Flourtown. As we continue to plan for the transition at Llanerch, we want to assure you that if you have questions or concerns, or need pastoral care, you may get in touch with Kelly in the church office, or Clerk of Session Mary Kane.

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

Our Sunday School program is now underway. We will be following the Revised Common Lectionary, "Feasting on the Word." This year we are encouraging the children to bring an offering each week, along with their **ENTHUSIASM!!**





CARE CLOSET CANS are collected in worship on the First Sunday of the Month— Sunday, JANUARY 1st! Bring your family's care closet can with you to worship!

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## **ALTERNATE GIFT GIVING**

(continuing through the month of January)

Are you tired of looking for the appropriate holiday gift? Consider a different kind of gift this year. Give something too big for a box!

In the past our congregation has supported Heifer International in their continued effort to bring help, healing and hope to millions of impoverished families worldwide. Today they are working in more than 30 countries and in areas where hunger and despair once prevailed. Heifer programs have reinvigorated communities through livestock, training and "Passing on The Gift" while also caring for the earth.

Heifer International works in the areas of livestock and agriculture to develop programs that alleviate hunger and poverty. Their field staff is comprised of livestock specialists and their programs are considered among the most successful in the world.

Please look at our display in the Fellowship Room. It will remain all through December. This display will provide you with all the information that you need to make this gift giving opportunity to a husband, wife, daughter, son, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparents, neighbors, teachers and co-workers. The list can go on and on. With a donation of \$10 or more you will receive an "Honor Card" to send to that individual or family. We will have the cards here for you at church.

For those of you unable to make it to church, but would still like to participate in this type of gift giving and its valuable outcome, please get in touch with Kelly at the church office or call Joanne Janos at 610-446-0165. Feel free to call Joanne any day of the week. It doesn't need to be on a Sunday. Joanne and Kelly will see that you get the necessary materials.

Here is how it works:

- You decide to donate a sheep in honor of your mother, who has always loved these gentle animals.
- Your mother receives a holiday Honor Card from you describing the generous contribution you've made in her honor.
- Thanks to your gift, one more family is on the road to self-reliance.
- Once the family has completed training and has prepared appropriate facilities, they then receive a healthy female sheep.
- Throughout the year, the sheep provides soft, warm wool that can be made into clothing or sold to pay for food, medicine and school – all the ingredients for a brighter future.
- The family gives one or more of its sheep's offspring to another family in need. That's part of the **Passing on the Gift** tradition that participants agree to when they become partners with Heifer International.



You can see that your kind gift is much more than one animal – it's the gift of hope and opportunity for an entire community. That's why this is *The Most Important Gift Catalog in the World*.

# Per Capita Appeal



*Per Capita -  
For Love of  
Christ's Church*

Our church is a member of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and our support of the Presbytery is the backbone of our connection to the larger church. Each year, we offer an amount to support the Presbytery based on our membership, known as the per capita apportionment. This money supports local and regional staff members and the operation of the General Assembly in Louisville, Kentucky. You have already received a letter and envelope for you to use to help us meet this obligation! The support we receive from Presbytery is real, so thank you for making this part of your giving.

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## MISSION NEWS

Advent Wreaths this year were prepared by the Christian Education Committee as a fundraiser for the **Heifer Project**, an international ministry of economic development and self-determination. Animals, veterinary care, and training are provided to villages in rural areas around the world through the Heifer project, improving family and community health and encouraging school attendance. Donations are welcome for this project. See the decorated coffee cans in the Fellowship Room or speak to Joanne Janos.



We have a continuing program of donations to the food bank and outreach program at **Chester Eastside Ministries** on 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Chester. Our next donation will be dedicated in worship on December 18. Remember gifts to Chester when you are clipping coupons and shopping. Baskets are in the Narthex for your donations. There is never a “wrong Sunday” to donate, and it is always a party when the food is received. Thanks also to the volunteers in the church who help make this happen.



