

Coming this Winter ...

- **Saturday, December 2**
Community Holiday Dinner
- **Sunday, December 10-**
Budget Meeting, Congrega-
tional Dinner; Confirmation
Caroling
- **Friday, December 15-** Red
Cross Blood Drive at St. John
UCC, Riegelsville
- **Sunday, December 17-**
Children's Christmas Pro-
gram, Caroling to Home-
bound
- **Sunday, December 24 - 10:30**
AM - Lessons & Carols 7:30
PM Candlelight Communion
- **Sunday, December 31—NO**
Sunday School, 10:30 AM
Service of Carols, Readings,
Hymns, Prayer
- **Wednesday, January 17 -**
Soup Supper

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Seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany

"The Beginning of the Good News of Jesus"

On December 3, 2017, a brand new Church Year begins - not to be confused with the secular New Year which begins January 1. Each of our Church Years is identified with one of the first Gospels - Matthew, Mark, and Luke. We are just concluding the Year of Matthew, so this December we begin the Year of Mark. And the very first line of Mark in chapter 1, verse 1 reads, "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

The coming of Jesus is "Gospel" (Good News) for the world and all its people. Of course, when Jesus comes on the scene in the first century, there is a whole lot of bad news for most people. When Mark actually writes this Gospel, around 70 B.C., the Jewish Temple of Jerusalem has been destroyed during the war with Rome. Mark's community of Christians is marginalized, suffering, and dying. The political and social scene is divisive and oppressive. Many of God's people are afraid -- afraid they might face extinction. The world was full of violence and poverty.

But into this scene Mark places Jesus, God's Son, to insert the Kingdom of God in the world. The Kingdom of God announces healing and hope to God's people. In December this year, we will hear a little bit about this Good News from Mark. Then after the secular calendar turns over, beginning January 7, 2018, we will hear a lot more Good News from Mark.

It may seem interesting sometimes to go back to the Church of the first century. At others it may also seem distant, irrelevant to us today. But is it? It seems to me that our world is full of division between classes, races, ethnic groups, and religious groups. There is so much hunger of body and soul within 21st century human beings. Political corruption and oppression are widespread. Maybe we, too, need Good News and healing and hope.

As we gather as a community of faith this December, we will receive lots of Good News and hope for the present and the future, culminating in December 24 with the birth of this carrier of Good News in the flesh. You, too, may need some Good News. So, don't miss our 10:30 gathering each Sunday morning.

~ **Pastor David Deal**

Third Sunday of Advent - 12/17 - 10:30 AM - Children and Youth present "The World Sings Noel" a special Christmas Service for families with children.

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve - Sunday, December 24 10:30 AM - Advent Service of Lessons & Carols with brief Communion.

7:30 PM - Candlelight Communion Service with Adult Choir



Highlights of the Advent/Christmas Season -

Worship/Education/Special Events

Saturday, December 2 - Annual Free Community Dinner at Riegelsville Firehouse

December 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 10:30 AM - Advent Worship: - Holy Communion will be celebrated on December 3, 10, and 24.

Sunday, December 17 - Sunday School presents "The world Sings Noel," a special Christmas program, at 10:30 AM. This will also be our featured Christmas service for families with children this year. **There will not be a 5 PM service on Christmas Eve.**

NEW - Adult Small Group begins another course. This new group had a good experience with our first theme on Lutheran interpretation of scripture. Participants couldn't wait to start another course - "The Gospel of Mark," which includes a biblical storyteller performing the entire Gospel on DVD. The group will meet on Tuesdays, starting **Tuesday, December 5 from 2:00-3:30 PM.**

December 10 - Congregational Budget Meeting - A brief meeting after worship to approve our 2018 budget. After the meeting, head on downstairs for "good eats" - our annual **Christmas Covered Dish Dinner** sponsored by Women of the ELCA.

Confirmation Youth - Attention! We will meet twice in December - once on December 3 at 5:30 PM at Trinity Lutheran Church, Pleasant Valley (TLC) and also on December 10 at 5:30 PM here at Durham. See you all there!

Saturday, December 16 - Help is needed **decorating the Sanctuary.** We will prepare candles, decorate the trees, and other fun things, starting at 9 AM. The more, the merrier!

