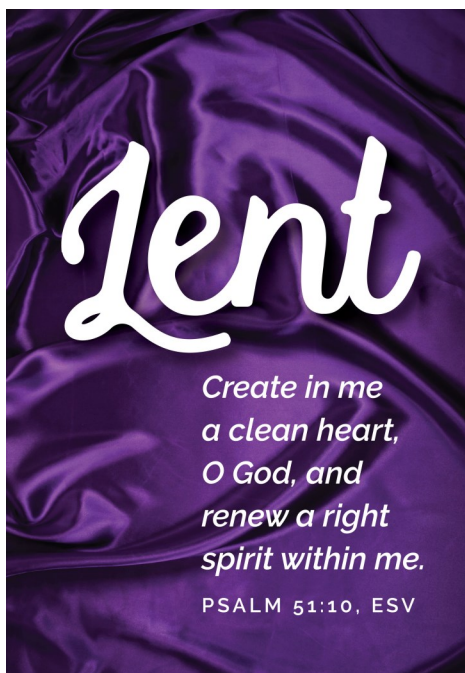


News-Line

*Lincoln Park Community United Methodist Church Newsletter
Lincoln Park, Pennsylvania
March-April 2021*



"Lent is an occasion for us to journey with Christ...into tomorrow. For you never walk with Christ long but what the dawn breaks, the sun shines, and hope breaks through."

—C. Neil Straight

Church Reopening: We're Hopeful

From Rich Auman and Richard Bashore

Finally, we think, there is some good news to report on church reopening. No, we don't have a date yet, but there are some good signs that we're seeing light at the end of tunnel.

The daily new cases being reported are now in the low 100's as compared to many days in January when the numbers exceeded 200. And, our congregation, especially our health care workers and older members, are receiving vaccinations. Also, according to CDC projections, everyone who wants a vaccine should have one by summer.

The major drop in daily new cases is a great move in the right direction; however, the PA Department of Health keeps Berks County in the substantial category, the most severe of the three.

While some area churches have reopened for in-person worship, the state guidelines for indoor gatherings have not changed. Our Reopening Committee and

(Continued on page 9)



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.

Welcome Newcomers!

We invite you to any meetings or activities you read about here. Please call the Church Office, 610-777-1422, for names, phone numbers, information, or to speak with our pastor. If you'd like to receive *News-Linc* in the mail, just notify our Secretary. Please join in at Lincoln Park!

The Show Must Go On!

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

Tradition

COVID-19 isn't stopping us from continuing the beloved tradition of a concert preceding our 10 am Easter service. As usual, we'll have brass, organ, and vocal music. The concert will last 20 minutes, beginning at 9:40.

Since we're social distancing, we won't have the five-member Berkshire Brass, but we *will* have two of them. So, our hymns will still be accompanied by brass and organ, and our own vocalists and a trio from Bell Choir will provide the seasonal music we all look forward to. After all, it's our tradition, and a great one at that!

Behind the Scenes

That's where you'll find me for our worship services. Members have asked where I am during the service. I provide an organ or piano prelude and postlude every week. (That's a reason to tune in early at 9:55 am and "stay" afterward to hear the postlude.) It's a good way to begin and end worship, perhaps offering a prayer of praise and thankfulness.

Most of the time, I accompany the special musicians, but, again, I'm behind the scenes. I schedule and sometimes write the script for our Children's Messages, and I am, indeed, thankful that so many adults and children have said "yes" to helping with this ministry.

Our Chancel Choir has been divided into seven groups who take turns singing the weekly hymns. The toughest part of

the job for me is making videos of these parts for the service, which was a tough learning curve. When I goof, **Mark Villecco** pulls me through.

Like most of us, I prefer live music and can't wait until we return!

Flexibility

In my teaching career, I was asked

what trait was most important in a teacher. I answered *flexibility*. That quality applies to our children's educational



program. I'm keeping in touch with our parents and have been delivering props (and more) for our kids to use during Children's Time.

Our emphasis during Lent is saving money in Tootsie Roll banks we gave the kids for Valentine's Day. We'll collect their coins at Easter and donate them to the children's program at Hope Lutheran Church in Reading, which has an amazing outreach program for their neighborhood and beyond.

Pastor Mary Wolfe is excited that we want to help and has invited our kids to participate in programs once we're safe from COVID-19. Collecting a few coins is a simple way our kids can learn that they're not too young to serve, share, and make a difference in the lives of other children.

Greetings to You in Our Lord's Name!

From Pastor Christopher Kurien

Dear Beloved,

On February 17, Ash Wednesday, the church entered into another Lenten season. In 325 AD, the Council of Nicea established Lent as a holy season to be observed by the whole Church. The season always begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes the Saturday before Easter. In the UM Church, like other denominations, the 40 days of the season do not include the six Sundays of Lent. Sundays are considered “Mini-Easters” as we celebrate the joy of the Resurrection of Christ.

