



THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN

VOL 89, NO 10, DECEMBER 2019

PALM News	1-6
Campus Ministry	7 - 10
Mission News	11-13
Special Events	14-15
Congregation News	16-22
School News	22-26
Concordia News	27-28

PALM DEVOTION

by The Reverend Dr. Douglas H. Spittel, President, Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries

Galatians 3:16 - "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

December in the United States is a season of giving. Christmas, of course, immediately comes to mind as we shop and prepare to give gifts to loved ones, friends, teachers, and employees. The Church stresses acts of kindness and charity as part of the expectant season of Holy Advent. Non-profit charities, Church organizations like PALM, and your local congregation will all encourage you to remember them generously with your year-end giving. All of this is good and laudable. Christians should have a generous heart not only in December, but all the year round. A charitable society is a healthy one.

Our busy, crazy, hurried world would have us put all the wrong things first and the right things last this time of year. From "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday" until Christmas Eve, consumers are encouraged to blitz the big-box and online stores to spend lots of money on goods that are far from necessary and that, in many cases, only add to our already cluttered lives. Dashing through the malls on an over-heated credit card and trying to make sure that the children are at their next basketball game or Christmas pageant heaps up the stress. All the while, diets degenerate into a fast-food or hastily eaten, reheated, gastronomic nightmare of left-overs. At the end of it all, Christmas day becomes more of a crash than a celebration. Our feast bloats but does not satisfy. People are weary and hurriedly tear down the Christmas decorations, breathing a sigh of relief that "It's finally over except for the bills."

THEN the world celebrates a "New Year" with a charade of resolutions to slow down, lose weight, begin anew and do it better next time around.

PALM DEVOTION

PALM DEVOTION (continued)

by The Reverend Dr. Douglas H. Spittel, President, Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries

In Holy Advent, the Church calls us to put first things first. Advent is the Church's "New Year." We begin anew with prayers to our Lord instead of resolutions to improve ourselves. We intentionally fast, taking care of our physical and spiritual diets. Advent is the time to slow down, to put God and Family first. The family sets aside time to eat together, pray around the family advent wreath, and get to know one another again in the Lord. We prepare for the coming of our Lord in Word and Sacrament. We prepare for the coming Feast of the Nativity of our Lord by slowly adding moments of enjoyment to the dark days of December.

On December 6 we celebrate the charity of blessed St. Nicolas by giving tokens of affection to our children and gifts to the poor. On December 13 we celebrate the martyrdom of St. Lucy by enjoying sweet breads that remind us of the sweetness of our Lord in the midst of a bitter world. The feast of St. Thomas on December 21 marks the time to begin our physical preparations for Christmas as trees are brought into our homes to be decorated (but not yet lit) and the smell of Christmas baking fills our homes like the sweet incense of family togetherness. Then, the holy Feast commences as our families join together at the Christmas Eve Divine Service to receive the gifts that our Lord so graciously bestows on us in the Gospel and Sacraments. For twelve days our homes become warm and joyous centers of hospitality and rest illuminated not only by twinkling lights, but especially by Christian faith and love.

I invite you to join my family in this joyous rest. Observing Advent is certainly counter-cultural, and it may mean a little less of the worldly trappings of the season. But the benefits to our families are innumerable in celebrating our giving God who presents Himself to us for our forgiveness and salvation, the Seed, the Gift ... Christ our Lord. Then, truly, Merry Christmas!

Mark your Calendar

December

4. Lutheran Homeschool Families, First Trinity, Shadyside, 9:30 a.m.
4. Tri Parish mid-week Advent Services, St. John, Clarksburg, 7:00 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.
4. Advent Wednesday, Gabriel, Zechariah, & Mary - God's Good News, our response Concordia, Brentwood, 7:30 p.m.
- 4, 11, 18. Advent Service St. Luke Cabot, 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
10. K - 5th grade Christmas Service, St Luke School, 7:00 p.m.
11. Advent Wednesday, Gabriel, Zechariah, & Mary - God's Good News, our response Concordia, Brentwood, 7:30 p.m.
11. Tri Parish mid-week Advent Services, Zion Lawrenceville, 7:00 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.
13. Live Nativity, Concordia, Brentwood, 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.
14. Concordia Carolers, visit Shut-ins, Concordia, Brentwood,
15. Concordia Lutheran Ministries Seventh Annual Live Nativity, Haven II, Cabot, 4:30 p.m., 5:15 p.m. and 6 p.m.
15. Sunday School Christmas Program, Ascension Lutheran Church, McCandless, 9:30 a.m.
16. 8th grade Christmas Program, St. Luke Sanctuary, Cabot, 7:00 p.m.
18. Pre-K Christmas Program, St Luke School, Cabot, 9:30 a.m.
18. Tri Parish mid-week Advent Services, Bethel, Glenshaw, 7:00 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.
18. Advent Wednesday, Gabriel, Zechariah, & Mary - God's Good News, our response Concordia, Brentwood, 7:30 p.m.
20. Christmas Concert, Redeemer School, Penn Hills Auditorium
21. Saturday before Christmas Service, St. Luke Sanctuary, Cabot, 6:00 p.m.



Volume 89, No. 10
The Pittsburgh Lutheran

Published by
Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries
(PALM)

Editors
Nancy Koester, Mary Lou Rilee,
Dione Vallelunga

Business Manager
Mike Fenger

The Pittsburgh Lutheran is published 10 times per year.

All inquiries, comments or suggestions should be addressed to the Editors at:
pittsburgh.lutheran.editor@gmail.com.

Please mail PALM donations to:
The Lutheran Center
Justin Spittel, Treasurer
535 N. Neville Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

PALM Officers
Rev. Douglas Spittel, President
Justin Spittel, Treasurer
Rev. Brian Westgate, Secretary

PALM Website
<http://www.palmpa.org>

PALM NEWS

Mark your Calendar

December (continued)

23. Christmas Eve-Eve Worship, St. Luke Sanctuary, 7:00 p.m.
24. Festival of Carols Service, Concordia, Brentwood, 7:00 p.m.
24. Christmas Eve Worship, St. Luke Sanctuary, Cabot, 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.,
24. Christmas Eve Worship, - New Life, Cabot, 5:00 p.m.
24. Candlelight Christmas Eve service, Ascension Lutheran, McCandless, and 7:00 p.m.
25. Christmas Day Worship, St. Luke Sanctuary, Cabot, 10:00 a.m.
25. Divine Service, Concordia, Brentwood, 11:00 a.m.
31. Eve of the Name of Jesus Service, Concordia, Brentwood, 7:00 p.m.
31. New Year's Eve Worship, St. Luke Sanctuary, Cabot, 6:00 p.m.

