



THE PILLARS

Rev. Jennifer Peters McCurry, Pastor

Monthly Newsletter of Emmanuel Lutheran Church

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Pastor's Reflection: Holy Communion

I give thanks that adult Christian education is such a clear presence in our congregational life together. On Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, our classes gather around the word of God, to explore its meaning for our lives. Similar to how we regularly engage with the word, it is good (and even fun!) to periodically take time to ponder the sacraments, like Holy Communion, in a similar way. We hear, see, and learn things differently at various points in our lives, partly due to our age and experience. The Holy Spirit works through our discussions, giving us different insights about this foundational Christian practice.

During most of this month, I will be teaching a special Christian education class focused on Holy Communion during our Sunday School hour on January 8, 15, 22, and 29. We will be combining our two adult classes with students in grades five through twelve.

Adults (including parents) and high schoolers will be participants and fellow-leaders, as our four confirmation students, and our fifth and sixth graders learn more about Holy Communion. We will look at what scripture, our Lutheran confessions, and the ELCA all teach about Communion. We'll explore the practices that we do, what beliefs ground them, and why they matter. This is an opportunity for us to learn together as a community, benefiting from one another's experiences and observations – and to teach our youth together as a community. During our time together, our congregation will be living into the promises that the church made at the baptisms of our kids and into the promises we all made on our confirmation days (or receptions as new members).

Our discussions will prepare us all, as this year marks when Emmanuel shifts the time of intentional communion instruction to fifth grade (instead of eighth grade), which helps us get back into step with our sister ELCA congregations around the country. Our fifth through eighth graders will participate fully in a Communion Celebration on the Feast of the Transfiguration, which occurs this year on Sunday, February 21.

This class is a great opportunity to show our kids and youth that learning about our faith, including learning about Communion, is a life-long opportunity and blessing. I hope that you will be able to join us as much as you're able during this series: January 8, 15, 22 and 29.

Your sister in Christ,
Pastor Jennifer

YOUTH CALENDAR (Grades 7-12)

Sunday, January 8, 4:30 – 8:30 pm

Our Synod's Sunday Night Live

Gather with over 50 youth from the Synod for music, worship, friends, service, and fun! We'll be at Faith Lutheran Church in McKeesport (White Oak) this month, so we'll meet at Emmanuel at 4:30 pm to carpool. Bring \$5 for dinner if you can; if you don't have \$5, come anyway and bring what you can. RSVP to Pr. Jennifer (412-297-9953 or pastor@elcetna.org) by **Wednesday, January 4** if you can come. Bring a friend, too!

Sunday, January 15, 12:00 – 2:00 pm

Stay after church for a youth group lunch and activities!

Sunday, February 5, 12-3 pm

We'll have lunch and then deliver our collection for local veterans, and get to visit with veterans at the the Aspinwall facility. Please mark your calendar – and contribute donations for the collection of "Welcome Home Buckets"!

Lutherlyn Winter Retreat

February 3-5, 2012

This year's winter retreat is for 4th – 12th graders (campers will be divided by age groups for the weekend) is February 3-5. GAGA ball in the snow, Bible study, the bouldering room, songs, worship, friends, indoor and outdoor games, lots of your summer camp favorites and fun in the wonderful winter weather! The retreat costs \$110 per person (includes 2 nights, 5 meals, and all program costs). Staff is provided by Lutherlyn. Registration forms are available in the narthex or on the bulletin board outside the sanctuary.

Stay at Home Mission Work Camp 2012

** Article reprinted from the January Synod newsletter.*

Christ Lutheran Church of Millvale and St. Mark Lutheran Church of Brookline and other Lutheran folk are sponsoring a stay at home mission work camp beginning Sunday, June 24 (6:30 pm) thru Friday, June 29 (ending early afternoon). Participants will eat and sleep at Christ Lutheran Church during that week. Participants will work on homes of elderly and low income people to make them more livable and secure. We invite adults and youth (those who have completed 6th grade to 12th grade). The camp fee is \$75.00. Please contact Pastor George Mendis at 412-821-4300 or email us at clc@clcmillvale.comcastbiz.net with questions and to procure registration materials. Registration is limited to 60 work campers and is due by Easter Sunday, April 8, 2012.

Collection for Local Veterans

During January, Emmanuel's teens are collecting donations for local veterans, who are transitioning to community life. We will be making "**Welcome Home Buckets**," with materials for cleaning and caring for home and sharing them through one of our local VA facilities.