It is also significant that, in the Bible, 40 is an important number, associated with anticipation and preparation:

- Moses waited on the Mt. Sinai for 40 days to receive the Law,
- Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years before entering the promised land,
- Elijah walked 40 days to meet with God at Mount Horeb,
- And, most importantly, Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness before His temptation.

During Lent, we're encouraged to observe the penitential practices of

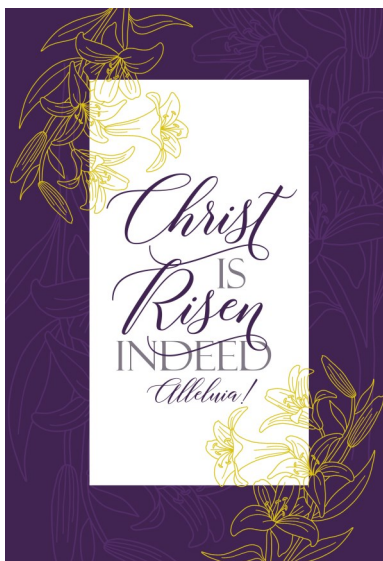
prayer, confession, self-denial, fasting, and almsgiving for 40 days. The Latin name for the season, *quadragesima*, is also significant, as it means *40 days* of penance. The word *Lent* comes from the word *Lencten*, which simply means *spring season*. In a real sense, Lent can be a 40-day springtime for the soul. A time of planting, nurturing, and experiencing God's love and care.

Lent is also seen as a time of year to declutter. We try to put down or put away some of the things that we think we don't really need or are not really important,

so that we have space and time for listening to God and learning more about Him. So, when we give up certain things for Lent, it makes room for God! We give up something to take up something. May God help us to practice the five penitential practices during this Lent.

This year Easter is on April 4. As we know, Resurrection Day is one of the most important days in the life of the church, which is the foundation to our Christian existence. Without the death and resurrection of Christ, we would have no church, there would be no reason for ministry, and we would have no message to preach. Resurrection is the

(Continued on page 5)



Greetings

(Continued from page 4)

foundation of the hope that we cherish and of the faith that we passionately proclaim when we get up on the Easter morning and say, *He is risen! He is risen indeed!* Celebrating the resurrection of Christ is the most joyful experience for us Christian believers.

Friends, it's been an extremely challenging year for all, and it doesn't seem to be over yet. I hope everyone can get the COVID-19 vaccination soon, and we can return to our normal lives. Meanwhile let us pray for those impacted adversely.

May our Lenten disciplines and the season of Easter be meaningful and purposeful to all of us.

With much love,
Pastor Chris

A Time for Prayer

*May the Son of God,
Who is already
Formed in you,
Grow in you
So that for you
He will become
Immeasurable,
And that in you
He will become laughter,
Exultation,
The fullness of joy
Which no one will take
From you.*

Isaac of Stella, 12th century Cistercian monk



From Jerry Manhart

As a group of us removed the manger scene in front of our church, we noted that the church looks lifeless. We decided, once again, to investigate the purchase of an electronic sign.

Church Council and the Trustees then approved a committee to contact vendors, seeking information and eventually obtaining estimates. Local churches in our area were contacted to find out where they had purchased their signs and if they had any recommendations..

We welcome any suggestions from our congregation. What have you seen at other churches? What appeals to you about a church sign? Feel free to call me with your thoughts, 610-777-2347, or email manhart19609@verizon.net. More information will be posted as we move forward.

Excerpts from ***COVID-19 Conversations: Kara Powell on Innovative Youth Ministry***

Submitted by **Lindsey Villecco Guercia**, Interim Youth Leader

Over the past few months, pastors



Powell concludes, “What I think beats at the heart of next gen minis-

try, and parents alike have expressed the struggle they face when ministering to children and youth in a time of social distancing. For pastors, figuring out how to keep children and teens engaged while doing church from a distance has been a challenge. For parents, finding the balance between work, childcare, school, and screen time in the midst of a pandemic is often a daily battle.

try, and really all ministry, is innovation. Let’s really understand. Let’s empathize with what our people are going through, with what our young people, children, and parents are going through, and then let’s experiment with different ways that we can respond to those needs.”

Kara Powell, Executive Director of the Fuller Youth Institute, discusses the unique challenges pastors, parents, and teens are currently facing. “Half of pastors (47%) agree that ministry to kids and youth is the largest challenge they face right now. I’ve spent a lot of time talking to youth leaders, and I think one of the biggest mistakes that we’ve made in youth ministry [right now] is assuming we could take what we were doing in-person with young people and drag-and-drop that into Zoom,” says Powell. “You can’t take an in-person experience and try to exactly duplicate it on Zoom.”

