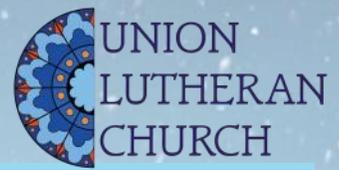


# LUTHERAN LETTER



Union Evangelical Lutheran Church

January 2022

**Goodbye 2021 . . . and . . . good riddance?**

*I will never leave you nor forsake you. Hebrews 13:5*

The jokes are already abounding – people can't wait to see 2020 in their "rear-view mirror." We're looking forward to a vaccine and the pandemic being "over" and 2021 looks like the year. 2021? 2021? 2021?

In the 1993 comedy *Groundhog Day*, actor Bill Murray plays the role of a judgmental, egotistical weatherman named Phil Connors. While covering Punxsutawney Phil's annual weather prediction, Murray's character finds himself trapped in a time loop in which he forever relives the second day of February.

As we flip the calendar from 2021 to 2022 it feels as if we are trapped. Trapped in forever Covid-19. The latest winter surge makes us wonder will we ever get out of our "Groundhog Day"?

I would like to ask you a question though . . . why should we be ecstatic to see 2021 end? I bet all of us can look back in our lives and think of a year that was "terrible" for us. Maybe it was the year 2010 when a loved one died. Maybe it was 2008 and we lost our job. Maybe it was an accident in 1992 that changed our lives. The flipping of a calendar on January 1st didn't magically heal everything that went wrong during that year. But through all those many years, through all those terrible moments in our lives, hasn't Jesus Christ been with us? In the midst of our frailty, in the middle of our worst moments, in the face of death itself, Jesus Christ has been with you. He has not been offended by our unfaithfulness, He does not turn His head away when our disease might disgust even the closest to us, Jesus does not shy away from us as we are dying. In fact, during the most terrible moments in our lives, Jesus Christ can be the closest to us. He is always faithfully caring for us, steering us, comforting us.

The year 2021 may have been a bad year for us in many different ways. But as we leave this year behind, do we want to think of it as just "gone," or as Christians, is it better for us to look back at this year as a time when Christ cared for us in the face of a pandemic and everything else we may have endured during this year? I would encourage us to look at 2021, and all years for that matter, not as moments in our lives to be discarded. Our lives are filled with good years, bad years, and very painful years, but they are all years in which Christ cares for us. Whether they are years in the past, or years to come, God will always care for us as He Himself promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you".

*Pastor Camp*

It has been a very busy Fall & Christmas season for the Fellowship Committee here at Union Lutheran Church. From the Fall Virtual Basket Party to cookie baking to Advent Kits to Manger Scene planning. A lot of folks have been busy behind the scenes.

Without the volunteer hours folks are willing to give us, none of the events would be possible. Many of the folks helped at multiple events.

Tom & Diane Ward

Carol Snyder

Ron & Cindy Pugh

Gail Lafferty

Ruth Weaver

Shirley Rennolds

Ella & Finn Stauter

Kandy Lang

Sueann Hregican

Debra Geiger

Sally Grim

Dick and Millie Ruth

Dianne Gillikin

Lynne Banzhoff

Patty Hersh

Sharon Beck

Sandy Castaldi

Robert & Bonnie Krause

Jason Marakovits

Sandy Castaldi

Kaiti Snyder

Jen Bauer

Rachel Bauer

Grace Bauer

Chris, Sam and Jake Rittle

Brandon Arnold

Rachel Arnold

JR Marchetti

Joann & Anna Michaels

Ben Smith

Violet & Amy Forte

And especially our staff;  
Pastor Camp, Cathy Shaffer,  
Katie Stauter and Terry Hoffman  
and their invaluable guidance and  
support.

Here is looking to  
2022 and a new year  
of fun.

Thank  
you

# Cat. Class

January 16th

9:45—10:30 am

Meet Pastor in the Nave  
after worship

**Holy Baptism**

**November 27, 2021**

## ***Kenley Joy Huber***

**Kenley Joy is the daughter of Joseph Ryan Huber and Kaitlin Christina Huber (Shankweiler). Kenley's God Parents are Tyler Deane, Emily Lotz and Tara Huber.**



*In Loving Memory*

*Robert Frey & Ed Razzis*

## *Social Ministry Corner*

Thank you to everyone who participated

in the holiday campaigns:

*Giving Tree, Holiday Shoebox, Wegmans gift card,*

*Ripple Community Center donations.*

Thanks to our generous church family we were able to make the holidays brighter for many children and needy in our community.

**STAY TUNED FOR  
"SOUP"ER BOWL 2022  
INFO**

# Happy Hour

Join us in Room 206-207  
Sundays

immediately following worship

**1/2/21-Herb Gifford, Pr.  
Camp and Friends**

Come watch a hilarious video of Herb Gifford  
interviewing the New Year's baby (Pastor  
Camp) and many more friends!

