

the Messenger



November 2023

Time after Pentecost



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A Note from Pastor Dan:

Dear Beloved Members and Friends of God's Love,

As I face my final week of service as one of your pastors, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to God and to you for the mutual ministry we have shared. This nearly 8 years has been one of the great privileges of my life. What started out as a temporary assignment in January 2016 turned into an inspiring pilgrimage marked by personal conversations and shared stories that will resonate for a lifetime.



By God's grace, we have made significant strides in this small corner of God's vineyard in Bucks County.

- **First**, we have addressed a whole cadre of deferred maintenance needs and capital improvements beginning with the church kitchen and continuing up to the most recent facelift of the preschool entrance.
- **Second**, we have gotten into a beautiful rhythm of monthly service emphases that cover the gamut from local to global human needs.

- **Third**, we were able to drive what was a \$500,000 building debt down to zero.
- **Fourth**, amid a global pandemic, we were able to carry out a wonderful variety of projects contiguous with the congregation's 50th anniversary.
- **Most of all**, God inspired us to form a better connectivity within the congregation, into the local communities we serve, and in partnership with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Even as I leave this parish to take on a new God-given assignment, I will remember you in constant and fervent prayer. And I urge you to pray for and support your congregational leadership and Pastor Brandi Hebert in the weeks and months ahead. As Mother Teresa once said, "We are not called to do great things. We are called to do all the little things— with great love."

With much love and gratitude,
Pastor Dan Whitener



A warm welcome to new members **Bob Fauteaux** and **Steve and Debbie Plunkett** received on October 22.

Scripture Readings for November 21

Amos 5:18-24

Let justice roll down like waters

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The promise of the resurrection

Matthew 25:1-13

The wise and foolish bridesmaids

Night Out at Shady Brook Farm • October 21



Kyle Vawter & Aman Kaur



Ludwig & Cummons families



the Watza family

Interfaith Service of Giving Thanks

hosted by the Newtown Yardley Ministerium

Sunday, November 19 • 3:00pm

Newtown Friends Meeting
219 Court Street, Newtown

Non-perishable food, children's clothing, and monetary donations will be collected to support the ministries of Mercer Street Friends.





All Saints Remembrance • Sunday, November 5

All Saints Sunday...a time to remember those in our faith community that died in the past year. A slideshow tribute will be shown during worship services. A list of names of those included in this tribute is available on the Ministry Resource Table.

Congratulations to Our Confirmands

The congregation celebrated with **Emily Bowen** and **Ben McNulty** as they affirmed their baptism on October 29. During worship, the two youth spoke from the heart about their faith journey. Afterwards the congregation enjoyed a celebratory reception with cake and goodies arranged by **Sharon Sottung**.



Stewardship Emphasis: "ONE" Campaign Challenge

"The Lord our God, the Lord is One; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your minds, and with all your strength."

How the Israelites understood **Heart**, **Soul**, and **Strength** is very different from how we understand them today. Exploring these words from the perspective of the Hebrew tradition can help us grow in our commitment to faithfully respond as Jesus' disciples learning to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength. *To watch the heart, soul, and strength videos shown during worship, click the links below or visit bibleproject.com.*

- **HEART:** The Hebrews understood the heart as an organ that sustained all human life. However, because Hebrews had no concept of the brain (and no word for it), the heart was also the source of all human thinking and feeling. It was where wisdom and understanding dwelled. It was a place of discernment and therefore where humans made choices; choices such as how, where and with whom to spend one's **Time**.
- **SOUL:** The modern image of one's soul is often viewed as a disembodied aspect of one's personhood. However, the Hebrews imagined *nephesh*, or soul, as the throat, a vital component of human beings and critical to their overall well-being. The nephesh exemplified a whole, living, breathing, uniquely individual being. Therefore, we might understand the soul today as the unique individual expression of personhood comprised of one's varied spiritual gifts and **Talents**.
- **STRENGTH:** The Hebrew word *me'od* has been translated in modern English as strength. However, in Aramaic, it is more closely translated as **Wealth**. Furthermore, the Hebrews' core understanding of *me'od* was "very" or "much." It was a word used to intensify whatever other word it modified. Therefore, when Jesus says love God with all of your *me'od*, he is encouraging his followers to love their God with everything they have, the entirety of their personhood and livelihood: their Time, Talents and, yes, wealth or **Treasure**.

