



Good News!

Church's Office Phone (717)933-4723 Church's Office Fax (717) 933-9223 www.LittleSwatara.org

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A life of Gratitude

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, let's pause and count our many blessings. God has given us shelter, he's provided food, he's given us financial resources, he's given us clothing, he's cared for us while we're sick and the blessings go on and on. As a life of gratitude, how might we share these blessings with others. I'll never forget that day as a young child when our chimney caught fire and we needed to evacuate our home. We needed a place to stay, and our neighbor graciously offered his home. That act of kindness remains with me 'til this day. How about us? When's the last time we took the opportunity to share a meal with others or offered a resolution to a need. In the world around us, we can live that life of gratitude or we can choose to look the other way. I often wonder how many times Jesus would have looked the other way. I am rather convinced there weren't any times he did so. May this be our response to the love and kindness Christ has shown us. Happy Thanksgiving my friends!!! Blessings to you as you serve in our world and live a life of gratitude.

Blessings :-)

Pastor Matt Christ



John E. Ziegler	1
Dylan Himmelberger	2
Robert Smith, Jr	2
Amanda L. Swanger	3
Connie Steinrock	5
Lindsay N. Fessler	6
Terry Donkel	8
Sterling C. Meyer	8
Arlene C. Dundore	9

Joan James	9	Samuel Forry, Jr.	16
Marvin Luckenbill	9	Cheryl Straw	17
Lauretta Walborn	9	David Younker	18
Linda Jean Cass	12	Julie Markle	20
Christine Doig	12	Darrell Younker	22
Alex J. Donkel	12	Tanya R. Feathers	22
Bradley M. Bechtold	13	Jonathan Bicksler	23
Dane W. Bicher	13	Matthew Christ	23
Michael J. Peace	13	Richard Frantz, Jr.	26
Susan Benedetti	14	Lisa M. Gagliano	26
Charlene Anspach	14	John Kauffman	27
Todd A. Rebman	14	Maya Bicksler	28
Amelia Dettwiler	15	John M. Wise	28



Pastor's
Office Hours

NEW OFFICE HOURS

9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Tue.-Thurs.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this month's Newsletter. The deadline for the next edition is the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Open to all. Feel free to share Little Swatara Church related events, thoughts, pictures of past events, articles summarizing past and future events, or anything else.

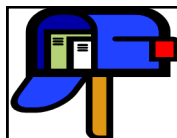
Email: secretary@littleswatara.org



NOTE - COLLEGE STUDENTS

Parents, if you have a son or daughter attending college this year, please leave an address with the secretary so we can support them with cards and letters of encouragement throughout the coming year.

**Please remember to
check your church
mailbox!**



UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 4 - Christmas Bazaar

Nov. 7 - Leadership Team Meeting

Nov. 11 - 1:00 PM 50+ Club meeting

Nov. 13 - Every Member Council Meeting

Nov. 15 - Newsletter Deadline

Nov. 17 - 3:00 PM Bethel Food Pantry

Nov. 18 - 9:00 AM Women's Christmas Brunch at Country Fare Cottage

Nov. 19 - 12 Noon Church Potluck Meal

Nov. 21 - 9:00 AM Women's Fellowship mtg.

Nov. 22 - 7:00 PM Community Thanksgiving Eve Service at Salem Reformed Church, Bethel, PA

Nov. 23 - THANKSGIVING

Nov. 25 - Men's Prayer Breakfast / café

Nov. 28 - Ministry Team Minutes due

Help Wanted



"Do you love Jesus? Do you love working with children? Little Swatara Preschool is looking for volunteers in our classrooms! If interested please contact Sara Bryant at:

sara.bryant@littleswatara.org"



The Gathering Place

is in need of volunteers. Contact Patty Timmins if you can help with this important ministry of Little Swatara to the community of Bethel.

"Look forward and be hopeful, look backward and be thankful, look down and be helpful, look up and be humble."

—Unknown

EVERY MEMBER COUNCIL MEETING

November 13th, 2023

7:00 PM

Agenda

Reports

Pastor Matt
Gathering Place
3rd Quarter Financial
Gymnasium Committee

Business

Pastoral Support Package
2024 Budget
supported motion from Stewardship and Property regarding roof repair and lawn mower.