January

5. Festival of Lessons and Carols, Concordia at Rebecca Residence Chapel, Allison Park 15101, 2:30 p.m.

PALM NEWS

by Mr. Justin Spittel, PALM Treasurer

Please Give Generously to PALM and Our Missions

Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries is advancing the cause of outreach across our region with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With two new mission churches now operating and new mission plants in the works, PALM serves our missions by providing administrative and financial assistance. This is only possible through the partnership of our beloved Synod, our Districts, the LCMS congregations in the Pittsburgh area, our partner Recognized Service Organizations, and generous donors like you.

In order to be the best stewards of the Church's mission, PALM will keep you informed about our financial outlook with regular reports. The Board of Directors receives a financial report at each of their monthly meetings, and a detailed report is given at the annual delegate meeting. Our treasury is audited annually by a certified public accountant and Form 990 is filed with the IRS every year. You may find this information on our GuideStar.org page at <https://www.guidestar.org/Profile/9177971>.

PALM NEWS

PALM NEWS (continued)

by Mr. Justin Spittel, PALM Treasurer

The snapshot of PALM's income and expenses over the past year presented here gives a simplified view of our financial health. These pie charts include only the missions and ministries for which PALM is directly responsible. (We often receive pass-through restricted gifts for specific LCMS ministries in Western Pennsylvania that we immediately pay out, so they are not shown for simplicity.) Please note that the PALM Board is operated by volunteers, so this allows us to keep operating expenses at a minimum.

PALM maintains dedicated fund accounts for missions that are used when restricted gifts or grants are received for those specific missions. PALM has three major funds to which we encourage all of our contributors to prayerfully and generously consider with their gifts:

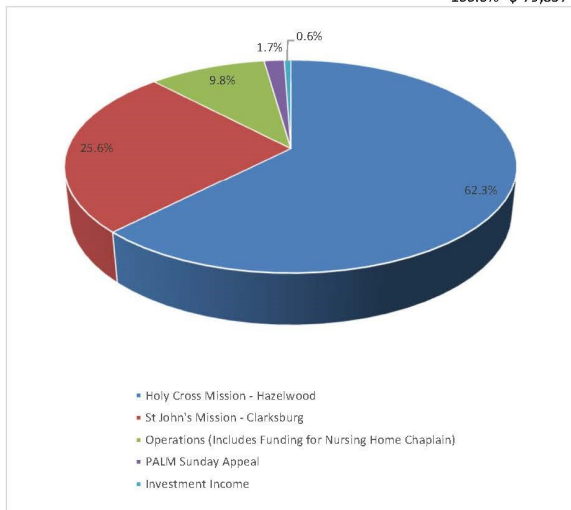
PALM Operating Fund – this fund pays for the daily operations of PALM, including the services of our regional Nursing Home Chaplain, the Rev. Reholma McCants, and any expenses incurred by *The Pittsburgh Lutheran*, the PALM website, or normal business expenses.

PALM Mission Grant Fund – this fund is held in an interest-bearing account and is used solely for the mission and ministry grants that PALM awards annually.

PALM Income

11/1/2018 through 11/1/2019

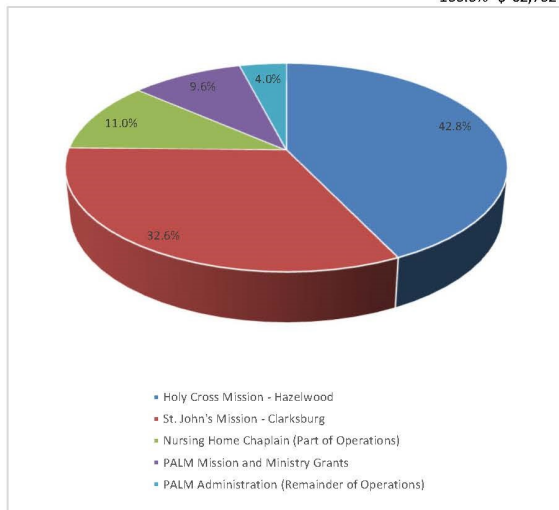
Holy Cross Mission - Hazelwood	62.3%	\$ 49,784
St John's Mission - Clarksburg	25.6%	\$ 20,426
Operations (Includes Funding for Nursing Home Chaplain)	9.8%	\$ 7,854
PALM Sunday Appeal	1.7%	\$ 1,348
Investment Income	0.6%	\$ 445
	100.0%	\$ 79,857



PALM Expenses

11/1/2018 through 11/1/2019

Holy Cross Mission - Hazelwood	42.8%	\$ 26,858
St. John's Mission - Clarksburg	32.6%	\$ 20,426
Nursing Home Chaplain (Part of Operations)	11.0%	\$ 6,890
PALM Mission and Ministry Grants	9.6%	\$ 6,000
PALM Administration (Remainder of Operations)	4.0%	\$ 2,528
	100.0%	\$ 62,702



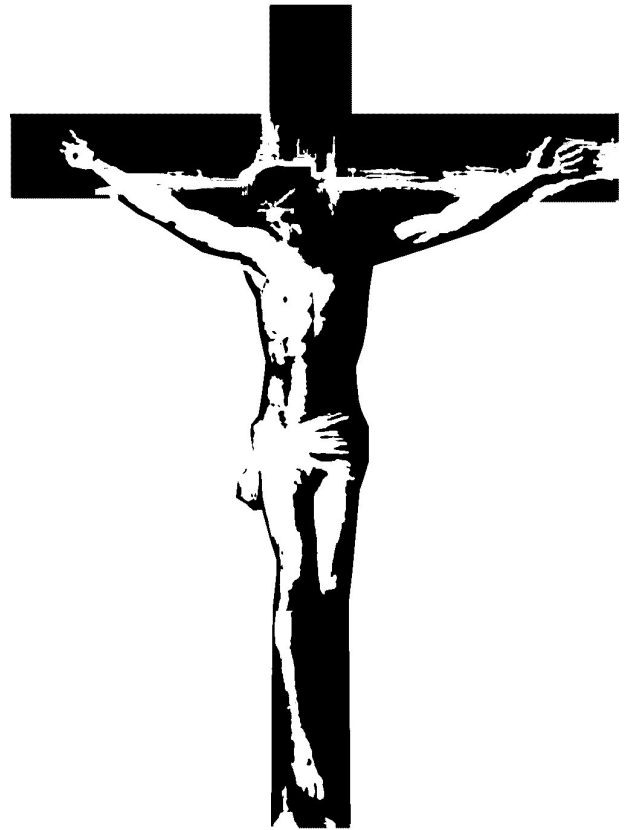
PALM NEWS (continued)