Sunday, December 17 - Caroling to the Sick/Homebound - It is our annual tradition to carpool and go out to homes/assisted living facilities after worship. Helen Dungan and the Outreach Committee sponsor this service activity. We will begin with lunch at Helen's home right after the worship service.

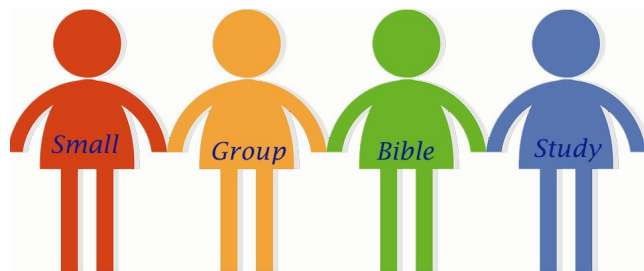
Sunday morning, December 24 - Advent Lessons and Carols - Something new this year, we will listen to God's word, sing familiar carols and hymns together, and celebrate a simple service of Holy Communion. (This will be a different service than our Candlelight Communion Service later in the evening.)

December 31 at 10:30 AM - New Year's Eve Service - lessons, Christmas and other appropriate hymns, and special prayers for the New Year.

Sunday School Students and Parents - PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO Sunday School on December 24 or December 31. We will resume Sunday School with a new story on Moses on January 7, 2018.

Special Scoop about ADULT SMALL GROUP

On Tuesday, December 5, our Adult Small Group will begin to look at "*The Gospel of Mark*," which will include a DVD with a dramatic retelling of the Gospel, and also background material and questions on each chapter of Mark. It's a great group! Come join us if you can. We meet from 2:00 to 3:30 PM each Tuesday down in the Fellowship Hall, starting up again on 12/ 5.





Helen Dungan

During our November we gave thanks for those who donate their time and talents to make our lives better. We wrote some thank you notes to Durham folks acknowledging their service to our church.

On **Sunday December 10th**, following the budget meeting, WELCA will host our annual Christmas covered dish dinner. Please join us for a time of fellowship and good food. We will supply the beverages, rolls & butter; you bring a dish and/or dessert to share. The tables will be decorated with poinsettias which will be given to our shut-in members.

Our January meeting will be held on Monday, January 8, 2018 at 10:30 in the church fellowship hall. The main order of business is the January soup supper. If time permits, we are going to watch the first episode of *Touched by an Angel*. Following the meeting, those who are free will have lunch together.

Date: Wednesday, January 17th **Time:** 4:00 -6:30. **Soups:** vegetable beef & potato.

Price: Quart of soup -\$7.00 (please bring your own container.)

Eat In (soup, bread, beverage, dessert) - \$7 for adults; \$3 for kids 6-16; 5 & under free

CAN YOU HELP? Monday we will be cooking bones for the beef broth; help is needed around 5 PM to strain the broth and wash pots. If you can help Monday evening, please let Helen Dungan know.



At 9:00 AM **Wednesday** morning help is needed to peel potatoes, chop vegetables and prepare the soups. We have BASKETS of potatoes to peel as well as other vegetables so there will be lots of opportunity to chat.

We also have tables to set up and take down, bread and desserts to bake, pots and dishes to wash, and soup to serve. There is plenty of work and we need lots of helpers. From around 3:30 to 6:30 PM on Wednesday, we need volunteers to help with serving and dishwashing; and around 6:30 PM we need helpers to take down the tables and put the chairs away.

And remember, ***ALL proceeds are donated to hunger causes.***

THANK YOU ... and PLEASE

From Kathy Hlavaty: I would like to thank my Durham Church Family for all the prayers, cards, love and support during my cancer treatments. You gave me the courage to work hard with the Good Lord right beside me. The little church on the hill have members with giant hearts.

From Joe Hlavaty: I extend a personal/heartfelt appreciation to my Durham Family for your cards/support following my mom's death. You showed my mom the love/comfort/friendship that made her cherish her worship time with us. That's a miraculous congregational accomplishment from a 93 year old lifetime Catholic. You're the BEST!!! :-)

From the Hlavaty Family: Gerry Seipt, the Durham Card Lady, will be turning 90 on December 27, 2017. Now it's your turn to shower her with cards. Her family would welcome the Durham Church Family and friends to send a card to her on this milestone birthday achievement.