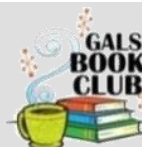
Visit the display in the Commons for more information and inspiration.

Stewardship Note!

The "One" Campaign stewardship mailing was sent to households this past week. Please review the materials, fill out the **Gifts of Service form** and **2024 Intent Card** and return them to church on **Consecration Sunday, November 12**. Extra copies are available on the display in the Commons.



God's Caring Stitchers
Friday, November 17
1:00pm • Room A1/A2



Thursday, December 7
7:00pm • Lounge
"The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich

November Highlighted Collection
St. Nicholas Day • Sunday, December 3

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

Our annual collection of holiday gift donations kicks off next week! Donations will support the following local agencies:

- Bucks County Housing Group
- Woods Services
- Bethanna
- Family Services
- Interfaith Food Alliance



Tear-off tags with gift ideas will be posted **online** and in the **Lobby of Love** ❤️. Select a tag, go shopping, wrap the gift *if directed to do so*. Return the item, **WITH TAG ATTACHED**, to the church office **on or before, December 3**. During worship that morning, St. Nicholas will be here to welcome your gifts.

Monetary donations are also welcome. Add "St. Nicholas Day" in the memo section of your check or envelope and place it in the offering plate.

Questions? Contact **Karen Hoch**



Earlier this month the preschool staff attended a professional development day at Tyler Park where **Bonnie Tobin**, the Environmental Education

Specialist, taught us about trees, and gave us lessons, and crafts to foster a learning and love of trees. We planted a tree in Tyler Park, and a redbud tree was donated to plant here at God's Love. The children helped plant the tree near the playground, **dedicating it to Pastor Dan**. It will serve as a reminder of his ministry here, his dedication to the preschool, his love for the children, and his example of living a Christ-centered life.



Over the years, we hope the tree will bring enjoyment and a sense of peace to all, just as Pastor Dan has done. We will miss him, and we wish him happiness and fulfillment in his new church.



Discipleship in a Democracy
Sundays, November 12 and 19
 10:00am • Fellowship Hall

Join this two-week discussion on the connection between faith-based living and civic engagement as we explore the following questions: *What's faith got to do with civic life? How do we as Lutherans address controversial civic issues? What about 'separation of church and state'? How do we 'go in peace to serve the Lord' in civic life?*

Each session will include a brief video, scripture study, discussion, and practical resources from the ELCA Task Force on Civic Life and Faith.

HOPE Supporting Those in Need

We celebrate the birth of Christ by following the example of Jesus and helping people in need. God's Love provides bagged lunches three days a week to the *Reach Out Foundation* in Pennel, a place where those in need can go to get warm, take care of personal needs and receive assistance.

Want to help? [SIGNUP FOR DECEMBER](#), or visit the **SignUp Hub**. No one should go hungry.

Donations are due in the **Lobby of Love** ❤️ on **Tuesdays by 10:30am**. Drop off non-perishable items any day. Sandwiches can be left in the church freezer. **Questions? Sandy Anthony.**



Red Cross Blood Drive
Tuesday, December 5
 2pm – 7pm • Fellowship Hall

The Red Cross reports that there is a national blood shortage. Please consider donating. Appointments are available at Red Cross Blood.org.

Questions? Contact **Beth Meyers**.

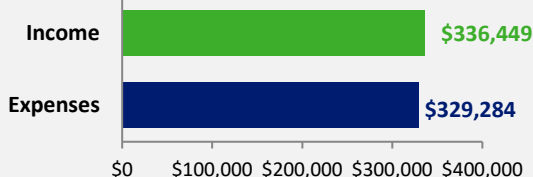


Preschool Fundraiser

God's Love Christian Preschool is selling delicious Thanksgiving pies from *Tabora Farm* to raise money for preschool programming. 16 different flavors are available.