by Mr. Justin Spittel, PALM Treasurer

PALM Endowment Fund – this managed account is for the long-term financial health of PALM and our missions. Donations to this fund are rolled into the principal and used to grow the fund. The earnings from this fund are used to support the missions of PALM.

Please prayerfully consider donating to PALM and our missions as you are able. When donating to these funds, please make checks payable to “Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries” and indicate to which fund you wish to contribute on the memo line. If no specific fund is indicated, the donation will go to the PALM Operating Fund.

Thank you for your prayers and generous support. God bless us all.



Seeds that Sprout

by Augusta R. Mennell, Campus Ministry

Director

Do you remember a certain gift you wanted for Christmas? You probably could hardly wait to see if it was under the Christmas tree. I remember my wish for a cowgirl outfit, but that changed when I learned that in those days cowgirls did the cooking and indoor work and not the glamorous riding outdoors.

The Lord is a wonderful gift-giver. Long after seeds of faith are planted through campus ministry at All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center, they continue to grow. The phone rang after supper. The voice was familiar, but didn't quite sound the same. It was an odd time for this former student from China to call from Texas.

At first she asked the usual questions: How are you? How is Mister Mennell? How are the students? But her voice sounded so different. Finally she couldn't hold back her emotions. She apologized for being emotional. She struggled to speak clearly so she could explain what was hurting. She gained her composure and explained that a young professor and mother from Japan had died without a chance to live very long. She had been ill and so had gone to the hospital. A day later she was released, yet slipped into a coma and then died.

Although my former student is a Christian, she was so stunned that she could hardly continue with her classes or with teaching

students how to speak and teach Chinese. She feels so hurt that she can hardly breathe at times. She can't see what the purpose of life is. After all, this young professor had worked incredibly hard, yet had died. My student friend felt she had lost the meaning of life.

What a gift that she called. We talked about her purpose in life. She described how God has opened so many doors for her. He gave her help coming to teach in Texas and to be able to take classes so she will be able to teach students Chinese. Then they will be able to teach others Chinese, so that then they can teach the Christian faith in China. The student said God has given her so many opportunities. The problem is that she feels this is a burden she must live up to: she must never stop working or take a rest; she must pay God back by doing her work well enough to please Him; she must treat her faith like a rigorous examination that she could easily fail unless she tries hard enough.

So the death of her friend hit like a hammer. She wondered if she is working hard enough at her faith. She is wondering if she will work and then die in the midst of the effort. Her faith feels like an endless treadmill walk all dependent on her own efforts. Finally her pain was out in the open.

Seeds that Sprout (continued)

*by Augusta R. Mennell, Campus Ministry
Director*

She could then listen to some guidance. We went to Psalm 23 looking at her “sheepness” and her Shepherd. We went to the free gift of salvation that Jesus Christ gave on the cross. We went to the need for rest even though she is an extremely busy student and teacher. We went to the heart of the Gospel: God’s unconditional love for her.

One problem for her is that her Christian denomination emphasizes what she must do. It does not stress the great loving God she has. Her phone call was a gift because we ended our conversation with the encouragement to believe that she can lean on God and that He loves her unconditionally. When she calls again we will pray again for God’s peace. It is a common Christian mistake that we owe God something that can be paid for by working to become perfect.

At Christmas and all through the year she, like all of us, need the gift of love. We cannot survive without the assurance that He will carry us and that we don’t carry Him. God loves her as she is. The seed of faith was planted years ago in Bible class at campus ministry. This seed will continue to grow, praise be to God.



**Cho is a student at SRU and
faithful worshipper at All Saints**

CAMPUS MINISTRY

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

by Pastor Eric Andrae

NEVER A DULL MOMENT! There are so many wonderful things happening, that I hardly have time to write and send these updates! TO GOD ALONE THE GLORY.

Not pictured: Pastor Andrae is meeting once again with a Jewish student to discuss Christianity in the New Testament. Also, Pastor Andrae is leading the first session of the year with the Pitt Pre-med Hospice volunteer program, consisting of students from several different religions or none at all.

And none of this would be possible without your continued prayers and ongoing financial support. Thank you! Please make checks out to First Trinity with "Campus Ministry" in the memo line, and mail to: Campus Mission, 535 N. Neville St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213. You can also donate online: scroll about halfway down at www.LSFPgh.com/donate. If you are a Thrivent member, please contribute through Thrivent Choice to "Lutheran Student Fellowship of Pittsburgh, PA".



Esther (Pitt, '19) and Kenny were married November 9 through the campus ministry at the Univ. of Texas and campus pastor Rev. Richard Mittweide. Esther was catechized and confirmed here at your campus mission in Pittsburgh.



Students and alumni of LSF and their families came from all over the country to attend the wedding of Brandon Price (CMU, '17) and Kristi Nowak (Pitt, '17) at First Trinity. Brandon and Kristi came from NYC fall 2013, and both served as LSF chapter presidents. Brandon was baptized August 2014 and now serves as our parish president. Kristi finished grad school in Chicago and has returned to Pittsburgh. 9 Nov. 2019.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

by Pastor Eric Andrae



English as a Second Language class taught by our Deaconess Hanna Kern, with students from Colombia, Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Turkey, Japan, and Venezuela. All but one also stayed for Bible Study with Pastor Andrae. 13 Nov.



Area-wide pro-life retreat and networking event hosted by Lutherans Student Fellowship/First Trinity. Pastor Spittel spoke on fasting and Pastor Andrae presented on prayer. Twenty different groups were represented. 14 Nov.



