

News-Line

Lincoln Park Community United Methodist Church Newsletter
Lincoln Park, Pennsylvania *January-February 2023*

Welcome to LP Church, Linda Livingood



From Pastor Christopher Kurien

I'm delighted to announce that we begin the new year with a new Office Administrator. We welcome **Linda Livingood** and pray that her ministry among us will be a blessing to her and to our church! She has been training and working in the office already.

**Our Church Office Hours are:
Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 10 am- 1 pm**

An Exeter resident, Linda has many skills and much experience that make her an ideal candidate for the position here at LP Church.

She has worked for six different companies over the years until retiring in 2012. "Since retirement," Linda says, "I like staying busy and have worked at two part-time jobs as secretary at St John's Lutheran Church and as a receptionist/secretary at Forest Hills Memorial Park."

Linda says, "Working at Tel Hai Retirement Community as an Administrative Assistant to the CEO for five years

was a rewarding job. I also totally enjoyed working at Stevens & Lee Offices as a document specialist for five years. I've had a diversity of jobs, including customer service, real estate agent, caregiver, singer and voice teacher. "

Linda majored in Music Education at Ithaca College and has a Bachelor of Music Degree from Manhattan School of Music. She managed her own voice studio, teaching up to 56 students a week. She also performs as a soloist for churches, choral societies, theater, weddings, and opera.



9 am: Contemporary

11 am: Traditional

**Loving Childcare
Available for both
services.**

Sunday Services also Continue Virtually on Facebook

To view, go to our website at lpcumc.org, and click the blue “Facebook Live” button.

The service livestream begins at 9 & 11 am (EDT) and appears at the top of the “Posts” listings, just below the picture of the altar area of our sanctuary.

Please submit prayer requests by clicking on the *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. **Simply click “Not Now.”**

LET’S SHARE THESE OPPORTUNITIES WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

10:10-10:50: Children’s Sunday School

We have a fantastic group of volunteers teaching our children amazing lessons each week. Each week there’s a short video and related activities for either the classroom or at home. We’d love to have more children in our congregation come to Sunday School.

Note: When there is a Fourth Sunday Breakfast, there will be no Children’s Sunday School. Come and have breakfast with us instead!

Sunday School Teachers

Lauren & Kasey Pierson
Dave & Deb Gehr
Nick Guercia
Barb Olaewe
Tori Whiteley

ADULT
Sunday School

On January 9, **Barbara Olaewe** begins a new Adult Sunday School program, “I Am,” about the *I am* sayings of Jesus. Please join us between services, in the Library. Please bring your favorite version of the Bible, eBooks welcome, or use one off the library shelves.

From Music Director Irina Shmeleva

Christmas time is magical with its sparkling lights, carols, a song in every store and every car, gifts - wrapped and piled beneath the Christmas tree—and the bright star we see in the sky, hoping to be led by it to see the newborn King.



music brings brightness and variety to the music program.

I was thrilled to meet new singer **Jenna Hope Gracias**, whose voice blended beautifully with **Krista Gilham**'s voice. Having two brilliant local musicians **Robin**

Lilarose and **Donna Danielski** under our church roof was not just a joy, but a delight. Their mastery and soulful performance make me tear up every time I play with them.

I have to say that I felt so emotional and grateful after those two services in December, and I can't thank enough all of our great musicians!

I dare to think that December at Lincoln Park was musically magical. As a Music Director, I may have broken tradition by planning music for Cantata Sunday using an Advent theme, not Christmas. I had my reason for that: It doesn't seem right liturgically singing *Christ is born, sing Hallelujah!* two weeks before Christmas itself. And, I believe that in listening to the beautiful music of the Gospel readings on that December Sunday we soaked our souls in the atmosphere of anticipation of the great miracle - the birth of the baby Christ, bringing us peace and love.

And, our expectation was rewarded on Christmas Eve! We rejoiced, like our young artists with their wonderful performance (we're grateful to **Barb Leas** and our Sunday School teachers for their great work!) As always, the combination of traditional and modern

Soon after Cantata Sunday our church received a letter addressed *To everyone involved in Sunday's musical program*, written by parishioner **Diane Fisher**. I'd like to quote her letter, because I couldn't say it better myself: It's all about a huge team effort, devotion, and hard work:

I thoroughly enjoyed the Christmas music performance this past Sunday. It's evident that everyone worked very hard. The music selected was so beautiful and meaningful. I appreciate all your efforts. What a great way to begin the Christmas season! Thank you All, Diane.

Happy and Blessed New Year 2023

From Pastor Christopher Kurien

Dear Friends,

As we begin a new year, it's natural to feel hope and anticipation for what the future may bring. I always look forward to the beginning of a new year with some excitement; it's a chance to start over with a clean slate. I can't change my past, so I ask for God's forgiveness for the mistakes I've committed and look forward to new opportunities and possibilities.

