

News-Line

Lincoln Park Community United Methodist Church Newsletter
Lincoln Park, Pennsylvania *January-February 2021*

Church Reopening : Ready but Waiting

From Richard Auman and Richard Bashore

Probably the question we hear the most right now is: *When are we going to reopen church?* The simple answer right now is *We really don't know.*

Back in October, we were ready to reopen for in-person gatherings on November 15, but, by the 1st of November, the number of COVID-19 cases began to spiral upwards again. We agreed to continue offering Sunday services **online only**.

Since November, the cases have continued to increase, and some churches



that were opened earlier have since closed their doors and are now again offering online services only. At one local church which had opened its doors, the associate pastor as well as a number of parishioners contracted COVID-19.

With that being said, the Reopening Committee and Trustees will continue to monitor the numbers and will — once we see a solid change in direction of cases — start putting our reopening procedures back in place.

From Carol Bashore, Missions Committee Chair

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to the shoebox and Angel Tree projects. They were both very successful. We've received thank you notes from nine local nonprofit agencies for our financial assistance. We also exceeded our goal of purchasing 10 wells throughout the world. However, since the project is part of our 75th anniversary celebration, we're keeping the project open until we meet together in person and rejoice in this accomplishment. If we far exceed our original goal, then we'll have even more to celebrate. Our congregation is truly blessed with many caring, generous people. Wishing you and everyone a very Happy New Year.



THANK
you.



at Lincoln Park Church 10 am

From Pastor Christopher Kurien

Sunday Services Continue Virtually Due to Covid-19

We'll continue our worship services, at 10 am, via Live Streaming or Zoom. We thank all our participants. If you're willing to help, by recording your part and emailing it, please let me know, 570-573-1455.

To view Sunday worship services, click on this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/lpcumc/>

The service livestream begins at 10 am (EDT) and appears at the top of the "Posts" listings, just below the picture of the altar area of our sanctuary.

You can make the livestream a "full screen" view by using the "click to enlarge" icon in the lower right corner.

If you're unable to connect, join a Zoom meeting by following these prompts:

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9346283520?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9346283520?pwd=SW9JdndlOGJkL0xZZTc4L1dIQ2J0QT09)

[pwd=SW9JdndlOGJkL0xZZTc4L1dIQ2J0QT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9346283520?pwd=SW9JdndlOGJkL0xZZTc4L1dIQ2J0QT09)

Meeting ID: 934 628 3520; Password: 714372

Or, join by phone:

Step 1: Dial 646-876-9923

Step 2: Enter the meeting ID: 934 628 3520 followed by # sign

Step 3: Because you don't have a participant ID, choose *Enter the # sign*.

Step 4: The password: 714372 followed by # sign

Step 5: Place your phone on "mute."

You can submit prayer requests by clicking on *Prayer Request* tab at the top of the LPCUMC home page, or by using this link and filling in the *Prayer Request* fields:

<https://www.lpcumc.org/prayer-request/>

You may receive a "pop-up," asking you to log in or create a new Facebook account. **You don't have to create a Facebook account, so click "Not Now."** Questions? Call **Jack Villecco**, 484-256-9861.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SHARE THESE OPPORTUNITIES WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.



We extend our sympathy...

† to family and friends of **Robert Miller**, 98, who died on November 13. Bob was active at LP on the Board of Trustees. A World War II veteran, was honored with many medals and had fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

† to **Carol Brightbill** and family on the loss of her sister, **Janice (Rinehart) Baker**, on October 29.

† to the family of **Ira Peter Mohler**, 57, who passed away December 7 after a long battle with cancer. His grandparents (**Ira and Dorothy**) were charter members at Lincoln Park Church.

Wishing You a Brighter, Merrier New Year!

From Beverly Perella, Director of Music and Children's Ministries

For 10 months, we've been consumed with fear of COVID, and rightfully so. We've learned to adapt as best we can, as is certainly true of our church services and other ministries.

There's something positive about the changes we've had to make: We're reaching a larger church family and we're inviting many people to take a role in our services. It's been a wonderful way to see and hear our friends, even if we can't actually be with them. It makes me feel that we've never been apart.

Thank you to all who've volunteered (or been drafted) to offer a prayer, read scriptures, sing hymns, prepare a children's message, and record special music. My LP Church family knows that I'm always asking for help, and I'm doing it again, as I've done in "normal" times.