Ellanys Ferrer was baptized by the Lord into his Kingdom on Sunday, November 10 through Pastor Andrae. Her mother Migaja, her aunt Elbannys, and her grandmother Elba are currently in catechesis toward confirmation/baptism.



Annual LSF-ISM-Deaf Mission Thanksgiving feast, with 70 in attendance, including many guests and people from at least seven different countries. 10 Nov.

LOCAL MISSION

PALM MISSION

by Rev. Bob McCanless,
PALM Mission Director

Cranberry/Mars Mission set to begin in January! PALM's long-anticipated Cranberry/Mars mission is finally set to begin Sunday, January 5, 2020.

Thanks to the help of Concordia Lutheran Ministries, we will begin meeting in the upstairs Activity Room at Concordia of Cranberry (10 Adams Ridge Boulevard, Mars, PA 16046) just off Route 228 East.

The Divine Service will begin at 1:30 p.m. with a Bible Study to follow. The Rev. Scott Kuntz will be overseeing the development of this mission. Those with friends, co-workers, or families in the area should certainly encourage them to attend.

A letter will be going out to our North Hills congregations shortly, with more details on this mission as we look to help "seed" this start with any LCMS members in the area.

For more details, or questions about this mission effort, please contact Mr. Dave McElroy, PALM Mission Chairman, at (412) 952-2461, or at david.w.mcelroy86@gmail.com.

Mileposters News

Sunday, November 3, the Mileposters year-end celebration was held. Attendance was sixteen, including all six adult captains and one youth captain. There was plenty to eat, including pizza, chicken, salad, cookies, and blue moon ice cream, with tea and Cheerwine to drink. Participants viewed pictures of many mileposts along the trails they travel, all the way back to 1997, mostly along the Youghiogheny River Trail, but also on the Allegheny Highlands Trail in Maryland, next to an active railroad track, and along a former Pennsylvania Railroad track in Ohio. Games played included Jenga (pictured), chess, checkers (pictured), Bananagrams, and Scrabble cubes (pictured). It was a good season for the Mileposters, thank God, with 21 new riders and several speed records set.



LOCAL MISSION

Mileposters News (continued)



Appeal letters for the Puerto Rico campaign, with a total of 1,040 miles, were planned to be mailed out around Thanksgiving, and the mailing for Campus Ministry at First Trinity Lutheran, with 701 miles at this writing, is expected to go out in the last days of December.

Minersville Cemetery

Vicar Timothy Kern of Holy Cross Lutheran Mission in Hazelwood led prayers on Veterans Day at the Minersville Cemetery giving thanks for the gift of our Veterans and praying for our nation, communities, and Church.





LUTHERAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Around the world, the call is the same. From Sudan and Vietnam, from Argentina and Siberia, from India and China...

“We need good Lutheran books!

We want to learn more about the true God.”

For 25 years, the Lutheran Heritage Foundation has been answering calls like this. In Muslim strongholds like Afghanistan and Somalia, LHF-published pamphlets that proclaim the Gospel are the secret, prized possessions that sustain Christians, whose lives are threatened for their faith in Jesus Christ.



Using the “Projects to Adopt” menu below, click on links to see what projects are needing funding in what areas of the world. We can even send you information on several projects where the needs are great. Feel free to call for more information at 1-800-554-0723. <https://www.lhfmissions.org/projects/>

Imagine trying to understand Scripture in all its richness without the benefit of *Luther’s Small Catechism*. Or trying to teach young children about basic Bible stories without books like *A Child’s Garden of Bible Stories*. For Lutheran churches around the world, these situations are reality. They don’t have the basic books, so vital to understanding the Lutheran faith, because no one has translated them into their languages. *Through the mission gifts of people like you, LHF translates, publishes, distributes and introduces books that are Bible-based, Christ-centered and Reformation-driven.*

In more than 80 countries and 100 languages, thousands of people have come to faith in Christ because they’ve been able to read books like *The Good News About Jesus* or *Luther’s Small Catechism* in their own languages. LHF has published the catechism in more than 90 languages with dozens more requested. In the past decade, LHF has published and distributed over 1,000 titles and 3 million Lutheran books to pastors, seminary students, missionaries and churches – all at no cost to them.

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF BIBLE STORIES

Language: Amharic

Author: Gross, Arthur W.

Description: Originally written in 1948, this book has enjoyed a popular readership for more than 50 years. Today’s classic version offers 60 Old and New Testament Bible stories. This book contains the timeless biblical accounts of God’s faithfulness, grace, and mercy as He interacts with His people.

<https://www.lhfmissions.org/support/donate-now/>

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

ASCENSION LUTHERAN

The Sunday school children of Ascension Lutheran Church will present their annual Christmas Program on Sunday, December 15, 2019 during the 9:30 AM worship service.

A candlelight Christmas Eve service will be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, December 24, 2019.

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN, *Brentwood*

Our Advent Wednesday theme this year, is "Gabriel, Zechariah, & Mary - God's Good News, our response." We'll explore this theme during our Wednesday night services on 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18. Service times are at 7:30 p.m. All are invited to attend.

Our Live Nativity returns to the church grounds on Friday, December 13, between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Cookies and Cocoa will be offered in the Narthex, and tours of the church available for all who stop in.

Concordia's Carolers will visit our shut-in's on Saturday afternoon, December 14, ending with a visit to Concordia of the South Hills to sing to the residents there as our final stop.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL, *Oakmont/Penn Hills*

Friday, December 20: Christmas concert at Penn Hills Senior High School Auditorium

TRI-PARISH: *Bethel, Glenshaw, St. Johns, Millvale and Zion, Lawrenceville*

Our Tri-parish Choir (members of Bethel, Glenshaw, St. John's, Millvale and Zion, Lawrenceville led by Ruth Miller) will be presenting a Festival of Lessons and Carols at Concordia's Live Nativity at 5:30 p.m. (Haven 2 in Cabot) as part of the "entertainment" in the Dining Room in between the Live Nativity performances. Other groups will include St Luke's School 3rd and 4th graders at 4 p.m., Redeemer Lutheran School Choir at 4:45 p.m. and Haven 3 resident Carole Kaltenhauser at the keyboard for a sing-along at 6 p.m.