Answer: (See 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV) C



Can you help? Little Swatara is in need of a Cemetery chairperson. Please contact Richard Yenser

I have a great need for Christ; I have a great Christ for my need.

—Count Zinzendorf



The 2024 Offering Envelopes will be arriving shortly. Please let Jean Myers know if you no longer wish to receive offering envelopes **or** if you would like to begin using envelopes in 2024. There is nothing to do if you are currently using envelopes and wish to continue. Contact Jean at: Jean351@aol.com or church mailbox #113

When Bad Weather Arrives



and a decision is made to cancel Sunday services, the congregation shall be notified immediately. An announcement will be placed on the Little Swatara church website:

<http://www.LittleSwatara.org>

The announcement will also be added to Little Swatara's Facebook page. A message will be sent out to all those on the church's E-mail list.

Information Updates from Little Swatara



The next meeting of Women's Fellowship will be on Tuesday, Nov. 21st at 9:00 a.m.



The next Widows luncheon will be Tuesday, Nov. 14th 11:30 a.m.
The Country Fare Restaurant
Myerstown, PA



Community Thanksgiving Eve Service

November 22nd at 7:00 PM
at
Salem Reformed Church
8361 Lancaster Avenue
Bethel, PA



There's a beauty in being a member of a church. It brings an even greater connectedness. It offers a fellowship with other believers that is second to none. It demonstrates your dedication to the body of Christ. Whether you choose to transfer your membership or reaffirm your faith or enter the baptismal waters, please contact Pastor Matt or sign up in the narthex with your contact information. Classes will begin once we identify the attendees and find the best meeting time.

A Family Prayer

Lord, behold our family here assembled.
We thank you for this place in which we dwell
for the love that unites us,
for the peace accorded us this day,
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,
for the work, the health, the food, and bright
skies
that make our lives delightful
for our friends in all parts of the earth. Amen

—Robert Louis Stevenson



Please join us for the Women's Christmas Brunch

We will be gathering on Saturday, November 18, 2023 at 9am
at the Country Fare Cottage in Myerstown, PA

There is a sign-up sheet in the church narthex

For more information or if you need a ride,
please contact anyone in Women's Fellowship or
call the church office

2023 Christmas Greetings for Stockings

Stockings are placed in the narthex for home-bound persons, group home residents, and those in assisted living / elderly homes. Our goal is to fill them with Christmas cards thus giving some cheer to the recipients that cannot attend church for various reasons. Cards may be placed in stockings from Sunday, November 12th to Sunday, December 10th. Cards and a small gift will be taken to shut-ins during the Christmas Season.



MARY BASHORE	JOHN KELLY
DOROTHY LUTZ	RANDY KEENEY
VERA GROSS	LAURETTA WABORN
ANNETTA KEENEY	DARRELL YOUNKER
THELMA KEENEY	PAUL SWEIGART
MAE ZIMMERMAN	
RICHARD & ARLENE DUNDORE	
NOLAN & DORIS KEENEY	
PASTOR MATT, DENISE & FAMILY	

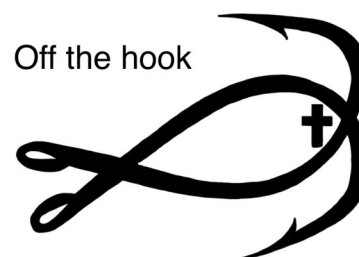
Any questions or additions please contact:
Dianne High or Sharon Dosch

Bible Quiz

Fill in the blank: "Rejoice always, pray continually, give _____ in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

- A. alms
- B. praise
- C. thanks
- D. offerings

See page 3 for answer



What a wonderful time of worship and the word we've been having in our time together at 8:30 in the fellowship hall. Tables are set up as you'd see at any given potluck meal and there's food, yes food and of course coffee. A huge shout out to Allen Rebman for providing our beverages. There's always fruit like blueberries or apples or oranges and cookies or donuts or pastries. The atmosphere is very laid back and we begin with prayer followed by our offering and media driven worship; which simply means the music is on the screen. Then we just talk about the catch of the day. So far we've looked at such words as broken, fear and loved. Following to end our time together, we offer discussion questions to ponder for the week. It's been a small crowd and the presence of God has been felt. This is a great opportunity to invite a friend that hasn't been to church. The music has been contemporary with selections from Chris Tomlin, Elevation



Poinsettias to Help Decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas

Red, white, pink or marbled poinsettias are available for purchase at a cost of \$7.00 each to enhance the worship area during the Christmas season. Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex by Sunday November 26th. Checks payable to Little Swatara Church of the Brethren or cash to Pam Gerberich. Pick-up after Christmas Eve services on December 24.