While we don't know how everything will be in 2023, we remember that God has a plan for our lives. Although we can't travel into the future, God travels ahead of us. Let's leave the challenges of the past behind and move forward with renewed purpose and optimism.

Trusting in God's plan and knowing that God is always with us is comforting, no matter what challenges we may face. It's important to remember that we still have the ability to make our own choices. It's up to us to try to live in line with God's will, trusting that He will guide us and be with us every step of the way.

Many studies, including Harvard University's Grant and Glueck research, show that having strong, positive relationships with others is an important fac-

tor in our well-being, happiness, and longevity. As Christian disciples, we

also know that having a good relationship with God gives us joy and a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Studies have also shown that those who have a spiritual rootedness may have lower rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.



New Year's Day Hymn Sing with the Rev Rodney Shearer

Friends, in this new year, I pray we find time to read God's word, to spend more time in prayer, to be in community with friends and family, and to find ways to worship God more often. Also, remember to eat healthy and get some exercise at least five days a week. Let us stay healthy physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

May the God of Peace and Love guide our lives.
For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.- Jeremiah 29:11

God bless you all!

Pastor Chris

Introducing Our Lincoln Park Community United Methodist Church

Office Bearers and Committee Members for 2023

STAFF

Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Christopher J. Kurien
Music Director & Organist	Irina Shmeleva
Worship Leader, Contemporary Service	Mark Villecco
Office Administrator	Linda Livingood
Accounting	Marilyn Seiders
Custodian	Carl Madeira
Nursery Attendant	Kathi Ernst

CHURCH COUNCIL

Chair	Geoffrey Whiteley
Vice-Chair	Jack Villecco
Secretary	Kris Wright
Lay Leader	Kris Gilham
Associate Lay Leader	Jim Gehman
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Jerry Manhart
Alternate Lay Member to Conference	Jack Villecco
Trustee Chair & Vice Chair	George Weikel & Rich Bashore
Finance Chair	Jerry Manhart
Treasurer	Cindy Kercher
Financial Secretaries	Richard & Carol Bashore
Nurture Chair	Barb Leas
Missions Committee Chair	Deb Gehr
Nominations & Leadership Development Chair	Pastor
Nominations & Leadership Development Vice Chair	Roe Gehman
Worship Committee Chair	Mark Villecco
Staff Parish Relations Chair	Earl Hope
Christian Education Co-Chairs	Krista Gilham & Tori Whiteley
Endowment Chair	Rich Auman
Historian	Carl Madeira
Membership Secretary & Native American Ministries	Jack Villecco
Newsletter Editor	Cheri Fallon

STAFF: Christopher J. Kurien (Pastor), Mark Villecco (Worship Leader),
Irina Shmeleva (Director of Music), Barb Leas (Children's Ministry Coordinator)

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Ron Schucker ('23), Harry Garrity ('23)

(continued on p. 6)

(continued from p. 5)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

George Weikel (Chair) Richard Bashore (Vice-Chair) Linda Mann, Barry Goodolf, Harry Garriity, Sandi Rosencrans, Bill Lape, Jim Gehman, Bob McFeaters
Ex Officio: Pastor, Lay Leader, Lay Member to Annual Conference

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP

Jerry Manhart (Chair) Cindy Kercher (Treasurer) Rich & Carol Bashore (Finance Secretaries) Geoff Whiteley, Jack Villecco, Pam Shenk
Ex Officio Members: Pastor, Lay Leader, Lay Member to Annual Conference, Church Council Chair, Staff Parish Chair, Trustees Chairs, Endowment Chair

ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

Rich Auman (Chair) Beth Auman (Secretary) Dan Christopher (Treasurer) Richard Larsen, Don Schlosser, Jim Gehman, Jerry Manhart

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Roe Gehman (Vice Chair) Mark Villecco, Lou Manhart, Linda Hope, Karen McFeaters, Nancy Goodolf, KC Dianna, Beth Auman
Ex Officio: Pastor (Chair) Associate Lay Leader, Alternate to Annual Conference

STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Earl Hope (Chair till June) Ed Fallon, Curt Glass, Kweku Addae-Mensah, Ann Heller, Sandi Rosencrans, Michele Bausher, Barbara Olaewe (Chair) Kasey Pierson, Rich Auman *Ex Officio:* Pastor, Lay Leader, Lay Member

NURTURE COMMITTEE

Barb Leas (Chair) Linda Woll, Jackie Kauffman, Gretchen Garrity, Donna Stapleton, Krista Gilham, Darwin Stapleton, Nancy Madeira, Mike Kauffman
Ex Officio: Pastor, Lay Leader