Our Tri-parish Choir will also be presenting the Festival of Lessons and Carols at: Concordia at Rebecca Residence Chapel, 3746 Cedar Ridge Road, Allison Park 15101 on Sunday, Jan. 5 at 2:30 p.m., Highpointe at Rebecca Chapel, 1871 Highpointe Lane, Allison Park 15101 - Sunday, Jan. 5 at 4:00p.m., and Concordia at Ridgewood Place, 1469 Renton Road, Pittsburgh 15239 - Sunday, Jan. 12 at 3:00 p.m.

All are welcome to come and hear the story of Christmas in scripture and song.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Concordia Lutheran Ministries

Concordia Lutheran Ministries will host the seventh annual live nativity scene on Sunday, Dec. 15 in front of the Haven II building at 148 Marwood Rd. Performances are 15 minutes and will be scheduled at 4:30, 5:15 and 6 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. The scene will feature people from throughout the Concordia family, both staff and residents, and live animals. Live Christmas music, hot beverages and refreshments will be provided indoors as well as a gift for children 12 and under. This will be a “walk-through” nativity, so guests are encouraged to dress warmly. Parking will be available at entrance 6 on Marwood Rd. For more information, call Connor Hagey at 724-352-1571, ext. 8343. To keep up to date with what’s happening at Concordia, visit the Events page at www.concordialm.org.

Please join us for an evening to remember at our Young at Heart Gala benefitting Concordia at Villa St. Joseph’s Benevolent Care Fund and Music Programs and Life Enrichment Activities. The event will be held on Friday, February 21, 2020 at The Sisters of St. Joseph Dining Room & Medaille Hall in Baden, Pa. The \$60 per person reservation includes: a cocktail reception beginning at 6:00 p.m., hors d’oeuvres and a small plates dinner presentation. The evening will also include a Wine and Craft Beer Pull, Basket and Silent Auctions, interactive musical performances with Concordia at Villa St. Joseph residents, the Rich Zabinski Band and a short program to recognize the 2020 Partners in Caring. To purchase tickets or find out more information, please visit our website at www.YoungAtHeartGala.org or call the CLM Foundation Office at 724-352-1571 ext. 8355.

Reservations will be accepted through February 7, 2020.

NEWS FROM AREA CONGREGATIONS

ASCENSION LUTHERAN

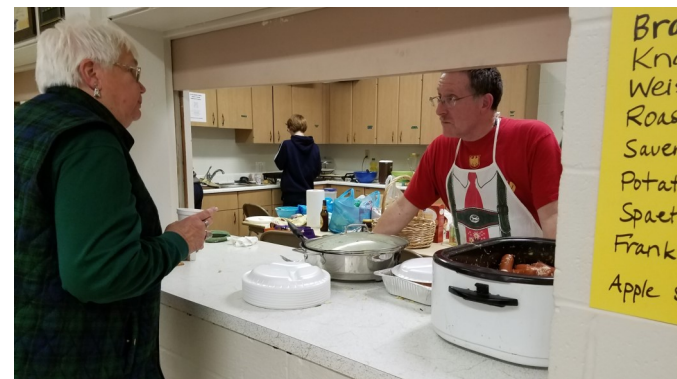
McCandless

Members of Ascension have been busy packing shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. This was our 7th year packing boxes to help to spread the Gospel to children and their families and friends around the world.

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Glenshaw

Bethel was the host of this year's Tri-Parish Oktoberfest. Approximately 80 people attended this great event and enjoyed German food and a live performer on the accordion. One thousand dollars was raised and will benefit Redeemer School in Oakmont.



Audrey Newcamp and Gary Swanson

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH (continued)

Glenshaw

Bethel will be participating in many upcoming events that the Tri-Parish group will spearhead, including worship services and community outreach for the holidays.

CHRIST LUTHERAN

Forest Hills

As part of its "Outreach" program, Women's Service Guild members from Christ Lutheran, Dee Law, Alma Eggers, and Joyce Purucker, delivered quilts to First Trinity Oakland/Shadyside on Thursday, November 7. Then they donated 20 quilts to the Southwestern Veterans Center on Highland Avenue.



Next, they will be taking cooked turkeys and canned goods to the Sunshine Kitchen in McKeesport. After that cookies will be distributed to our shut-in members.

Plans are underway for Jesus' Birthday Party on December 15 similar to our Easter event with stories, songs and crafts, but with a Christmas theme.

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN

Brentwood

Concordia and Good Shepherd's youth enjoyed a hayride at Simmons Farm in McMurray on Saturday, October 19. This was a first for both groups, following up on our joint bowling night back in May. We enjoyed the fellowship, bonfire, smores, and all the activities of the farm that night, and are looking forward to our next outing together.

On Sunday, November 10, Concordia members kicked off our 2020 Stewardship Campaign under the theme, "Let down the nets," with a covered dish luncheon following worship. We celebrated our 2019 successes that day, explored our 2020 theme in light of Holy Scripture, and heard from local Thrivent representatives about their programs, such as Choice Giving and Thrivent Acton Teams, to help us reach our stewardship and evangelism goals.

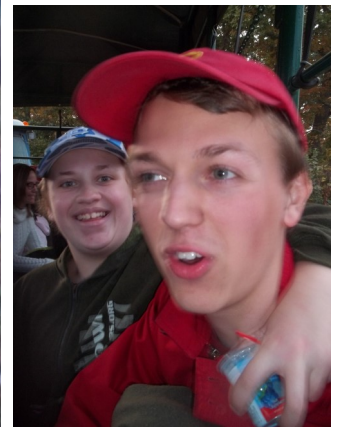
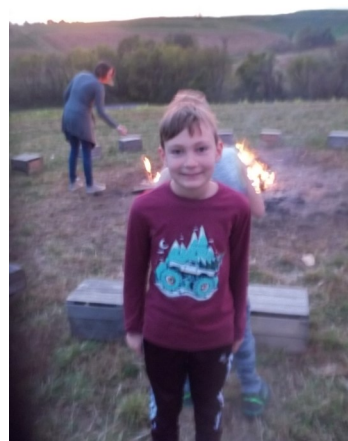
Our Live Nativity returns to the church grounds on Friday, December 13, between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Many thanks to John Toperzer, Jr. for heading up this effort again. Cookies and Cocoa will be offered in the Narthex, and tours of the church available for all who stop in.