**1/9 & 1/16 Cindy & Ron  
Pugh**

Let's watch the movie "Overcomer"

High school basketball coach John Harrison  
reluctantly agrees to coach cross-country, a  
sport he doesn't even like. His outlook soon  
changes when he meets Hannah Scott, an un-  
likely runner who pushes herself to the limit.

**1/23 Nancy Clee, RN-BC,  
MSN**

Dementia Friends of LV

Nancy visited our class in October and educat-  
ed us about dementia. The participants re-  
quested that we invite Nancy back to tell us  
more. Come hear her presentation from the  
Alzheimer's Association. There will be time for  
questions!

**1/30 Graeme Camp**

Cybersecurity—How to avoid the Big "Phish"



To all who loaned us their  
manger scene for the  
open house!

We could NOT have  
done it without you.



# **Council Report** Highlights from the November Meeting

## Financial Review:

As of the end of November, year-to-date 2021 income is higher than expenses by \$9,262. Council thanks our church family for their faithful giving.

**Thank you to our retiring Council Members, Hannah Geiger and Kim Kuhlman and welcome to Sherwood Geiger, Barb Mahoney, Ron Pugh to their first terms and Kandy Lang to her second Council term.**

Reviewed Northeastern PA Synod's Pandemic Update report and determined that our current Covid practices are appropriate. Our Reopening Team will continue to monitor.

Tech Team is reviewing bids to fix/improve sound system in the Nave.

Christian Life Team—mailed Christmas Eve invitations to all of our recent visitors.

Fellowship Committee—reports that the Manger Scene Open House was enjoyed by all.

Social Ministry—Christmas programs helped local food pantries, provided gifts for our homebound, youth of KidsPeace and clients of the NL Food Bank and many more. Thanks for all of your generous contributions.

Worship/Music Committee- reports that preparations are complete for our Christmas Eve services.

Youth Group- wrapped and delivered tons of Christmas gifts to the children of Jerusalem House Ministries in Allentown.

Next meeting: January 17, 2022 at 7:00 PM Room 206-207.



## Bible Study

The group will be taking a break for the month of January but will reconvene in February when we will once again turn to the author Liz Curtis Higgs and her book "The Women of Easter."

It's sure to be enjoyable! Watch for details at a later date.

Prayer Shawl Ministry - We will be meeting on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:45 p.m. New members are welcome. You don't need to be a knitter or crocheter, we can teach you.



Join us the 2nd  
Saturday of each  
month at the  
Parkland Diner!  
7am— first  
breakfast is FREE!

No obligations,  
ONLY food, fellow-  
ship and outreach

(planning & programming  
optional!)



YOU ARE CALLED TO LEAD

To all the  
singers,  
musicians,  
performers, greeters,  
acolytes,  
the decorating team  
for your hard work and  
dedication.

Christmas Eve was  
beautiful and could not  
have been done with-  
out you.

THANK YOU TO  
SHERWOOD & KATHY  
GEIGER FOR THE  
DONATION OF THE  
CHRISTMAS TREE THAT  
LIT THE GATHERING  
SPACE DURING THE  
CHRISTMAS SEASON.



### **Free Little Pantry Needs:**

**canned pasta and fruit in in-  
dividual plastic containers  
and small boxes of cereal**

### **NL Food Bank needs:**

**Condiments in plastic contain-  
ers, soups and crackers.**

### **Parkland Cares Pantry Needs:**

**Macaroni and cheese, granola  
bars, small cans of chicken  
and tuna.**

**We can not accept expired  
foods**

## Book Club January Newsletter

Our next selection is *The Stranger in the Lifeboat* by Mitch Albom. What would happen if we called on God for help and God actually appeared?

Adrift in a raft after a deadly ship explosion, nine people struggle for survival at sea. Three days pass. Short on water, food and hope, they spot a man floating in the waves. They pull him in.

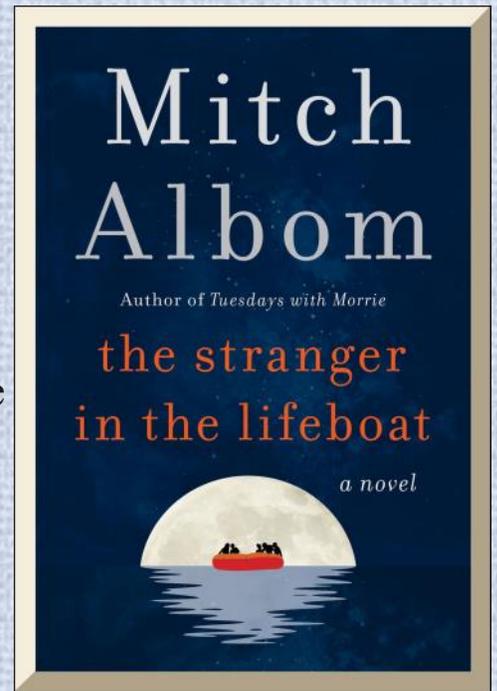
“Thank the Lord we found you,” a passenger says.