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Barb Leas (Coordinator) Barbara Olaewe, Krista Gilham (Co-Chair) KC Dianna, Linda Woll, Lindsey Villecco, Victoria Whiteley (Co-Chair) Lauren Pierson
Members at large: Children's Time Leaders, Children's Cherub Choir Leaders, Adult Leaders *Ex Officio:* Pastor, Lay Leader

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Carol Bashore (Chair) Diane Fisher, Cheri Fallon, Dave Kercher, Victoria Whiteley, Alan Koeble, Jim Eckert, Deb Gehr (Chair) Barbara Olaewe
Ex Officio: Pastor, Lay Leader

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Mark Villecco (Chair) Jean Weikel, KC Dianna, Dorinne Bilger, Kris Wright, Margaret Welliver, Karen McFeaters, Sara George, Lindsey Villecco, Deb Gehr
Ex Officio: Pastor, Lay Leader, Director of Music, Custodian, Jack Villecco & Church Secretary (Lector, Greeter, & Usher Scheduling) George Weikel & Nancy Madeira (Communion Set-up) Altar Flowers (Cindy Kercher)

FOOD MINISTRY TEAM

Alan Koeble (Chair) Dave & Cindy Kercher, Jen Born, Jim Gehman, Kris Gilham

AUDIOVISUAL TEAM

Mark Villecco, Kris Gilham, Dennis Antunes, Nick Guercia, Jerry Manhart, Jack Villecco, Rich Auman, Geoff Whiteley, Kevin Villecco

ADULT MINISTRIES

Carl Madeira, Michele Bausher, Darwin & Donna Stapleton, Sandi Rosencrans, Margaret Welliver, Ann Heller

CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Sandi Rosencrans, Jim Eckert, Harry Garrity, Darwin & Donna Stapleton

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Carl & Nancy Madeira, Jack Villecco, Jim Gehman, Cheri Fallon, Darwin & Donna Stapleton

The Well-Lived Life

From Cheri Fallon, Editor

Many of you probably know that our former pastor, the Rev Don Zeiter, lost his daughter Donna, 58, to cancer in September. In a Christmas letter Don wrote lovingly about her. At this time of year when we may think about starting fresh, I find his words inspiring and resolution-worthy.

*An investment company's ad speaks of the **well-planned life**. Such is not possible; every day can bring with it the unexpected. But what is possible is **the well-lived life**: a life of caring and compassion, of generosity and empathy, of deep friendships and a welcome of strangers, of outrageous fun and sympathetic tears. This was Donna: a daughter, a sister, an aunt, of whom we are most proud, and whom we miss beyond words. May she rest in peace.*

We're Grateful for Your Faithful Support!

From Diane Fisher, Missions



In Acts 20:35, the Lord Jesus said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* The Mission Committee would like to thank all the members of the congregation who “gave” to support the Salvation Army Adopt-A-Family Christmas Program. Because of your generosity, we were able to provide an unforgettable Christmas for a father, mother, and two young daughters. We furnished the family with household items ranging from cleaning and laundry sup-

“Our generous church members purchased every item on the family’s list.”

**Carol Bashore,
Missions Chair**

plies to small appliances, bedding, and towels.

Each family member received a hat, coat, and pair of gloves, several tops (shirts, sweaters) and bottoms (slacks, pants); and socks and a pair of shoes. Everyone received personal hygiene products like shampoo, conditioner, and body wash. Toys and craft items were also donated for the girls. In addition to all the presents, a number of Giant, Target, and Walmart gift cards were pur-

chased by several members.

It was wonderful to see how everyone

worked toward a common goal — providing a special Christmas for a deserving family. May God bless this family and also bless those who so willingly contributed to making our Adopt-a-Family Christmas a huge success. It truly is more blessed to give than to receive.



“What do we live for,
if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?”

—George Eliot

Food for Thought

From Jim Gehman, Assistant Lay Leader

I've used the title of this article before. I just want you to think of our outreach programs here at LPCUMC involving FOOD. Today I'm focusing on our involvement with Opportunity House, located at 420 North 2nd Street in Reading. Opportunity House provides an evening meal 365 days a year to people in need of a hot dinner.

Our involvement with this program is to provide a meal six times a year. Simple math says that if all the churches and other agencies who contribute meals donate the same number of meals as us, then 60-some agencies are involved. Providing six meals a year certainly is not an overwhelming number, but it does demand some planning and preparation by a small number of our church family. Currently, we rely on and thank **Alan Koeble** for determining a



menu, developing a food list, and directing our committee on how to prepare the meal. Additional volunteers travel to Opportunity House to help serve the meals. The range of meals served number from 50 to 80 depending on the month of the year and the temperature on the day. For those of us who are in-

involved, this project is heartwarming and gratifying. We've been able to fund this project because of our faithful church family. Your contributions have allowed us to pay for food products without having to ask our finance committee for funding. Hopefully, this tradition will continue.