Concordia's Carolers will visit our shut-in's on Saturday afternoon, December 14, ending with a visit to Concordia of the South Hills to sing to the residents there as our final stop.

Worship during the Christmas season includes our Festival of Carols Service at 7:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve - the Divine Service with Lord's Supper on Christmas Day at 11:00 a.m. - and our Eve of the Name of Jesus Service, at 7:00 p.m. on December 31. All are invited to attend.



Our Advent Wednesday theme this year, is "Gabriel, Zechariah, & Mary - God's Good News, our response." We'll explore this theme during our Wednesday night services on 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18. Service times are at 7:30 p.m. All are invited to attend.



CONCORDIA LUTHERAN
Brentwood



MT. CALVARY
Westview

"Fellowship!" That's the reason the Hoover family prepares an Oktoberfest feast each year at Mt. Calvary church in West View. Tom Hoover, who is a member of the Evangelism committee on church council, said they like to plan something and invite the neighbors to be part of it. "We do this with the hope of having the neighborhood come and visit the church and enjoy the fellowship."

MT. CALVARY (continued)
Westview

The Hoovers spend a day or two decorating the church hall ahead of time, and are always looking to add something new. This year it was a painting of a German village, which provided the perfect backdrop for photos. Saturday is when much of the preparation and cooking take place, with Mechele in charge. On the day of the event, Conrad Ostertag again supplied the musical entertainment.

Everyone was happy to hear that the Hoovers are planning to continue the tradition next year. "We enjoy the fellowship of our church family," Tom said, "and it's fun for everyone." Indeed it is!



Conrad Ostertag provides accordion music in front of the German-village backdrop

Karl Wilzer helps himself to the feast at Mt. Calvary's Oktoberfest.

ST LUKE LUTHERAN

Cabot and Butler

St. Luke is once again partnering with Fishbone Ministry as a mission outreach. Fishbone Ministry started in 2002. Their mission statement is "To strengthen and encourage a community of people within a community." Fishbone is located right in the center of the community it serves. It has ongoing services like Bible studies, children and family activities, and many more mission outreaches like the Christmas Gift Program. Dedicated volunteers collect Christmas gift requests from local underprivileged children. The requests, along with the child's age, are written on paper mittens. While pleas for toys are usually on the lists, coats, hats, and gloves are frequently requested. The mittens are put on a tree shaped board placed at St. Luke and our congregants take them home to shop for the children.

After the gifts and paper mittens are returned, our volunteers stoically wrap mountains of gifts. The children and their parents are invited to a Christmas dinner in mid-December, where the gifts are distributed and the message of the Birth of Christ is presented.

The children and their families are blessed by the generosity and hard work of the many people participating in this ministry. As is so often the case, the giver is truly blessed in the giving. Check out <http://fishboneministries.org/>

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN

Clarksburg

On Saturday, November 16, Pastor Amadeus Gandy was installed as pastor of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clarksburg, WV. Pastor Gandy had previously served as associate pastor at St. Luke Cabot and as the last pastor of Faith Butler. His first service at St. John's was Sunday, November 11. He was installed by Pastor Brian Westgate, English District Pittsburgh Circuit Visitor. Pastor Westgate, in his sermon on Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Hebrews 12:18-29, talked about how God uses the Office of the Holy Ministry to bring new life to the dry bones of people born dead in trespasses and sins. He does this through the preaching of Law and Gospel and through the Sacraments, which purify us from our sins that we might approach God in His sanctuary.

The congregation was blessed to have present Pastor Charles Lehmann, who now serves congregations in the Bozeman, MT area. He was the pastor of St. John's in the Cove, Accident, MD, who began the mission work in Clarksburg exactly 10 years ago. He served as liturgist for the occasion and also gave a speech during the reception following the service; he also read a letter from Pastor Robert Riebau, who served the congregation after Pastor Lehmann left and before Pastor James Oester came to the Cove and Clarksburg. Pastor Oester served as lector for the service. Both Pastor Lehmann and Pastor Oester were recognized by the congregation at the conclusion of the service.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN (continued)

Clarksburg

Other pastors present included Pastor Ken Zitsch from St. John's Munson & Martin Luther Punxsutawney, Rev. Dr. Edward Grimenstein from Zion Bridgeville, Pastor Berton Greenway from Grace Penn Hills, Pastor Douglas Spittel and Vicar Timothy Kern from First Trinity and PALM, Pastor Robert Wacker from CLM, Pastor Bob McCanless from Concordia Brentwood, and Pastor Larry Loree from All Saints Slippery Rock. Pastor Spittel served as Master of Ceremonies for the service.

Pastor Gandy is the first resident LCMS pastor in Clarksburg, and he went right to work to invite the community to his installation. He has gone to work inside the building too. He is preparing one room in the church undercroft to be his office, and he has restored the church building's historic Altar to the sanctuary.

Pastor Gandy's arrival will allow the congregation to now hold Sunday morning services. Starting Advent Sunday, December 1, Bible Class will be held at 9:15 a.m. and the Holy Communion Service at 10:30 a.m. Advent Wednesday services are also planned to be held at 6:00 p.m. If you are ever in the Clarksburg area on a Sunday morning, or a Wednesday evening in Advent or Lent, please drop in to visit and worship our Good Shepherd.



ST. JOHN LUTHERAN (continued)

Clarksburg

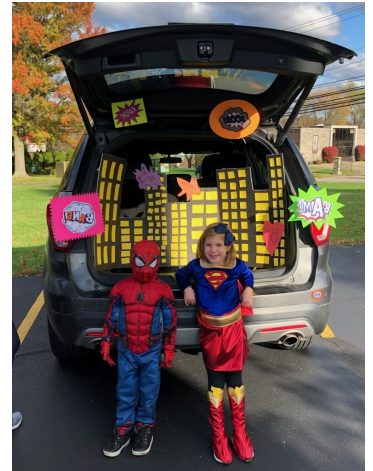
Lastly, please keep Pastor Gandy and his new flock in both your prayers and your offerings. We pray our Savior will richly bless this congregation, and we give Him thanks for all the blessings He has bestowed on it throughout this past decade, and especially during this past year as it became a congregation of the LCMS English District and received its first pastor.