The next time that you are at the grocery store or KMart, please consider picking up one of these items and bring them to the collection box in our church narthex:

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|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Bucket | Mop |
| Pine Sol | Broom |
| Mop | Dust Pan |
| Toilet brush | Hand soap |
| Dish soap | |
| Cleaning sponges or cloths | |
| 409 or Fantastic all-purpose cleaner | |
| Toilet Paper – multipack | |

Our students will be delivering the donations and visiting with veterans on the afternoon of Sunday, February 5. Thank you for supporting our youth's ministry!

The Epiphany of our Lord
Wednesday, January 4, 7-7:30 pm

Join your church family for a brief worship service to celebrate the coming of the wise men to worship the Christ child, and the gift of God's Son to all nations of the world. We will gather in our small chapel (also known as the adult ed. room).

112th Anniversary of Emmanuel
Annual Congregational Meeting
and Church Council Elections

Church Council elections will take place during our annual meeting on Sunday, January 22, 2012 in the social hall. Please plan to stay after worship for the meeting and luncheon.



Emmanuel's New Year's Resolution?

Seek new life in Christian Education...

There will be a Christian Education luncheon on Sunday, January 29, 2012 from Noon until 1 pm. All Sunday School teachers, substitutes, and helpers are strongly encouraged to attend. Parents and others in the congregation who are supportive of and interested in Christian education are also invited to attend.

Join us as we discuss a new emphasis on Christian education in 2012. We have invited Beth Caywood, Director of Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Resource Center, to help us kick off our new journey. R.S.V.P. by January 22 to Carol Koedel or Rafelin O'Dell, so we may have the enough lunch prepared.

Senior Friendship Center

Senior Friendship meets on Thursday, January 5 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. This month we will be playing bingo, so please bring a prize to share.

FROG BLOG:

News from our
Sunday School

For the 5th & 6th grade Sunday School class, Maddie, Lexie and Ashley have been hard at working learning about trust, forgiveness, being thankful, honesty, friendships and how it relates to church and family. This class is taught by Kelly Henning.

Reaching Out Creatively

The Evangelism committee is spreading its wings and making changes from the past. We would like to consider how we can invite people to enter more deeply into the Christian life of faith, even with the changes regarding how church fits into our society's culture. We are looking for people who would like to serve on our committee to help consider the challenges, brainstorm and implement some fresh ways. We hope to have our first brainstorming meeting in late January 2012. If you have the time and energy to contribute to this brainstorming effort, please contact Pastor Jennifer at 412-297-9953 or Karen Wolfinger at 412-492-0331.

Council Notes: December 5, 2011

Evangelism Committee has composed a letter of invitation to be sent to active and inactive members of the church.

Social Ministry reported that the food drive went well, but needs a little tweaking for next year.

Christian Education is planning a luncheon on January 29, 2012. Carol Koedel is continuing to obtain information regarding St. After School. Plans are to have this in operation by 2012.

We now have 10 people signed up for AED/CPR classes. If you are interested please contact Pastor Jennifer.

Council is moving ahead to reduce the number of council members from 15 to 12.

Glen Grady resigned as custodian. We thank Glen for his service and wish him well.

Annual Synod Christian Education Retreat: Planning VBS

This year's Annual Christian Education Retreat through our Synod will be a day-long event focused on Vacation Bible School! Interested leaders from congregations will gather on Saturday, January 28 from around 9 am - 3:15 pm at Christ Lutheran Church in Murrysville. The group will consider different curriculum possibilities and participate in writing one VBS curriculum, available for use by anyone in the Synod. The cost for this event is \$20, which our congregation can cover for leaders who wish to attend. Please see the flyer on the bulletin board or speak to Pastor Jennifer to seek more information. The registration deadline is January 18.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for:

The Grady family as they mourn the death of LaVerne Marshall (Dawn Grady's grandmother), who died on Monday, December 12, 2011;

*The Zacchero family as they mourn the death of Paul McGinty (Karen's Zacchero's cousin), who died on December 7, 2011.
May they rest in peace.*

Thank you...