“I am the Lord,” the man whispers.

So begins Mitch Albom’s most beguiling and inspiring novel yet. Now, for the first time in his fiction, he ponders what we would do if, after crying out for divine help, God actually appeared before us? What might the Lord look, sound and act like? Is this strange and quiet man really who he claims to be? What actually happened to cause the explosion? Are the survivors already in heaven, or are they in hell?

The story is narrated by Benji, one of the passengers, who recounts the events in a notebook that is later discovered—a year later—when the empty life raft washes up on the island of Montserrat. It falls to the island’s chief inspector, Jarty LeFleur, a man battling his own demons, to solve the mystery of what really happened.

A fast-paced, compelling novel that makes you ponder your deepest beliefs, *this book* suggests that answers to our prayers may be found where we least expect them.



# ELCA WORLD HUNGER

Japan



Supported in part by **ELCA World Hunger**, the Asian Rural Institute (ARI) in Japan is a nine-month service leadership training program that draws people from around the world, allowing them to live and work together as they learn agricultural skills they can take back to their home communities. ARI also invites guest lecturers from Japan and abroad to teach sustainable development, organic farming and more.

Through this model, ARI empowers leaders from around the world to build community, embrace diversity, value rural life, see the dignity of labor, promote food sovereignty and live in harmony with nature. Graduates return to their home countries equipped to work in sustainable development, build relationships with local leaders and transform their communities. Participants also receive ongoing support from ARI in identifying funding and leadership opportunities.

As the impact of COVID-19 began to ripple around the world, countries closed their borders and airports and flights were changed or canceled. Out of 26 students who'd planned to participate in ARI last year, only seven arrived in Japan; the others encountered travel restrictions and other challenges.

Four ARI participants from Sierra Leone were at the closest Japanese consulate — in Accra, Ghana — applying for visas to enter Japan when Sierra Leone closed its borders and the government in Ghana ordered a nationwide lockdown. The participants obtained their Japanese visas, but the airports and borders were closed, so they couldn't leave the country.

This is when ARI reached out to its graduates in Ghana for help. John Yeboah, a 2018 graduate, answered the call, providing safety, food and lodging for the travelers. He escorted them from Accra to Kumasi by bus and took care of their needs while they awaited travel news.

Modeling what he had experienced during his training in Japan, John even worked with ARI to start the participants' training right where they were. He led them in morning exercise, time-management techniques, leadership training and coaching, and discussion and reflection sessions.

Your generous gifts to **ELCA World Hunger** not only feed people worldwide, they also help to teach them, encourage them, support them and give them hope for a better life.



## Youth Group Serving Our Community

In December, Union Lutheran's Youth Group went shopping at Ollie's for Christmas presents for the children of Allentown's Jerusalem House. The youth then wrapped all gifts, which was no small feat! The gifts were delivered and will make Christmas a little brighter for many children in Allentown.

## *Happy New Year!*

Looking for something fun to do for New Year's Eve? Come celebrate with your Youth Group!

\*Party starts at 11:00pm, and pull an all-nighter watching the ball drop on the new tv, playing games, make your own pizza contest, and more!

\*Bring a friend, the more the merrier!

**\*\*RSVP to the church office, and fill out your emergency contact form\*\***

Upcoming in January:

Movie Night!!

First Showing: "God's Not Dead".

Check your email with dates and more information.



# SNAP SHOTS OF DECEMBER AT ULC!



ULC JOURNEYMEN 2021 CHRISTMAS PARTY





## ULC JOURNEYMEN 2021 CHRISTMAS PARTY



5500 Route 873 Schnecksville, PA 18078

610-767-6884 Church Office

**Website:** [www.ulclv.org](http://www.ulclv.org) **email:** office@ulclv.org

**Facebook.com/ulclv**

**Miller-Keystone Blood Center #1258 - ULC**

<b>Staff</b>	
<b>Pastor</b>	The Rev. Gordon A. Camp
	<a href="mailto:pastor@ulclv.org">pastor@ulclv.org</a>
	Cell 610-554-8061
<b>Pastor Emeritus</b>	The Rev. Dennis W. Moore
<b>Asst. to the Pastor</b>	Cathy C. Shaffer
<b>Director of Music</b>	Susan Frickert
<b>Communications Specialist</b>	Katie Stauter
<b>Sexton</b>	Terry P. Hoffman
<b>Parish Nurses</b>	Dorothy Bealer
	Jane Borbe

***"Our Mission is to follow Jesus and serve as He would."***