ZION LUTHERAN

Bridgeville

Zion Lutheran, Bridgeville, celebrated the Reformation with several events. On October 27, we hosted Trunk or Treat with hotdogs, popcorn and apple cider. There were 12 decorated trunks and over 100 people visited from our church and school community.



ZION LUTHERAN (continued)

Bridgeville

On November 2 more than 60 members and visitors enjoyed a Potluck Dinner and the movie “Luther”. After the movie those brave enough went outside to continue celebrating by a bonfire.



ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Bridgeville

The Parable of the Pumpkin - Every October we do the “Parable of the Pumpkin” chapel lesson, and my newsletter article is always on this lesson. It’s not because I don’t have anything else to write about, it’s because this lesson never gets old, because it’s the lesson that children (and adults) need to hear over and over, and it’s what we are here to teach our 183 little children. Jesus is the Son of God, our one and only true Savior.

The lesson is conveyed in a visual way using two carved pumpkins side by side. One pumpkin is cleaned out, smiling and lit from within. The other pumpkin is dark inside, still filled

ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL (continued)

Bridgeville

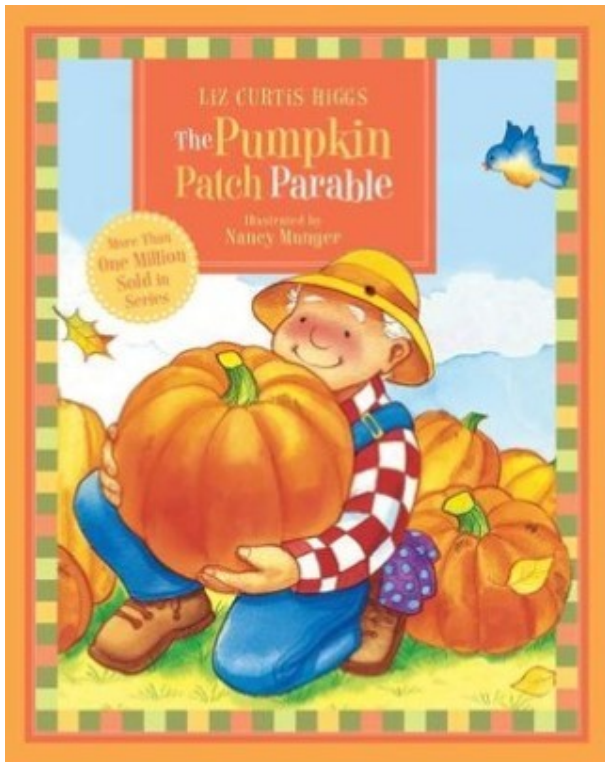
with seeds and pulp and frowning. Can you guess which pumpkin represents life with Jesus? Can you guess which pumpkin represents life without Jesus? I explain that the seeds and pulp (or slime as the children like to say) is like sin, and is why it’s dark and sad. To the contrary, the other pumpkin has been washed and clean out, with its light shining. It’s like baptism and the washing away of our sins. At this point, I ask the children to look to the cross and remember that Jesus died for us because He loves us and forgives us from our sins. God said “Let the light shine out of the darkness, made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.



ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL (continued)

Bridgeville

If you are interested in sharing this story with your child or grandchild, the name of the book is the "Pumpkin Patch Parable." Feel free to contact me for some lesson pointers!



CALVARY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Murrysville

The Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes at Calvary Early Learning Center (CELC) worked together to create a Thank You to our country's Veterans. The students put their handprints on the bottom of the banner and then used red and blue to decorate the letters. This banner was hung in the fellowship hall of Calvary Lutheran Church, where the Veterans enjoyed a special meal following a Veterans' Day Service on Sunday, November 3, 2019.

CELC collected money for our local firefighters in September and filled donation boxes for Toys for Tots during the month of November.



REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Oakmont/Penn Hills

The temps and the snowflakes are falling... 2019 is nearly over! As the seasons change, the events and special moments continue at Redeemer.

Our middle school girls volleyball team finished their second season by making it to the playoffs once again! While they did not advance past the first round, we are proud of them for their hard work. Congratulations to the girls and to volleyball coach Mrs. Loewe!

Our high school cross country team once again participated in the regional competition on Thursday, October 24, at California University of Pennsylvania. The Lord granted pleasant weather for the day, and all runners did well. Thanks to Athletic Director Nathan Loewe and cross country coach Dr. Dana Brown for working with the entire team this year.

Our high school robotics team competed in the BEST Robotics competition at Penn State DuBois on October 18 & 19. The two-day event involved marketing presentations by each participating school of their project and robot model on Friday, and robot driving competitions on Saturday. The team won numerous awards this year, including 2nd place overall! Congratulations to our Redeemer Robotic Rams and to our robotics coach Mrs. Schumacher, as well as volunteer engineer Mr. Daugherty (husband of 4th grade teacher Mrs. Daugherty) for giving of their time and expertise to the team.

Redeemer Robotic Rams take 2nd place at Best Robotics Competition



Our middle and high school students participated in Redeemer's first annual "Homecoming Week" during the final week of October. Students paid \$1 per day to participate in different themes, including Decades, Disney, and School Spirit. High school grades created mini floats for a parade, with



RLHS seniors enjoy Decade Day during Homecoming Week

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL (continued)

Oakmont/Penn Hills

the elementary students voting on the best float. The end of the week culminated with fun competitions in Minute to Win It and Fear Factor. Each grade earned points for participation and spirit, with the winning junior class receiving a trophy. The focus of the week centered around NLSA's theme for the year, "Joy:Fully in Jesus." All proceeds from the week are going to benefit St. Matthew's Food Cupboard on the North Side.

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears..." On Friday evening, November 1, Redeemer presented *Shakespeare: A Night of Comedy and Tragedy*. Students performed excerpts and vignettes from a variety of Shakespeare's works, under the direction of teacher Mr. John Driscoll and student director Callie Boyer. It was an excellent showcase of talent and effort by RLS students.

On Monday, November 11, we held our annual Veterans Day event. The Lord graciously gave us good weather, which allowed us to have our ceremony outdoors. The entire school gathered at Redeemer Church in Oakmont for a brief parade to our local cemetery. A service was held to honor all those who have served and are currently serving in our country's armed forces around the world. Students presented poems and songs, and Pastor Jack Hartman from Concordia Cabot shared a brief and heartfelt message with the veterans in attendance. Mr. William Seitz once again faithfully

faithfully performed on the trumpet for the service, accompanying the hymns and playing "TAPS."