November Mission of the month is Barnabas Fund

Our November Mission of the Month is the Barnabas Fund. This fund was established to share resources with congregations who express a ministry-driven need. Barnabas Fund supports Atlantic North East's four "Mission Churches"... Alpha & Omega church in Lancaster, Brooklyn First, Germantown, and Harrisburg First. Grants are generally awarded to outreach ministries that are located in an area that is economically challenged and may have limited resources. There also must be clear evidence of responsible stewardship with current finances, and notable efforts at reaching others in the community with the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. More about the fund can be found at www.ane-cob.com under "Special Funds, Scholarships & Gifts."



Sunshine Box

Everyone experiences the feelings of despair, anxiety, distress, or even hopelessness at times. Beginning in December, a "Sunshine Box" will be placed in the prayer room in the rear of the sanctuary. All are welcome to remove a Bible verse scroll from the box when dealing with these negative feelings. Keep the scroll to be used as a constant and encouraging reminder that....God is always with you.

2024 DIRECTORY

NEEDED: any corrections or changes for your family listing in our upcoming 2024 directory.

- Name changes
- Address changes
- Change in phone number (*please indicate if number is a cell phone*)
- Email address (*if desired*)
- New births/adoptions
- Marriages
- Address for child or children in college or military

Please submit all changes by December 1st to Church Secretary, Connie Davis, or a member of the Directory Committee:

Dianne High - Box 74

or

Michelle Snyder - Box 196



District Conference 2023 Briefing by Pam Gerberich

The ANE (Atlantic Northeast District) is the district that represents Little Swatara Church of the Brethren to the wider conference of churches. Alane Riegel, Mike Peace, and Pam Gerberich were the representatives to district conference this year. Prior to conference there was a Delegate briefing, Bible Study on 1 Peter 3. 8 -9, and a worship service. At the worship service on Friday evening Shawn O'Brien from West Green Tree Church of the Brethren challenged each of us to look beyond "the differences" and focus on similarities, find the common ground. He challenged us to think beyond our own individual preferences and to yield to what is best for the community of faith following Jesus Christ. Also on Friday evening pastors with 10, 25, and 50 years of ordination were recognized for their faithful service. Pastor Matt was recognized for being ordained for 10 years. Also some may remember John Miller, he has been ordained for 10 years and serves at Mohrsville.

The theme for this year was "The Tie That Binds". Delegates heard reports from the commissions in the district and then as we sat around the tables we answered questions related to each of these ministries. The Commissions are Church Development, Ministry, Nurture, Witness and Outreach, and Stewardship.

In business items there was the acceptance of 3 congregations leaving the district -- Lewiston COB, Akron COB, and New Beginnings COB. Their disorganization was accepted but some opposed this on a note of sadness.

The budget for 2024 was approved. Each congregation is asked to pay \$55.00 per member to the district to support the ministries of the district. There was a call to challenge ever member to give an additional \$1 per week above what the congregation has committed to the ANE district. The congregations are also called to support Seeds of Faith at \$5 per average worship attendance and Camp Swatara at \$7.50 per member donations. Bethany Theological Seminary, Brethren Homes, COBYS Family Services and Mission & Ministry Board are also areas that congregations are encouraged to support. Would you consider the challenge of additional monies to support the ministries of the ANE District?

Are you aware of the ministries that the district is involved in? Older Adult Fellowship & Activities, Youth ministries, Stewardship University, Women's Spring Fellowship, Urban Ministries Initiative, Women's Camp, Hispanic Leadership Team, Church 2 Church, Pastoral Placement, Disaster Response, Church planting & Rebirth, Seeds of Faith Fund, Barnabas Fund, Helping Hands Benevolence Fund Grants, Facilities Assistance and Grants. More information can be found on the district Website at <http://www.ane-cob.org>.