Another way for churches to minister not just to teens, but to their parents as well, is through webinars, Powell says. “Research shows, across the board, that there is no more important influence on a young person’s faith development than their parents. [Pastors, your] influence can best be leveraged when you equip parents who have, in general, far more time—especially during the pandemic—around their children and their teenagers. A lot of creative churches are doing parent webinars, and, I’ll tell you, I think many of them are seeing greater response from parents, especially if it’s a specific topic that’s very relevant to parents [right now], like anxiety, technology, and how to have better faith-related conversations with your young person.”

Lincoln Park's Book Club Recommends Reading

FIFTY WORDS FOR RAIN, by Asha Lammie, submitted by **Sharon Ackelson**

This book, by a new and talented author, opened my eyes to the strength of traditions. Taking place in post World War II Japan, it follows a young girl through her journey of trying to feel love and acceptance by those closest to her. The book enjoyed a long run on the bestseller list.

NEWS OF THE WORLD, by Paulette Giles, submitted by **Sharon Kleckner**

This is the story of a retired marshal who satisfies his wanderlust by gathering news from major newspapers and reading it to gatherings in eastern Texas towns. It is their connection to the outside world. A friend requests him to return a young white girl, raised by Native Americans, to her aunt and uncle. The story chronicles the eventful journey and the bond which grows between them. The ending is not what you'd expect. The book is now a major movie starring Tom Hanks.



We extend our deepest sympathy...

† to family and friends of **Mary Klein**, 91, who died on January 17. She and her husband **Donald** (who passed away on January 29, 2019) were active members here at LP Church. Mary served as Lay Leader. They were devoted parents to two sons, Andrew and Kevin, and had four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.



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

† to **Janet Holmes** and family, on the loss of her husband, **Gordon**, 79, on December 29. They have a son, a daughter, and three grandchildren. Gordon graduated from Auburn University with a degree in electrical engineering. He served in the US Army and was always interested in military history.

† to **Bob Flail**, whose wife **Lucille (Lucy)** died on January 15. They were married for 54 years and have two sons, **Gregory** and **Joshua**, and two grandchildren.

† **Susan Woessner** on the passing of her husband, **Ron**, on February 16. Married 55 years, the couple have four children: **Sherry**, **Lori**, **Tracy**, and **Troy**; and five grandchildren. Ron served in the US Navy on submarines during the Vietnam War, and he had a long career in telecommunications.

May God surround you all with His love and care.

Every Contribution to LP Church in 2020 Made a Difference

From Jack Villecco, Stewardship & Finance Chair

Our last in-person worship service was March 15, 2020, and our **2020**

Church Budget is now closed. *“We can become*

We’re grateful for the results:

- **Contributions** were **\$262,113**, and the cost of our **ministries** was **\$283,585**. Even though **ministries** cost **\$21,472 more than contributions**, we could fully meet all our commitments including:
 - UM World Services Fund \$5,476
 - General UM Church Ministries \$5,169
 - UM Connectional Ministries \$20,306.

Not all UM congregations can be as proud as we are of this accomplishment.

- As importantly, we continued to provide full compensation to our dedicated church staff, and to all our services providers. This is because, in addition to your generous contributions, we were able to borrow from our own accumulated savings. I know that with your prayers and renewed commitment during 2021, we will pay back the “loan” we made with those faithful stewards of our past.

You may wonder why you haven’t received your 2021 offering envelopes.

*part of
God’s story.”*

That is due to a failure on my part to make sure that they were ordered in October, 2020. I apologize and want you to know that they’ll be delivered to you by the end of March. Please continue

to use your “leftover” 2020 offering envelopes until then.

We can’t predict what 2021 will bring. Some of us may experience serious hardships. What we can be certain of is that our congregation will continue to be faithful to God.

Rob Renfroe, President and Publisher of *Good News*, wrote in an e-mail on December 26:

We can become a part of God’s story. There are a hundred ways to be part of God’s story. What’s important is that we do it. Whether it’s teaching a Bible study or leading a small group, sharing Christ with your neighbors, working with an outreach ministry, building churches, loving orphans, or some other way, what’s important is that our lives join God in his story, the big story of redemption.”

(Continued on page 9)



From Jerry Manhart

No date has been set for the 2021 Flea Market. We're hoping that when church reopens, it will become clearer if it will be safe and then we'll set a date. Please hold on to your fleas because there is no room to store them at the church. We all miss getting together with our church friends and hope everyone stays safe.

Stewardship

(Continued from page 8)

Please continue to participate in our virtual worship services. Be a scripture reader, a prayer maker, a singer, or even a message giver.