Lunch was served to the attending veterans following the service. After lunch, the attendees and Redeemer National Honor Society students used donated items from school and church families to assemble Christmas gift bags to send to troops that are currently deployed. Thanks to these generous donations, we were able to pack over 200 bags! We are grateful for this opportunity to support and encourage those that are bravely defending our country and our freedom.



RLS 8th graders walk in the Veterans Day parade

We wish everyone a blessed holiday season. We will see you in 2020.

RLS Teacher Spotlight: Mrs. Jodi Sloboda, middle/high school teacher whose hometown is Butler, PA. Her alma mater is Geneva College.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL (continued)

Oakmont/Penn Hills

My husband and I have been married 26 years, and we have two great kids - Hannah is 23 and just got married this past June. Andrew is 21 and will be graduating from Waynesburg University in December with a degree in media communications. We also have two dogs, Sammy and Nikke, and a cat, Willow, who are definitely part of the family.

My hobbies are scrapbooking and making greeting cards and other crafts; drawing/sketching; and reading. I was a bit of a jock in high school. I played volleyball and basketball and was actually pretty good. I continued to "play volleyball in college, though I was probably better at basketball at the time. I still hold a second place record in rebounds at my high school.

It's hard to put into words how grateful I am to RLS for this job! I feel like this is the job God has been preparing me for much of my life.

Concordia News

Concordia Adopt a Resident for Christmas Project Announced

Each December, many of the locations in the Concordia Lutheran Ministries family participate in a program called "Adopt-A-Res-ident." Skilled nursing and personal care residents provide the activities staff with a wish list. Then, employees, community members, churches, businesses and even independent living residents "adopt" a resident (or in some cases many residents) to make sure they have a gift to open for Christmas.

If interested in participating in the program, call the facility of your choice below to "adopt" a resident. For those who prefer to send a general gift, the activities staff can suggest some newly purchased items that residents typically use. Items should be wrapped and labeled with either the resident's name or, if it is a general gift, what the gift is, and can be dropped off at the appropriate facility.

Here are a few gift ideas:

- Sweat suits
- Door wreaths
- Stamps and stationary
- Digital clocks with large numbers
- Sugar-free candy
- Hair salon gift certificates
- Magnifying glass
- Slippers or slipper socks
- Throws or blankets
- Sports memorabilia

Concordia Adopt a Resident for Christmas Project Announced (continued)

The participating locations are:

Concordia at Cabot

Call Brandy Muth at 724- 352-1571, ext. 8241 (for skilled nursing residents) or Jaime White at ext. 8302 (for personal care residents). Deadline for gifts is Dec. 16

Concordia of Cranberry Call Katelin Dietz or Beth Schultz at 724-779-4300. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 11

Concordia of Fox Chapel Call Kelly Ellena at 412-767-5808. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 16

Concordia of Franklin Park Call Veronica Guerrini at 724-935-1075. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 1

Concordia at the Orchard Call Jodi Macko at 724-285-4490. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 13

Concordia of the South Hills Call Heather Tokarcik 412-294-1357. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 14

Concordia at Ridgewood Place (Plum Borough) Call Cheryl Sopcak at 412-798-1855. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 10

Concordia of Wexford Call Michelle Moan at 724-935-1266. Deadline for gifts is Dec. 1.

Make sure you contact the facility before the deadline! Monetary contributions are always appreciated and can be sent to Larissa Yates, Development Manager, Concordia Lutheran Ministries Foundation, 134 Marwood Road, Cabot, PA 16023.

Concordia's Season of Hope Campaign Announced

During this season, as we await and celebrate Jesus' birth, a feeling of hope and trust, portrayed by the residents, patients and staff daily at Concordia Lutheran Ministries, is unchanging and relentless against the ever-changing landscape of senior care. We are counting on your joyful support this year to partner with us to treat each patient, resident and family member with compassion and respect. We pray that your Christmas celebration fills you with joy as you remember God's amazing love throughout this Season of Hope, and for many seasons to come. To find out more or to participate in Concordia's Season of Hope campaign, please visit www.CLMSeasonofHope.com. You can also contact the CLM Foundation Office at Giving@ConcordiaLM.org or 724-352-1571, ext. 8355. We thank you in advance for making a gift to Concordia during this Christmas season.

Concordia Lutheran Ministries Elects Six Board Members

Keith E. Frndak, President and CEO, Concordia Lutheran Ministries announced the election of six board members today at the annual delegate meeting. Eighteen board members comprise the governing body and represent 30 Lutheran Churches Missouri Synod (LCMS) in the western Pennsylvania area.

Concordia Lutheran Ministries Elects Six Board Members (continued)

Installed by Rev. Jack Hartman, director of chaplaincy services, the newly elected members follow. Each will serve a three-year term.

Rande Casaday of Canonsburg

Jennifer Ciccone of Gibsonia

Rev. Dr. Edward Grimenstein of Bridgeville

R. Russell Lucas of Wexford

Katie Straszheim of Downtown Pittsburgh

James Wolf of Presto

Presented with a thank-you plaque for their service was Rev. Dr. Douglas Spittel for six years (First Trinity, Oakland); Rev. Arthur Litke for six years (Bethel, Glenshaw); Fred Heintz Jr for 6 years (Bethel, Glenshaw); Donald Olmstead for 6 years (St Luke, Cabot/Butler) and Gail Holzer for six years (Redeemer, Oakmont).

Left to right: Pastor Grimenstein, Rande Casaday, Jennifer Ciccone, Katie Straszheim, Jim Wolf





JOIN US FOR CONCORDIA'S SIXTH ANNUAL LIVE NATIVITY

* Sunday, December 15
148 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023
(Entrance #5, Haven II)

Performances at 4:30, 5:15 and 6 p.m.

- *Featuring Concordia staff and residents*
- *Live animals*
- *Hot beverages and refreshments*
- *Gift for children 12 and under*
- *Live Christmas music
(indoors)*
- *Free admission*



This will be a "walk-through" nativity, so guests are encouraged to dress warmly. Parking at entrances 5 and 6. For more information, call 724-352-1571, ext. 8343 or visit www.concordialm.org.