I encourage you to join the Opportunity House committee and experience the gratification of providing and serving a warm meal to some of the needy people in the Reading area.

A Christmas Eve Pageant Warms Our Hearts





Condensed from *The Reading Eagle*, January 1, 2023

CAPTAIN MATTHEW BROWN IS THE COMMANDER OF THE COAST GUARD CUTTER *HAMILTON*. Matt grew up in LP Church (and Wernersville) and is a 1991 Wilson grad. He joined the Coast Guard in 1997. He is the son of **Tina Eckert-Brown** and the late **Ray Brown**, and brother of **Mike Brown**.

Matt and his *Hamilton* crew crossed the Atlantic to Spain before heading through the English Channel and Danish Straits to the Baltic Sea region. There they conducted at-sea exchanges with US allies and partners, including Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. After 94 days at sea, they returned to their home port of North Charleston, SC, in December.

Matt says, “It was an honor to grow the relationship between the US and our Baltic Sea allies during engagements both at sea and in port. By working side by side with our current and future NATO allies, we learned just how much we have in common, and we were left with a stronger appreciation for our shared values. I could not be more proud of this crew’s hard work and sacrifice while serving as US representatives in the Baltic.”

Welcome to the World, Little Ones

- ♥ Congratulations to **Lee Riley** on the birth of her sixth great grandchild, **Ever Klein**, born prematurely on October 31. Ever has been in the hospital until just recently when he went home. Praise God!



- ♥ **Oliver Thomas Lundquist**, born November 14, is the son of **Jennifer (Auman)** and **Matthew Lundquist** and grandson of **Richard** and **Beth Auman**. Best wishes to all!
- ♥ On November 18, **Nick** and **Lindsey (Villecco) Guercia** welcomed their daughter, Lily Belle Guercia, into their family. Lily is the granddaughter of **Jack** and **Nancy Villecco**.
- ♥ Congratulations to **Rachel (Deibler)** and **David Parker** on the birth of their daughter, **Deliah Faith Parker**. She is the granddaughter of **Dr Valerie** and **Dave Deibler**.

May God bless and surround these precious families with His love and care.



Lincoln Park's Bulletin Board



February 15
for our March-
April issue

Change of Address

Mrs Laverna (Bernie) Ackelson
The Highlands Rm 606
Aspire Care
Wyomissing PA 19610

Change of Phone

Sharon & Duane Ackelson
484-334-8363



Congratulations to
Rich & Carol
Bashore

What did the cow in the
Manger say? *Moo, Moo.*
Baby Jesus I love you!



Christmas Eve Pageant

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, Ed Fallon, Diane Fisher, Nancy Madeira, Lou Manhart, Mark & Jack Villecco

♥ Rich and I want to thank everyone in our church family for all the thoughts and prayers, cards, emails, phone calls and meals during my 89 days in three different hospitals, including more than a month in intermediary critical care and intensive care units in the Reading Hospital.



I was diagnosed in early July with musk myasthenia gravis, a rare neuromuscular disease that first affected my eye lids and, then, in two months, attacked every muscle in my body, including my heart and lungs. When I was taken off the ventilator and feeding tube at the end of October, I was transferred to an acute rehabilitation facility in Harrisburg, where I took my first steps since early September.

I was finally released from the Reading Rehabilitation Hospital the Sunday before Thanksgiving. I can truthfully say that Rich and I found a whole new meaning of giving thanks on that Thursday after I was home. And, without hesitation, it was your cards and prayers that helped to give me the strength to get me where I am today. I look forward to once again worshiping with you, but for the time being I've been advised to avoid groups. **Beth and Rich Auman**

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: In-Person at **9 & 11 AM CURRENTLY** (Subject to change)

WORSHIP IS LIVESTREAMED AT BOTH SERVICES (See p. 2)

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

Contemporary Program Coordinator: Mark Villecco

Director of Music: Irina Shmeleva, irina@lpcumc.org

Office Administrator: Linda Livingood

Accounting and Finance: Marilyn Seiders

Children's Ministry Coordinator: Barbara Leas

Nursery: Kathi Ernst

Custodian: Carl Madeira

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

Church Office Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 10-1 pm

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

Fax line 610-777-4309

Voicemail: Church Office 10

Web: www.lpcumc.org

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

For urgent messages, use voicemail, please.

Let's do good to all people.



Galatians 6:10, NASB