**Chester Eastside Ministries**: Our monthly offering of food, diapers, and other household supplies will be on January 15, the third Sunday of the month. Thanks for the wonderful support of this program. You may place your offering in the basket in the Narthex at any point during the month. You may remember that we noted last month that long time mission leader Rev. Bernice Warren had retired as of the end of the year. Her successor is Rev. Zuline Wilkinson, Chester Eastside, Inc.'s new Executive Director. She has worked in a number of cities – her native Philadelphia, the Boston area in Massachusetts, and Trenton, New Jersey, – during a remarkable career as a social worker and member of the clergy. So one might be moved to ask, Why Chester? Without hesitation she replies, “I feel called by a passion and commitment to serve those in need in cities like Chester. We are excited at Llanerch to be part of the new chapter in the even better Chester Eastside. One plan for the year is to expand the number of days that the Center is open during the week so that the food center we support can meet greater need. Currently more than 1000 individuals receive aid at Chester Eastside each month, with more than half of the recipients young children.

Here's an expression of thanks from a Chester Eastside participant: "I needed an extra bag of food last week. I was really nervous about asking. You all were more than kind and also invited me to more events you are sponsoring. The man who handles the food is always singing God's praise. You feed us lunch and do things for our family with such loving kindness. I pray God's blessings on each of you. Thank you!"

– A Chester mother

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## **CONNECT-BY-NIGHT**

Connect-by-Night is a homeless-support program that we participate in with our partners at Christ Community Church at the Riverview Center in Lansdowne. We'll be taking a big role in this program in January and March of this year, as we have for many years. From 35 to a maximum of 55 adults are served each night. Homeless families may qualify for motel or apartment housing, but the Connect program is the sole support in Delaware County for homeless single men and women. We see both very young and very old participants who need help. As a team of churches, we provide a warm, safe place to sleep at the Riverview center, with evening fellowship and hot snack and a bag lunch for the next morning. We often also provide comfort items like fresh socks, warm gear, toiletries (hotel sizes, new toothbrushes, etc.), and reading material.

The evening program is sponsored by the Southeast Pennsylvania Mental Health Association, which runs the Connect Program on 69<sup>th</sup> street. The day program at the 69<sup>th</sup> St. Center offers counseling and life management assistance, facilities for bathing and laundry, and a safe place to stay out of the cold. In the evening, program participants come by van to the Riverview Center, where they are greeted and served by church volunteers. After the evening snack, participants bed down and spend the night at the church. Volunteers from Llanerch Presbyterian serve every other night and alternate Sundays through the month; volunteers from CCC serve the other nights.

We have many partners and friends working with us on this project, including our Scout troops, groups from work, and service organizations who want to help but aren't as familiar with how to make that happen. We can always use more of these friends! How can you help? Many families have already **volunteered** and could use **partners and helpers** of their own. Look on the calendar for a night you might be able to help and offer your assistance to the volunteer on the list. You can sign up in the church to make a **batch of lunches** or just **half** of one of the batches of lunches. You can provide a donation of **groceries** for a lunch packing party or **supplies for cooking** a pot of soup or stew. Supplies are stockpiled on the table in the fellowship room. You can make a **cash donation** to cover the costs of the paper supplies we use in serving. You can run a **toiletry drive** or a **sock** drive or a **warm coat** drive in your workplace, or donate a single one of those items yourself, knowing that volunteers have many chances to deliver them each week. You can lift up both the volunteers and the participants in **prayer** all during the month, and lay a friendly **hand of appreciation** on the shoulders of those who have served.

No matter how you find a way to participate, you should know that as a member of our church you share a special commendation made by the Delaware County Coalition for the Homeless several years ago. Together with CCC, we were cited for being essential members of the safety net in Delaware County, being organizations that brought faithful, reliable, resources to those in need. Let this recognition strengthen you for the big job ahead!

## **JANUARY 8: SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AND SERVE:**

Don't miss our gathering after worship on January 8 to share the experience of preparing bag lunches for Connect by Night. Those lunches will be delivered that night by a member of the church. All the supplies will be provided on Jan 8; but here are some suggestions for the lunches if you are interested in volunteering, based on experiences with 100s of lunches and some feedback from social workers and participants. The lunches are held in a refrigerator and can be made a day or two ahead.

