

December

2025



EVANGEL NEWSLETTER

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CONTACT US

Reminder: There will be a Congregational Budget Meeting on December 7th immediately following the service. At this meeting, we will review the proposed 2026 church operating budget, receive questions, and vote on its approval. After the budget meeting you are invited to join us at our traditional Christmas covered dish potluck hosted by WELCA. During the covered dish event we will have a Ministry Site Profile input session where we will brainstorm about how we would like our church represented in the synod online system that attracts potential new pastors. 2026 is looking to be an exciting year for ELC of Durham, as the heart of the church, your input is important to us!

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Pastor's Message December 2025

Greetings sisters and brothers in Christ,

Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. This greeting is intentional, although this article appears in the December newsletter rather than in January. Within the Christian tradition, there are in fact two occasions to mark the new year. In addition to celebrating the turn of the calendar year on January 1st, Christians also observe the beginning of the liturgical year, which commences with Advent. The start date for the liturgical year varies slightly, but it consistently occurs four weeks prior to Christmas; this year, Advent begins on Sunday, November 30th. Much like the astronomical new year, the liturgical new year offers an opportunity for renewal, grace, and hope, as well as a chance to move beyond the difficulties and struggles of the past year. For us as a family of God, this new year will also bring about a year of significant change, most of which I believe will be positive in nature.

The initial major development will be the construction of the Annex. At the time of writing, all necessary variances and approvals from the Township have been secured, allowing us to proceed with the project. In December, we will invite bids from four builders. By mid-January, these bids will be reviewed by the building committee, which will then make a recommendation to the council regarding the preferred contractor. Upon council approval, the selected General Contractor will apply for building permits and establish a groundbreaking date, anticipated for the spring. The construction phase is expected to take six to nine months, with a projected move-in date by the end of 2026. Monthly updates will be provided to the congregation through both the newsletter and the Durham Dialogue meetings, held on the fourth Sunday of each month following the service.

Another significant development is the ongoing search for a new pastor. This process has already commenced, with the council meeting Pastor Bill Colman, the Conference Dean, to discuss the necessary steps. A dedicated subcommittee has been formed to update the Mission Site Profile (MSP), which will be submitted to the Synod for posting to attract potential candidates. Both the committee and the council are eager to hear from all members of the congregation regarding the qualities, skills, and gifts you believe are essential in your next pastor.

The first opportunity for input will be on Sunday, December 7th. After the Congregational Budget Meeting, there will be the traditional WELCA-hosted Christmas Pot Luck luncheon, during which the Council will be soliciting feedback from attendees. The aim is to submit the updated MSP to the Synod early in 2026, at which point Durham will officially be listed as vacant and seeking a new pastor.

Continued on next page

Pastor's Message cont'd

While it is possible that an interested candidate may come forward quickly, the current shortage of pastors means that the process could take months. Please rest assured that should a suitable candidate become available prior to January 1, 2027, I am prepared to step down. Nevertheless, I remain committed to fulfilling my promise to see the building project through to completion as necessary.

Both of these developments represent positive progress for our community. Over the past four years, we have collectively worked to maintain stability and strength within Evangelical Durham, while establishing a solid foundation for future growth. The new annex will offer modernized office and bathroom facilities, expanded meeting areas, and a dedicated space for Care-a-lot. I am confident that the congregation is prepared to welcome its next pastor, who will guide you into the upcoming phase of ministry. You are a committed, generous, and joyful group, well positioned to collaborate effectively with your new shepherd in fulfilling your mission. It is anticipated that the new pastor will bring renewed energy, vision, enthusiasm, and a sincere dedication to serving in this role.

Although change isn't always easy for us Lutherans, it's unavoidable. As we approach another new year together, the changes ahead feel exciting and geared towards progress, all while remaining true to Durham Lutheran's long-standing vision and mission. I am eager to move forward with you each Sunday, experiencing both the ups and downs, confident that we are never alone—God is with us!

See you in Church.

Your servant in Christ.

Pastor Jim Heckman



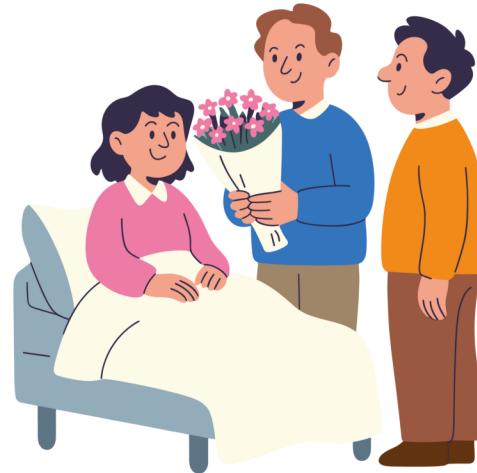
Poinsettia Orders due December 7

Order forms can be found on the table in the Narthex. Checks should be written out to Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham and returned with order forms to the Altar Guild Mailbox

ELCD Friendly Visitors

What is the Friendly Visitor group? This is a group that visits our shut-in members. Visit times are flexible and can be in a group, individual or even phone calls. The time commitment is also flexible as visits could be quarterly, monthly, bi-weekly or whenever you are available.