December Worship Assistants

	3*	10*	17	24* Christmas Eve	31*
Youth Acolyte & Communion Asst.	Hunter Aquino	Nicholas Phillipps	Matthew Mueller	AM: Conner Aquino PM: Grace Litzenberger & Sharron Streletz	Samantha Mueller
Greeter(s)	Ben Naska	Ed Xander	Val McGinn	AM Sara Aquino PM Lois & Jim Altemose & Grace	Frank and Addyson Mammana
Lay Worship Assistant/ Lector	Maggie Fischer	Bob Starling	Sunday School	AM: Various PM: TBA	TBA
Council Communion Assistants	Ken Anderson Scott Gaun	Ken Anderson Scott Gaun		Ken Anderson Scott Gaun	
Counters	Ken Anderson, Scott Gaun				
Head Usher	Cheryl Mesko				
Altar Guild	Barbara Naska, Nancy Moskella, Mark Harwick				
* Indicates Communion will be served					

	December Birthdays		December Anniversaries		December Baptisms
2	Clayton Lechlitter	8	Dianna and Peter Streletz (27th)	1	Kerri Rhine
14	Victoria Phillipps Benjamin Williams			2	Blake Trauger
				4	Rowan Froehlich
19	Bob Starling	21	Kathy and Joe Hlavaty (43nd)	6	Brian Ashmore, Sr.
20	Valerie McGinn	26	Cheryl and Wayne Mesko (41st)	8	Brendan Snyder
23	Scott Gaun, Clayton Helfrich	28	Jayne and Jim Miller (49th)	9	Lois Altemose
27	Gerry Seipt (90th)	29	Lois and Jim Altemose (44th)	10	Jocelyn Frey Hunter Frey
30	George Kreitz	30	Gerry and Don Seipt (67th) Laura and Dave Helfrich (11th)	11	Alex Crouse
31	Jenny Moyer			15	Lee Ann Kressman
				18	Ken Anderson
				23	Coraline Trauger
				29	Matthew Mueller
Other December baptisms, exact date unknown: Nancy Fox, Cheryl Mesko, and Cathy Mueller					

January Worship Assistants ... TBA

	January Birthdays		January Anniversaries		January Baptisms
		8	Betty and Leo Fox (69th)	6	Kaitlin Jensen
5	Joe Hlavaty			9	Faye Gadwell Conner Aquino
12	Landon Helfrich			10	Austin Apgar Joanne Apgar Erika Trauger
14	Joann Thaler			26	George Kreitz
15	Don Crouse, Kathy Hlavaty			27	Joe Hlavaty Chris Apgar Scott Apgar
16	Jim Altemose			28	Kenneth Crouse
18	Rachel Crouse			29	Mark Harwick
25	Audrey Bolesta				
26	Kathy Ecker Cora Gadwell Paige Reiman				
30	Carolyn Williams				
31	Rachael Roney Sharron Streletz				
Other January baptisms, exact date unknown: Victoria Phillipps, Peter Miller					



A Note from the Church Secretary

Many thanks to Helen Dungan, who has come in to the Church Office during September and October to learn to do the job of Church Secretary. Because of Helen's willingness to help out and her eagerness to learn, I now have a substitute !

My office hours in December are irregular because I am going to California to see my kids and to see the Eagles play the Rams in the LA Coliseum. If there is something you need, you can always reach me by email at evangel@durhamlutheran.org. Merry Christmas! ~ Ann



In December we will be exploring the similarities and differences of all of the Holidays celebrated around the world and the people who live in the Northern Arctic. We will learn the story of Jesus and Christmas and make a "Jesse Tree". We will have a Christmas Party on the 21st with a viewing of a Christmas favorite; "The Poky Little Puppy's Christmas". The story tells the true meaning of Christmas. **We are looking forward to a visit from the man in the red suit.** The children have all been on Santa's "NICE list". The school will be closed for the Christmas holiday the week of December 25th through the 29th. Classes will resume on Jan. 2nd.

In January we'll welcome in the New Year with many planned activities which include: Pajama Day, Teddy Bear Day, Mr. Yuk Day with a play and Dinosaur Day. We will have Parent-Teacher Conferences on the morning of January 17th, from 9-12:30, with no regular classes on that day. We will have evening Parent-Teacher Conferences on January 18th from 6:00-8:00 pm. We will have classes on that day.