- *Can you offer to prepare a message for our children?* There are lots of resources to help you.
- *Can you or someone you know pro-*

vide us with special music, instrumental or vocal?



In both cases, you can video in your home or arrange to come to church. Let me know how you can help, or I'll "volunteer" you as I've done for 15 years! Contact me at bperella@lpcumc.org or 610-334-4197.

So here's the plus about our current situation. Our messages, music, readings, and sermons have come from all over the US and abroad, which might

not have occurred if we were still worshipping in the sanctuary. Our services reach many more people; we've been introduced to friends from around the world. **Our church family has grown!** Praise to God for helping us learn to be creative during this difficult time. With God leading us, let us all believe in a brighter, merrier New Year!

Children's Sunday School News: We'll soon have weekly Sunday School lessons (virtually, of course.) Since we have new friends worshipping with us, please let us know if you have children who want to be part of our program for preschoolers and elementary age kids. Contact me at bperella@lpcumc.org or 610-334-4197.

Greetings to You in Our Lord's Name!

From Pastor Christopher Kurien

Dear Friends,

As we begin a new year, we look back on the difficulties of this past year. Without a doubt 2020 has been one of the most difficult years for our current generation. In some sense, it's difficult to say *Happy New Year*, knowing it's not going to be happy for many people. I pray this new year will be kinder to us.

At the threshold of this new year, we might complain about the difficulties of 2020, including our desire to be together with family and friends. I'm thankful that most of our lives have been spared. Personally, we had made plans to visit India this past summer and were disappointed that we couldn't travel. However, as I reflect on 2020, many blessings come to mind. I'd like to share some with you.

1. As we know, none of our immediate church family members have died due to COVID-19. While a few congregants contracted the virus, God has spared most of us.
2. As a church, we quickly adapted to new technology and never had to cancel our services.
3. This technology has enabled us to see many friends and family members. Many participated in our virtual services.

**"Let us be in
touch and let
people know we
love them.
Let us live with a
purpose and find
joy in all we do"**

4. We've heard people say, "We were in touch with people we're not ordinarily in touch with." So, there was more communication between people.

5. We began to appreciate **what we have** rather than **what we don't have**, especially our family.

6. Unlike many congregations, our financial health seems good, and I thank all of you for your faithfulness.

7. Despite the challenges of 2020, our lives, in general, have been good. We praise God for that.

8. Many of us developed new interests, such as gardening, painting, reading, and learning.

9. We are experiencing democracy at work, with the transition of power in the US, which in some other parts of the world could only be a dream.

10. Above all, God has been faithful in our lives and we are grateful.

While we don't know what's in store in 2021, we *do* know that our God holds and knows our future. With that certain hope, **I'd like to wish you a happy, healthy, and blessed New Year!** Let us find time to read God's word and pray regularly. Let us be in touch and let people know we love them. Let us live with a purpose and find joy in everything we do. God Bless you all!

Shalom! **Pastor Chris**

A Nativity Pageant and 3 Christmas Eve Services Produced: Here's How!

**From Beverly Perella, Director of Music
and Children's Ministries**

After 11 months and two shoulder surgeries, I was released by my surgeon December 2, just in time to prepare for Christmas. By Saturday, December 12, we were videoing for our concert on December 20 and three Christmas Eve services.

My technical skills are limited. Thankfully, my former organ student and substitute for many months — **Reid Simmons** — is skilled at videoing, editing, and piecing everything together. And, this gifted, accomplished musician was eager to help.

On December 12, our three sopranos — **Lindsey Villecco Guercia, Krista Gilham, and Donna Danielski** — along with flutist, **Robin Lilarose**, and our three bell ringers — **Aimee Fangman, Krista Gilham, and Pam Light** — gathered in the sanctuary for a marathon videoing (following COVID guidelines.) After seven hours, our vocalists could barely talk, our flutist had numb fingers, and the bell ringers were happy they had only one song to play. Everything was handed over to Reid who prepared the recordings for the concert and the music for Christmas Eve.

Reid and I returned the next day to video the pageant. So for another seven

hours, our families arrived, one at a time, donned costumes, and acted in our Nativity. If it weren't for the parents' cooperation, there would have been no pageant. I do believe the parents and children enjoyed their parts.

Rich Auman arrived late in the afternoon to record the narration in sync with Christmas carols. And then Reid took over again, producing our annual pageant. He added additional scenes that tied the story together. Then

Mark Villecco, our Contemporary Worship Leader, combined the sections of worship into a cohesive service, just as he does so skillfully every week.