*To the members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church:
Merry Christmas! Thanks for all you do.
Linda Sherman and the Domestic Outreach staff.*

*To the Choir and organist,
You all made my day. It was wonderful to hear all your voices that I enjoyed for years. The cookies are delicious. Happy Holiday! Helen Ferraro*

*To the women of Emmanuel:
Thank you ever so much for your thoughtfulness and generosity. I truly enjoyed your cards and Thanksgiving and Christmas gifts. May God bless you all. Your cookies are delicious!
A very happy New Year!
Again thank you, Millie Fincke*

SERVING SCHEDULE

JANUARY 8

Ushers: Roland and Lynn Kania
Bob and Brett Burkhart
Acolyte: Sydney Schmitt
Nursery: Jennifer Egan, Brittney Harencome
Lector: To be announced
Counters: Vera and Brittney Harencome

JANUARY 15

Ushers: Terry and Courtney Tuite
Joe Kiernan, Bob Klinefelter
Acolyte: Christian Henning
Nursery: Donna Kiernan
Lector: To be announced
Counters: Carol Koedel, Karen Wolfinger

JANUARY 22

Ushers: Shirley Simon, John Mertens
Matt and Bill Schmitt
Acolyte: Ashley Matesic
Nursery: Vera Harencome
Lector: To be announced
Counters: John Mertens, Jack Dellert

JANUARY 29

Ushers: Jim and Kathy Suhadolnik
Sue Spelic
Acolyte: Anniston Bieri
Nursery: Vic and Karen Zacchero
Lector: To be announced
Counters: John Jeffries, Rafelin O'Dell

FEBRUARY 5

Ushers: Craig Tuite, Matthew Kiernan
Vera and Brittney Harencome
Acolytes: Julia Bernesser
Maddie Dombrowski
Nursery: Trish and Terry Tuite
Lector: To be announced
Counters: Don Zimmerman, Kathy Suhadolnik
**If you are scheduled to serve and cannot make it,
please find a replacement.**

Meals on Wheels:

Baked goods for the Elfinwild Presbyterian Meals on Wheels are due the first Sunday of the month. Please place your items in the hallway from the side entrance door. Thank you!

**WILLIAM J. WOLF MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

The Scholarship is available for undergraduate and graduate students of the Lutheran denomination residing in Allegheny County. The award will not exceed \$5,000 per year for four years. Renewal of the scholarship will be contingent on maintain a good grade point average. Completed applications should be submitted by April 1, 2012. Please contact Deborah L Turner, Scholarship Coordinator of the Pittsburgh Foundation at 412-394-2649 or email turnerd@pghfdn.org for more information or an application.

LUTHERAN VOLUNTEER CORPS

** This article is reprinted from the Jan. Synod newsletter*

March 30 is the final deadline application for Lutheran Volunteer Corps (LVC). LVC is a one year, full-time program that offers an opportunity for spiritual and personal exploration while volunteers work for social justice and sustainability in intentional community. LVC partners with non-profit organizations in 15 cities where volunteers will live and work.

Pastor Jennifer McCurry from Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Etna, PA, did a year of LVC after graduating from college. She says, "During LVC, I was most blessed by living in intentional community, for which both spirituality and simplicity were explicit goals. I learned a lot from living in a small community that was drawn together amid diversity, and to explore new practices that grew from our faith."

LVC is on a Journey to Inclusive Community, forming and strengthening alliances among people of many cultures and communities, and intentionally dismantling racism within LVC, the church, and society. As a Reconciling in Christ organization, LVC welcomes and encourages the participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people in all aspects of LVC.

Visit their website for more information on applying or how to support the mission of Lutheran Volunteer Corps:

<http://www.lutheranvolunteercorps.org>

**SEMINARY WEEKEND
JANUARY 27-28, 2012**

** This excerpt is reprinted from the Jan. Synod newsletter*

Come for a weekend of discernment at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, January 27-28, 2012. Immerse yourself in Gettysburg's faithful and faith-filled seminary community. Discover how God might be calling you to study at this "crossroads of history and hope." Learn all you need to know about attending seminary, including the application process, courses, and financial aid. See Pastor Jennifer if you (or someone you know) are interested.

THE MILLVALE CLINIC

Free legal advice which is sponsored by the law firm of Dickie McCamey and Chilcote, PC which meets at Christ Lutheran Church in Millvale, is available by appointment only, the first Thursday of the month between 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Potential clinic clients, please call our dedicated line at 877-239-2745 and leave a message.



facebook

Connect with our congregation on facebook! Get reminders about what's going on and invite friends easily. Go to Emmanuel's website home page (www.elcetna.org) to find links to both our church and youth facebook pages.

Did you miss worship Sunday?

Go to our website (www.elcetna.org) to read the sermon or be reminded of upcoming events!