Please continue to put in your Giant Rewards 11-digit number, if you have not already done so. The program runs until the end of March. If you need help adding your number, please write down your number with your name and phone number and put it in the Care-A-Lot mailbox. Thank you for your help.

The Care-A-Lot Students and Staff wish everyone a Joyous and Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!!!!

LUTHERFEST 500 - What a Celebration!!! - Rev. David M. Deal

On October 28, 2017, more than 400 men women, and children gathered at St. Andrew's in Perkasie for a commemoration of the Reformation. There was food, drink, music, games, drama, and a whole lot more. Attendees brought more than 500 new books to share with children served by our Bucks County Food Pantries. More than \$700 was given to Lutheran Disaster Response. It was truly a day to remember.

As part of the festivities, there was a poster board displayed for people to place their thoughts about the statement "You might be a Lutheran in 2017 if ..." Here are some of the responses made -

- ... you talk a lot about Grace. And you try to live like it.
- ... you feel guilty about feeling guilty.
- ... you know you're a saint **and** a sinner.
- ... you like to read, and you believe in education (like Luther).
- ... you love music, contemporary and classical (like Luther).
- ... you care about women. (Luther, in his day, contributed to the rising status of women.)
- ... you value fairness, equality, justice.
- ... you care about family. (Luther was very big on family.)
- ... you realize that "reformation," renewal of the church continues.
- ... you like to do things (especially service) with other Christians, other people of faith, others in general.



Now here are some of the more humorous responses -

- ... you carry silverware in your pocket, just in case there's a potluck.
- ... you have an uncontrollable urge to sit in the back of any room.
- ... you like to break bread together. ("to eat")
- ... you'd save the coffee urn first if the church building is on fire.
- ... you don't want a sermon longer than 10 minutes.



Thanks to all who contributed to our clean up buckets. Thanks to George Krietz for navigating us to the warehouse to deliver the supplies.

Christmas giving:

On **Sunday, December 10th**, we will dedicate our donations of personal care kits, children's gifts, and food gift cards. Lynn will deliver the local gifts, the personal care kits will be delivered later, so if you cannot get them here by the tenth, you can bring them later.

Children's gifts: Lynn Gaun has the names of some local children whose Christmas would be brightened by a gift from you. Speak to her if you would like to help.

Gift cards: We are also collecting some food cards for some older and needful folks in our community. Again, speak to Lynn.

Personal care kit: Each kit contains: 1 light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27", dark color recommended), 2 or 3 bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping, 1 adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging, 1 sturdy comb, 1 metal nail clippers (attached file optional).

The personal care kits will go to Lutheran Disaster Relief for those forced from their homes and into shelters. Recent disasters have depleted their supplies.

Caroling: After church on Sunday, December 17th (weather permitting) we will go caroling to our shut-in members. We will share a light lunch in the fellowship hall before heading out. Please join us – all ages and singing levels are welcome. **You do NOT have to be a great singer to share the music of Christmas.**

Food Banks: Thanks to all who donated food for our Thanksgiving food drive; thanks to Val and Paul McGinn for delivering the food to Upper Bucks and to Lois and Jim Altemose for delivering it to Easton. For the month of **December**, please buy **personal care items**, such as shampoo and deodorant. In **January** please bring in cans of **soup** in preparation for Souper Bowl of Caring. However, **everything** is welcome. If you find something on sale at a really good price, please donate it. **Both food banks appreciate all donations.**

Food baskets: The following food baskets were placed on the altar during November: October 29th – Barbara and Ben Naska in honor of Benjamin John's 10th birthday. November 12th – Linda Sauter in memory of Nancy Jean Xander. November 19th – Ed Xander in memory of Nancy Jean Xander .

If you would like to honor or memorialize a loved one with a food basket, please sign on the sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex; include your dedication. If you do the shopping yourself, any non perishable item is appreciated. Alternatively, I can do the shopping. Minimum price is \$25 (the cost of altar flowers.)

Souper Bowl of Caring: On Super Bowl Sunday, we will again be collecting cans of soup for the food banks. More details in the February newsletter.