Your stewardship is more than making a financial offering. Stewardship is doing whatever you can, whenever you can, as often as you can, to help us fulfill our mission of *Seeking and Sharing Christ*. I look forward to seeing all of you, either on the computer screen or in-person — with God's help — in the not-too-distant future.

Thank you again for investing in LPCUMC and its ministries with your financial support.

Your servant in Christ,
Jack Villecco, 484-256-9861

Reopening

(Continued from page 1)

Trustees feel we need to continue to see this downward movement in new cases before we can set a firm date for in-person worship.

And be reminded that when we do reopen, we'll be enforcing mask-wearing and social distancing while in church. After service refreshments and the fourth Sunday breakfast worship will not resume until our daily activities are really back to normal.

If you have a question or concern about reopening, don't hesitate to contact **Rich Auman**, 610-670-0955, or **Rich Bashore**, 610-678-1802.



Who Made the Road Safe for You?

From Daniel Schantz, submitted by **Nancy Villecco**

From *2021 Daily Guideposts*, pgs. 115-116

Take the stumbling block out of the way of My people. —Isaiah 57:14 (NKJV)

The sunrise is sweet, as my wife, Sharon, and I roll north on the freeway, listening to "oldies" on the radio. Traffic is very light at this early hour. As I come over a rise, I see something scattered across the road ahead. I stand on the brakes and pull off on the berm to check it out. The road is littered with construction debris that has fallen from a truck: blocks of wood, wallboard, nails, sheet metal, broken glass, bricks. I bound out of the car.

"Danny!" my wife shrieks. "What are you doing?" "Got to clean this up before someone gets hurt!"

While Sharon watches for traffic, I dash back and forth, heaving trash off to the side of the road. At last the road is clear.

Sweaty, exhausted, I climb back into the car just in time for a row of cars that comes whizzing by, unaware of the danger they were in.

As I pull back onto the road, I am thinking of all the people who have cleared obstacles for me on the road of life. People like my parents, who guided me through the tumultuous teenage years, plus schoolteachers and youth leaders who taught me to recognize dangers ahead.

The world is a dangerous place, and so I pray:

Thank You, Lord, for protecting me on the highways of life; show me how I can clear the road for younger lives who come after me.



FROM AN EASTER ISSUE OF PLUS MAGAZINE, 2015:

Mrs. Thomas Edison, wife of the great inventor, said of her late husband, "I asked him one time, 'Where do you get all these remarkable ideas?' And he just pointed up." And on the night of his passing, she added, as he lay at death's door and she and the doctors were at his side, suddenly that great wizard of science said clearly, so that all might hear: "It is very beautiful over there."



Lincoln Park's Bulletin Board



*April 15
for our
May-June
Issue*

Change of Address

Barbara Leas
58 Chestnut St
Mohnton PA 19540

Bob and Michelle Ringler
Front St South E201
Issequah WA 98207

Bob Flail
16 Wyoming St Apt 2
Tamaqua PA 18252
smokepole32cal@aol.com

Birth

Praise God for the
Birth of **Bob
Robertson's** 12th
great-grandchild, **Damion**, son
of **Elizabeth** and **Jay Brown**.
Congratulations to all!



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

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

Dear LP Members,

We recently sold our home on Amherst Ave and moved to Washington state, near Seattle. We're very lucky to have this opportunity. Bob loves his new job at Kindred

Hospital, and our new apartment borders on a National Forest. We're also only two hours away from Canada, where our daughter lives. It wasn't easy to leave our LP family, but with retirement only a few years away, we thought this was the best choice. Contact us at our new address in Issequah anytime!

Thanks, **Bob & Michelle Ringler**



In the Mail!

♥ I've appreciated all the cards and calls received this month after my surgery. It was a comfort to know that Pastor Chris and our congregation were praying for me. Thankfully, I'm feeling better every day and looking forward to resuming normal activities soon.

Sincerely, **Ed Fallon**

NEWS-LINC

Lincoln Park Community United Methodist Church
1 Carlisle Avenue
Reading, PA 19609

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Reading, PA

Permit No. 233

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.

Pastor: The Rev Dr Christopher Kurien, 570-573-1455

Music Director, Children's Ministries Coordinator: Beverly Perella, 610-334-4197

Contemporary Program Coordinator: Mark Villecco

Youth Ministry Coordinator: Lindsey Villecco Guercia

Secretary: Marilyn Seiders

Editor: Cheri Fallon, 610-678-8735, cherfallon@comcast.net

Nursery: Kathi Ernst

Custodian: Carl Madeira

Office phone 610-777-1422; Ext: Kitchen 17; Ed Bldg 15; Nursery 14

Fax line 610-777-4309

Voicemail: Church Office 10, Beverly Perella 16

Web: www.lpcumc.org

E-mail: info@lpcumc.org (Secretary and Church)

For urgent messages, use voicemail, please.