In the afternoon there was a time of questions and answers with Pete Kontra ,district executive and Jim Grossnickle-Batterton, District Board Chair. There was an insight session presented by Ryan Braught on looking at our changing world and involving us in discussion at our tables of how things are changing. Reports were shared from Elizabethtown College, Camp Swatara, Eder Financial , Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center, Historical Committee. There was time to celebrate the retirements of Kay Weaver from the District offices and Mark Cunningham from

Continued on page 10.....

Reflections

by Richard E. Frantz

As promised last month, I plan to discuss our church library in this month's Reflections. So take out your October church newsletter and check your answers to the quiz I provided.

In the True-False section, number one is *false*. Numbers two through eight are *true*. (How are you doing so far?)

In the Completion section:

Judy Emerich is our church librarian.

The library is located next to the **Oak Classroom**.

The big red books are our monthly newsletters. We have them bound every three years. Incidentally, we bind our Sunday morning bulletins every year. Those can be found in the book cases with glass doors. You are welcome to use them to check specific things that happened over the years.

A fiction book is based on a writer's ideas, imagination and opinion.

A non-fiction book is based on facts.

Before our congregation built our spacious new facility in 1963-64, our forebears provided a library for us to read. At Schubert Meeting House the library was up front right next to the stairway leading to the basement. That book case is now in our present library. It is one of the three with glass doors. I remember that seventy years ago, I read every *Hardy Boys* book available in the Schubert library. Since I seldom worshipped in the other three meeting houses, I cannot remember where those libraries were.

Today our library provides many more possibilities. We continue to provide pleasurable fiction selections. Upstairs in the foyer, there is a mobile cart with various titles, both fiction and non-fiction. You do not need our librarian, Judy Emerich, there to check them out. It is based on the honor system. Take it when you wish and return it when you are finished with it.

Although many Little Swatara members and attenders subscribe to our denomination's *Messenger*, we have been keeping a copy of those magazines since 1962 for those who want to read articles and check the pages listing memberships, wedding anniversaries, deaths, and minister placements. Those are placed on a top shelf, so ask Judy to assist you in getting them.

Ladies, do you enjoy reading novels by writers such as Beverly Lewis and Karen Kingsberry? The library has them for you.

Parents, are you aware of the many dozens of selections for your children? The library has them for you.

Some folks like reading materials by Joyce Meyer. Check out the availability. One would expect a church library to have materials in church history, theology, etc. It is true, our library has myriad possibilities in those areas.

If video tapes and DVDs are your thing, check the library's offerings.

If there is a resource you would like that our library does not have, request that the library purchase a copy. If possible, the church will purchase a copy for the permanent collection.

Remember, the library is here for you to use.

What goes into keeping the cemetery at Little Swatara in top notch condition.



~When the death call is received from the funeral home, or the family, a date, time of funeral, location of funeral and approximate arrival time at cemetery is noted. You may need to talk with the family to find out if there is a stone in place (It is easier if a pre-need marker is in place.) or if they own multiple plots. Have the funeral home contact Esterly Burial Vaults Company to reserve date, time and get a price.

Little Swatara has **Dennis Emerich** to thank. Following Lester Bashore's resignation April 17, 2001, Dennis took over soon after with training from Lester. In that time span, there were

[illegible]

eighty-eight funerals and twenty-one cremations. Each grave site had to be leveled and grass planted. There were thirty-eight cemetery lots sold with Jean Eberly and Judy Emerich typing the deeds. The deeds go to the moderator and church clerk to be signed and notarized before being taken to the family and payment is collected. Fifty-four foundations for flat markers were dug and concreted. (Record keeping for this started in 2004.) 4 concrete collars were installed around flat markers.

The large bushes in the center circle were kept trimmed until Sharon Dosch priced and coordinated the new landscaping in 2021. With the help of Sharon and Gary Emerich, a small memorial garden was constructed at the entrance of the cemetery using a bench donated by Ruth Keeney in memory of Paul Zigler.

Under Dennis' service, rules and regulations have been updated; sales of cemetery lots and burials have been recorded; maps are updated, and copies are kept in the church office; a list of responsibilities for the chairperson has been made.