~ Helen Dungan

Don't forget about the free Community Holiday Dinner, held at the Riegelsville Fire House on Saturday, December 2. Seatings are at 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, 5:00, and 6:00 PM. For free tickets and more information, contact Joe Hlavaty or Lois Altemose.



Community Blood Drive

Friday, December 15th

2:00 PM - 7:00 PM

St. John UCC

651 Easton Rd, Riegelsville, PA 18077



To sign up go to www.redcrossblood.org

sponsor code Riegelsville

Or call 1-800- redcross

Eligibility questions call 1-866-236-3276

**-- GIVE A MEANINGFUL GIFT THIS HOLIDAY—
DONATE BLOOD!**

Christmas Flowers It is time to order Poinsettias to decorate our chancel for Christmas. Orders will be taken until December 17. You can place your check and completed order form in the offering plate on Sunday morning, or you can order by mail. Send your check and completed order form to: Victoria Phillipps, 100 Meadows Lane, Riegelsville, PA 18077. Make checks payable to Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham. Please make sure to include your phone number. Flowers will be delivered on Friday, December 22 or Saturday, December 23. Any questions, please contact Victoria at 610-346-1996.



NAME			Phone Number	
Quantity	Plant	Price	Total Amount	In Honor/In Memory of
	Red Poinsettia	\$7.00		
	White Poinsettia	\$7.00		
	Grand Total			

Please lift up in prayer the following:

PRAYER



Luke 1:46-55 Mary's Song of Praise

And Mary said,
 'My soul magnifies the Lord,
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
 Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name.
 His mercy is for those who fear him
 from generation to generation.
 He has shown strength with his arm;
 he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
 and lifted up the lowly;
 he has filled the hungry with good things,
 and sent the rich away empty.
 He has helped his servant Israel,
 in remembrance of his mercy,
 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
 to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'





December 2017

To Our Church Family,

This year, as in previous years, the Church Council of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham invites you to make a contribution toward a Christmas gift for Pastor Deal and our other staff members. Any amount you can afford is welcome, so that we can show our appreciation for the many ways our Pastor and church staff serve God and our congregation.

Please make your check payable to Evangelical Lutheran Church and put it in an envelope marked "Christmas Gifts." You can place your contribution in the collection plate on Sunday morning, or mail it to Ken Anderson, P.O. Box 51, Durham PA 18039-0051.

Thank you for your generosity. We wish you all a joyous Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Mike Rhine
Church Council President

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Events Coming in January: January 8 - WELCA January 17 - Soup Supper					1	2 Free Community Holiday Dinner
3 First Sunday of Advent/New Church Year 9 AM – Christian Education 10:30 AM – Holy Communion 5:30 PM Confirmation at TLC, Pleasant Valley	4	5 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot 2-3:30 PM Small Group	6 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot 6:30 PM Choir	7 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot	8	9 Pastor's Day Off
10 Second Sunday of Advent 9 AM – Christian Education 10:30 AM – Communion 11:30 AM Congregational Budget Meeting Noon - Christmas Covered Dish Dinner	11	12 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot 2-3:30 PM Small Group	13 Hanukkah Begins 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot 6:30 PM Choir	14 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot	15 Red Cross Blood Drive	16 9 AM Decorate Sanctuary for Christmas Services
17 Third Sunday of Advent 9 AM – Christian Education 10:30 AM – Sunday School Christmas Service Noon - Caroling to homebound	18	19 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot	20 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot 6:30 PM Choir	21 9 AM–12:30 PM Care-A-Lot Winter Begins	22	23
24 Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve 10:30 AM – Advent Service of Lessons, Carols, Communion 7:30 PM - Christmas Candlelight Communion	25 Christmas	26	27	28	29	30
The Christmas Season - <i>The Church Office is Closed. There is NO Preschool this week.</i>						
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS Pastor: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 10 AM - 12 PM Secretary: December 4 and 5: 12 PM - 4 PM December 14 and 15: 2 PM - 6 PM December 19 and 22: 2 PM - 6 PM						
31 First Sunday of Christmas/New Year's Eve 10:30 AM – Special Service of Carols, Hymns, Readings, and Prayer						

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham

"The church on the hill, lighting the way to God's love"

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EVANGEL