Are you able to join our Friendly Visitor group? If so, just fill out the sign up sheet at church!



Meals on Wheels

If anyone needs Meals on Wheels assistance, the Upper Bucks contact is Deanna 215-262-4761. Meals are prepared at McCafferty's in Doylestown and delivered to those in need.

Christmas Card Bulletin Board

There will be a bulletin board in the Narthex again this season devoted to sharing your Christmas cards with our Church family! Please feel free to mail one or post one yourself!



Worship Assistants

Altar Guild	Mark Harwick and Nancy Moskella			
Counting Team	Scott Gaun and Kathy Hlavaty			
Date	Greeters	Lector	Head Usher	Acolyte
Dec 7, 2025		Mark Harwick	Mark Harwick	
Dec 14, 2025				
Dec 21, 2025				
2pm service Dec 24				
7pm Service Dec 24				
Dec 28, 2025				
Jan 4, 2026				

Church Calendar of Events-

Monday, December 1	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Wednesday, December 3	9:30 AM-12:00 PM 12:00 PM 6:30 PM	Office Hours Chat & Chew w/ Pastor Jim Taize Meditation Service @ St. Luke Ferndale
Thursday, December 4	10:00 AM 10:00 AM- 1:00 PM 1:00 PM-3:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal Office Hours Bible Study @ the Hlavaty's!
Saturday, December 6	3:00PM and 5:00 PM	Living Nativity at Trinity
Sunday, December 7 2nd Sunday of Advent	10:00 AM AfterWorship Aftermeeting 5:00 PM- 7:30 PM	Communion Worship Congregational Budget Meeting WELCA Christmas Potluck+ MSP Input session Confirmation Class at St Lukes
Monday, December 8	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Tuesday, December 9	7:00 PM	Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 10	9:30AM-12:00 PM 12:00 PM	Office Hours Chat & Chew w/ Pastor Jim
Thursday, December 11	10:00 AM 10:00 AM- 1:00 PM 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal Office Hours Bible Study @ the Hlavaty's
Friday, December 12	5:00 PM-8:00 PM	Parents Night Out
Sunday, December 14 3rd Sunday in Advent	10:00 AM AfterWorship	Communion Worship New Member Forum Meeting WELCA Flowers and Carols to Homebound
Monday, December 15	1:00PM -3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Wednesday, December 17	9:30 AM-12:00 PM 12:00 PM	Office Hours Chat & Chew w/ Pastor Jim
Thursday, December 18	10:00 AM 10:00 AM- 11:00 PM 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal Office Hours Bible Study @ the Hlavaty's
Saturday, December 20		Church Decorating
Sunday, December 21 4th Sunday of Advent	10:00 AM 5:00 PM- 7:30 PM	Communion Worship Confirmation Class at Durham
Monday, December 22	1:00-3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Wednesday December 24 Nativity of Our Lord	2:00 PM 5:00 PM 7:00 PM	Communion Worship at Durham Communion Worship at Upper Tinicum Candlelight Communion Worship at Durham
Wednesday, December 25	Christmas	Happy Birthday Jesus!
Thursday, December 26		Office Closed
Sunday, December 28 Lessons and Carols	10:00 AM AfterWorship	Communion Worship Durham Dialogue
Monday December 29	1:00-3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Wednesday December 31		Office Closed

DECEMBER

December	BIRTHDAYS	ANNIVERSARIES	BAPTISMS
2	Clayton Leichliter(18)		
4			Rowan Froehlich
6	Barbara Michl		Brian Ashmore Sr.
8		Dianna & Peter Streletz (34)	
9			Lois Altemose
11			Alex Crouse
14	Victoria Phillipps, Benjamin Williams		Lee Ann Kressman
19	Bob Starling		Ken Anderson
20	Val McGinn		
21		Kathy & Joe Hlavaty (51)	
23	Scott Gaun, Clayton Helfrich, Porter Gentner	Cheryl & Wayne Mesko (48)	
29	Leo Grzelkowski	Jayne & Jim Miller (56)	Matthew Mueller
30	George Kreitz	Laura & Dave Helfrich (18)	



WELCA met Friday Nov. 14th; we had originally planned to meet at the home of Gladys Nicholas, but that was postponed until Spring. We continued our Gather study on stewardship, and during our business meeting planned our December activities. One result of shivering at the church was the decision to meet at Helen Dungan's home during the winter!

We will host a congregational Christmas covered dish after church on Sunday December 7th. WELCA will provide rolls, beverages and paper products, we ask you to bring a covered dish or dessert to share. This will be the kick off to our Christmas celebrations.