Yes, we were all in our own homes for the concert and Christmas Eve services, but the spirit, the holiness of the season, the feeling of awe that we experience every year with the birth of Jesus, was just as sacred and meaningful as it always has been.

So now we've begun a new year, and our hopes are high that with God's love and mercy, we'll have a better 2021. I wish you a year filled with God's peace, love, joy, and healing. It's good to be back!



Our Youth Reflect on a New Year

from Lindsey Vilecco Guercia, Interim Youth Leader

2020 was a hard year for many in our Lincoln Park community, with new challenges every day. But, **where there is fear and anxiety, there is also hope.** As Interim Youth Leader, I want to share some reflections from the past year, and also prayers and hopes for 2021, from some of our Lincoln Park UMC youth.

Daniel Antunes - "I am thankful for being safe and healthy in the past year with COVID. Also I'm thankful that my family and friends have been safe as well. I pray for health for the people in the hospitals and their families with this new year."

Madison Kauffman - "I'm definitely thankful for the doctors and nurses who are doing their best at keeping us safe during COVID. I'm also thankful for the teachers at Wyomissing for staying organized and putting students first. In 2021, I'm going to be praying for my grandma and aunt because they're both going through a difficult time."

Kara Brown- "I am thankful in 2020 to have the ability to go to school and play sports. I'm praying that, in 2021, things will go back to normal, and everyone will be able to visit friends and family again."

Kaylee Cipolla- "I'm thankful for the friendships made in 2020 and the lessons taught during a pandemic...to slow down and enjoy the people around you that mean the most. I pray that in 2021 people remember the lessons learned and to not take anything for granted."

Emily Born- "I'm thankful that, in 2020, we had time to reflect on how important life is and the thought that it could be gone fast. I'm also thankful for being financially stable. Unlike other people who have lost their jobs, my family is, fortunately, still able to provide and that is something major. Going into 2021, I'm praying that my mother and I make a speedy recovery from COVID-19 because this virus is terrible and exhausting. Also that everyone is healthy and happy and that we know that God is here with us."

Adam Gehr - "Something I'm thankful for from 2020 is being able to spend time with my family. I'm praying in 2021 for things to go back to being closer to normal."





Lincoln Park's Bulletin Board



February 15
for our
March-April
Issue

Change of Address

Danielle Hallacher
223 Winding Way
Womelsdorf PA 19567-1702

News-Linc, bi-monthly publication of Lincoln Park Community United Methodist Church, hopes to link you to your church with information about its programs, plans, and people. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and may be left in the newsletter mailbox by the Church Office.

Our staff-

Editor: Cheri Fallon, 610-678-8735

Staff: Nancy Artz, Bunny Carlson, Jim & Roe Gehman, Beverly Ruffner, Marilyn Seiders, Mark & Jack Villecco

PEACE

Thank You Notes

♥ Dear Friends at LP Church,
Thank you for all the kindness shown to both Ron and me over the past few months. Your flowers, soup, cards, and phone calls have been most appreciated and have really helped to keep my spirits up. Because of COVID, the facility where Ron is has not allowed visitations. I can call him, but, sadly, I have not been able to see him since January! God bless you all,
Susie Woessner

♥ I want to thank LP Church members for my beautiful cards and flowers. **Hildamay** took me to church, **Sue Romig** fed me at Agape, **Beverly Perella** is my lifeline. **The Rev Dr Chris** offered prayers and conversation. I'm thankful for nine messages from people I know and others I did not know. I've been quarantined since March 13 and for some months unable to leave my room. (My only sanity was I wasn't wearing striped clothes. Jail —Haha!) **Gert Young**

Lincoln Park's Book Club Recommends Reading



Our Book Club has not been meeting during the pandemic, but of course we've been busy reading. We want to share a review of a book we've enjoyed.

The Pioneers by David McCullough

This Pulitzer Prize-winning historian tells the American story of the settling of the Northwest Territory by people who overcame hardship to build a community based on ideals that defined our country. In 1788, the first band of pioneers set out from New England and settled in what is now Marietta, on the banks of the Ohio River. They coped with many hardships, but they let nothing deter or defeat them.

NEWS-LINC

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Reading, PA 19609

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Change service requested



Worship with us: **10AM - ONLINE WORSHIP** for now (See pg 2)

When we resume there will be one combined worship service in the sanctuary at 10 am, and Online services will continue.

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For urgent messages, use voicemail, please.