**Suggestions for what goes in Lunches:** Paper bags, sandwich bags, and napkins are available on the supply table in the Fellowship Room.

- Sandwich: lunch meat, cheese, or peanut butter and jelly. Any bread is fine.
- A salty snack like a handful of pretzels (can be from a big bag just in a baggie, doesn't need to be in packet)
- Cookie or sweet snack
- A small piece of candy (we have an abundant supply at the church, frozen from Halloween)
- A piece of fruit (oranges, bananas, or a bunch of grapes better than apples)
- A juice box (this is a very popular part of the lunch, according to participants)

**Suggestions for Evening Snacks:** Guests arrive in van loads of 8-12 after 9 pm until needs have been met or the shelter is full. Warm foods like soups, chili, and stews are welcome. Salads, small sandwiches, cheese and fruit are popular. Baked goods like a muffin or cookie are popular. We supply juice and milk as a beverage, along with water. Some of the participants may have had a chance to eat at the Life Center or a donated meal at the Connect Center, but some will be very hungry. The hardest thing to provide is a chance to sleep well, so our goal is to have food ready and let guest eat if they like and then lie down.

## **GENEROSITY & STEWARDSHIP**

Our Church runs on the energy and financial resources of its members and friends. In January, we'll be "telling our story" about who we are and what we hope to accomplish this year by pledging our financial commitment as individuals. Each Sunday in January, we'll be hearing another chapter in our story. On January 29, we'll dedicate those pledges and celebrate our story and future. Here's what to expect after you receive your pledge card and appeal in the mail: on January 8, you'll hear about how our church goes beyond its walls to serve the community and make connections that show our path to following the gospel. On January 15, you'll hear stories about how our church building provides a physical and spiritual home for hundreds of people each month as they grow, learn, nurture one another, celebrate and heal. On January 22, you'll hear about the ways that financial support of the church will help you meet your own personal and spiritual goals, and see how you fit into more than a century of dedicated service to God, each other, and the community around us. Look for that mailing and join with us during the month to help us tell our story.



## **SCOUTING NEWS**

Scout troops generally have a quiet month in December because of the holidays, but Troop 434 had a lot going on. The scouts don't camp in December but they do have a very popular "Gym Night" held at the Middle School with active ball games pitting scouts against leaders.

During meetings, boys got plans together for the rest of the scouting year, including a much-anticipated ski trip to the Poconos this month. At the end of the month, the troop got together in their best uniforms to celebrate on of their new Eagle scouts. Eagle Scout Alex Greene was inducted into the company of other Eagle Scouts on December 17<sup>th</sup>. Alex's Eagle project was renovating one of the playgrounds at the Chatham Park School where most of the scouts had attended as children. Deacon Peter Hiebert (also an Eagle Scout) offered the invocation and blessing on behalf of the church. Congratulations to Eagle Alex Greene and his parents, Scott and Patty Greene.

The Scouts are still selling first aid kits as a fund-raiser for their trip to the Scout Jamboree in West Virginia this summer. Let Scout liaison Kate Hiebert know if you are interested in purchasing one of these extremely nice kits for your car or backpack (\$10.00).



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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## **CONVENIENT PLEDGING. GIVE IT A TRY!**

### **WE'RE GLAD TO MAKE ONLINE GIVING AVAILABLE FOR FINANCIAL GIVING TO OUR CONGREGATION.**



You can make secure, online gifts to our congregation by using our web portal provided by the Presbyterian Foundation. It takes less than a minute, and your pledged giving can go directly from your checking/savings account to our Church account. You can schedule your gifts for the whole year, make contributions monthly, or give weekly. If you haven't tried it, you might like it!

Access the "Give Now" Button on the "Donate" tab on our website, or use your smartphone or tablet to scan the QR code on the right!