After church on Sunday December 14th, we are taking flowers to our homebound members; we also want to sing some carols with them. We invite all of you to join us, especially those who have good voices! There will be a light lunch in the fellowship hall before we leave.

Helen Dungan

Bible Study

The Adult Bible study meets from 1-3 o'clock on Thursdays at the home of Kathy and Joe Hlavaty. Our current topic is "Making Sense of the Scriptures."

Our discussions are lively, and we invite you to join us.

Helen Dungan

From the Synod

Faith Alive Worship Learning Lab

January 10, 2026

Lutheran Church of God's Love, Newtown



This all-Synod learning event will support your congregation's ministry of welcoming children and youth and focus on how we use music to engage them.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Outreach

Food banks: Thanks to all who contributed to our Thanksgiving Dinner food drive. I fear some of our donations will actually be going to folks for Christmas dinner. I apologize for being so late with this drive.

When you come to worship, please, bring something to share. In December, please celebrate Christmas by donating food or personal care items to those who are in need. You can also sign up to donate a food basket in memory or honor of a loved one. Thank you.

Outreach envelope: Our Outreach envelopes for December will go to the food banks.

Christmas gifts: Lynn Gaun requests the names of anyone you know in our community who can use some help this Christmas. She traditionally gets gift cards to Giant and Walmart, so parents in particular can shop for what they need. Please give your requests to Lynn by December 7th. She also needs help delivering these gifts (traditionally the cards are attached to a fruit basket).

Caroling: After church on Sunday December 14th, we will take a flower to our homebound members; and sing some carols with them. A light lunch will be provided before we go. Please join us, especially those who have good voices!

Helen Dungan

Prayer List

For Healing of those in our Congregation: Barbara Altemus; David Antoni; Esther Crouse; George Kreitz; Paul McGinn; Bradley Mundt; Barbara Naska; Joanne Ziegenfuss

For Healing of Friends and Family: Phyllis Allebach; Bob Benoure; Jason Bigley; Al Boorse; Hans Buss; Deb Carmichael; Jane Carr; Anna Cole; Peggy Coleman; Christine Connelly; Stephanie Courtney; Dan Crooke; David Davis; Nancy Edelen; Marissa Embardino; Carol and Leon Errico; Gabriella Froehlich; Debbie Gardner; Michael Gardner; Candie Gimbar; Baree Lee Goodman; Penni Griffith; Penny Houck; Bill Hunt; Lois James & family; Martine King; Tim Koplin; Linda Lyle; Frank Manfredonia; Jim McAnally; Letitia McCrea; Connor McDevitt; Stacy Mecham; Hunter Nebbia; Keith Newcomb; Lucia Otero; Jennifer Phelps; Dennis Phillipps; Adrienne Rozzi; Connie Rugen; Richard Seifert; Laurel Sheetz; Jami Silfies; Holly Snyder; Jeff Starling; Debbie Statler; Donna Storm; Edward Thaler; Russ Trauger; Joe V.; Karen von Ruffer-Hills; Kelly Walsh; Jacqueline Ward; Dean Erika Wesch; Ann & Henry Wong and Family; Wayne Yeisley; Barbara Yob.

For those who are Homebound: James Altemose; Jayne Miller.

For families and friends grieving the loss of:

If you want to add or remove someone from the prayer list, please contact Joan Mammana either by phone (610-258-5717 or 610-417-6553) or by email at: joanmammana@icloud.com

TAIZE MEDITATION SERVICE



Join us at 6:30pm on
Wednesday, December 3, 2025

As we unite in meditative prayer on
the hope, peace, joy and love
of the Advent Season

St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church
470 Church Hill Road, Ferrndale, PA 18921

Palisades Area Lutheran Ministries presents

A Living NATIVITY

Join us for an exciting Christmas experience celebrating
the birth of Jesus with actors, music, and live animals

Saturday, December 6th

Performances at 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
2170 Route 212, Coopersburg, PA 18036

Contact 610-346-7282 for more information



Parent's Night Out

FRIDAY DEC. 12, 2025 5-8PM

ENJOY A NIGHT OUT ON THE TOWN
WHILE THE KIDS HAVE DINNER AND
A MOVIE HERE AT
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF DURHAM

FRIDAY DECEMBER 6, 2024

DROP OFF AND PICK UP BETWEEN
THE HOURS OF 5PM-8PM

AGES 0-13 (POTTY TRAINED PREFERRED)

\$25/CHILD
+\$10/ADDITIONAL SIBLINGS

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT CARE-A-LOT



Food

Popcorn, Pizza, and cookies
will be provided.

Please let us know of
any allergies

RightNow Media Christian
Kids Content will be shown on
projector, Story Time, and
play time.

Volunteer Help:

Kathryn Wagner

Pastor Jim Heckman

Cathy Mueller

Samantha Mueller