Contact the preschool office **by November 9** to place an order. Pickup **November 20 – 21**.

Financials through September 2023



Questions? Contact Treasurer, **Bob Smoose**, or Financial Secretary, **John Tidd**.



Usher, Reader, Communion Assistant, Altar Guild, Nursery Assistant, Acolyte, Basket Bearer

There are many opportunities for members of the congregation (adults and youth) to assist during our worship services. Any of these roles are wonderful opportunities to engage in service, meet new people, and deepen your own worship experience.

[SIGN UP FOR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER](#), or visit the **SignUp Hub** to choose weeks and roles convenient for you.

New volunteers are encouraged! Instructions will be provided.

“Let’s Talk Turkey” Collection
through Sunday, November 19



November is a time to count your blessings and share with those less fortunate. Donations benefit *Manor Elementary Food Pantry*, providing for families in need in the Pennsbury School District.

Purchase a frozen turkey or use your **FREE** turkey coupon. On Sundays, place your donation on the “turkey cart” in the **Lobby of Love** ♥ or place it anytime in the main kitchen freezer.

Questions? Contact **Sandy Anthony**.



Early during the COVID pandemic, the church took steps to improve **air quality in the sanctuary**. We installed in-duct LED air purifiers and upgraded the air filters to a MERV-13 rating. Both of these components clean the air as the ventilation system draws air through the ducts, which is why the blowers run continuously during worship services.

According to a “60 Minutes” report on October 29, improved air filtration has been beneficial to all of us that use indoor spaces since the aerosol particles that come out of our noses and mouths (as well as other contaminants and allergens) are pulled out of the air as it circulates. Using these filters has proven to be a definitive aid in reducing the spread of germs.

- **ELCA** “Thank you for the gift of \$295 to ELCA World Hunger. The glory of God shines through you.” [We send a check every quarter to support World Hunger. This is the money collected during the 3rd quarter.]
- **The Emergency Relief Association of Lower Bucks** “Thank you for your gift of 816 pounds of food and a check for \$1,000. Your generosity helps those in your community avoid hunger.” [This represents part of the 2023 distribution from our Endowment Fund].

thank you

- **Family Service (Association of Bucks County)** “Thank you for your generous gift of \$1,000. Your ongoing support has touched the hearts of those we serve and is so appreciated by the dedicated staff here.” [This represents part of the 2023 distribution from our Endowment Fund].
- **Advocates for the Homeless & Those in Need (AHTN)** “Thank you for your gift. Your support towards our campaign is deeply appreciated. Our programs include: Code Blue Homeless Shelter, Wheels to Meals Transportation, and Those in Need Fund.” [This represents part of the 2023 distribution from our Endowment Fund].

NOVEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Got Candy leftover over from Halloween? Consider donating it to HOPE. Our friends in need have a sweet tooth. Place donations in the Lobby of Love ♥. Questions? Contact Sandy Anthony.</p>			1 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	2	3 Knit & Crochet 1p	4 Vawter Wedding 11a Farewell Reception for Pastor Dan 4p – 7p
	5 ALL SAINTS SUNDAY Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a	6 Counters 9:30a Boy Scouts 7p	7 Staff Meeting 10a Rejoice! 7:30p	8 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	9	10
12 CONSECRATION SUNDAY Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a	13 Counters 9:30a Boy Scouts 7p	14 Staff Meeting 10a Rejoice! 7:30p	15 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	16 Musicians Mtg 11a Adult Ed Mtg 1p Preschool Harvest Social 6p Church Council 7p	17 Knit & Crochet 1p	18
19 Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a Worship Min 12:15p Interfaith Thanksgiving at Newtown Friends 3p	20 Counters 9:30a Boy Scouts 7p	21 Staff Meeting 10a Rejoice! 7:30p	22 NO CHOIRS	<p>thanksgiving</p>	23 OFFICE CLOSED	25
26 Worship 8:45a & 11a No Education classes	27 Counters 9:30a TLC Meeting 11a Boy Scouts 7p	28 Property Team 10a Rejoice! 7:30p Mutual Min. 7:30p	29 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	30		



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