A HUGE **THANK YOU** TO DENNIS. LITTLE SWATARA IS MOST GRATEFUL FOR THE UNTIRING SERVICE YOU HAVE QUIETLY AND EFFICIENTLY PROVIDED OVER THE PAST TWENTY ONE AND A HALF YEARS.

Jean Myers

Postscript: Dennis would like to say thank you to Lester for covering during vacations for several years. Also thanks to Tony Fazio for mowing and trimming the cemetery.

District Conference 2023 Briefing *(continued)*

COBYS. We also celebrated that 300 years ago in December, the first Baptisms in the states took place in Germantown. We have a rich history as a church. Elizabethtown College is home to Brethren Heritage Center which is a great place to spend an afternoon exploring our heritage.

Kathy Brode will be moderator for the 2024 year and her theme is one that builds on this year's theme of "The Tie that Binds". The theme is "Seeking to Live as Christ's Ambassadors in this World."

I encourage you to think about being involved in the activities of the district. There are areas where we can serve as well as wonderful programs of enrichment that are available to all ages. Watch the newsletters and bulletins for upcoming events. If you are interested in more Bible training think about enrolling in classes that can lead you towards serving in ministry through Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center.



Annual

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4th

8 am ~ 1 pm

Little Swatara Church of the Brethren

31 Rehdersburg, Road, Bethel, PA 19507

There is something for everyone
Breakfast and lunch items will be available

COME and START YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY



Little Swatara Preschool

November 2023



Autumn Greetings to our Preschool Family and Friends!

The holidays are upon us and we will be counting our blessings throughout the month of November. Little Swatara Preschool has so much to be thankful for - our students and their families, our staff, volunteers, the board of directors, Little Swatara Church Pastor, secretary, custodians, treasurer, and the church congregation who gives so much love, support and encouragement to the program. We are MOST thankful for the gift of God's love and His son, Jesus! What are YOU thankful for? We hope you'll take some time to count your blessings with your children this month.

Fall has been a busy season here at LSP. The children are settled into their classroom routines and we are so pleased with their progress since the beginning of the year. We have had field trips, our Fall Fest, fire safety drills, our Sub Sale Fundraiser, and lots of other fun learning activities. Read on to learn about what the month of November has in store for your preschooler. As always, thank you for choosing Little Swatara Preschool and sharing your precious children with us. They are dearly loved!

Blessings, Miss Sara ❤️

Thanksgiving Vacation

Preschool will be closed on the following dates for the Thanksgiving Holiday:

Wednesday, November 22nd, Thursday, November 23rd, Friday, November 24th

We will return to class on Monday, November 27th.

We wish you a beautiful Thanksgiving Day with family and friends!



Thanksgiving Feasts

Each class will have their own "feast" to remember the Pilgrim's thanksgiving celebration after their first year in America. The classes will celebrate on either Monday, November 20th, or Tuesday, November 21st. Please watch for an announcement regarding an item your child has volunteered to bring to their classroom feast. This could range from a food item to paper supplies. If you are unable to supply the item, please inform your child's teacher. Thank you for supporting our classroom celebrations throughout the year!



There are many times throughout the classroom session that the children pray together. We would like to share a few of our prayers the students say:

Snack Time Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for the world so sweet, thank you for the food we eat, thank you for the birds that sing, thank you God for everything!
Amen

Start of Day Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for this brand new day. Give me loving words to say. Keep me safe at work and play. Show me how to live your way.
Amen

End of Day Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for my friend next door and my friend across the street. Please help me to be a friend to everyone I meet.
Amen



Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!
Psalm 107:1

THANK YOU!

Thank you to all of our preschool families and friends that helped with the R&K Sub Sale. 649 Subs and Sandwiches were sold and the funds raised a profit of \$1,895.25. Through your generous support, we are able to purchase classroom resources and essential educational supplies.

**THANK YOU!**

We send out a big thank you to the Bicksler family for hosting a wonderful field trip at Wheelcrest Farm for our Preschool classes.

We also send a big thank you to Miss Jennifer for hosting our Pre K classes at Oak Nut Farm for their fantastic, fall field trip!



We are so grateful for our volunteers that give of their time each week in our Pre K and Preschool classrooms. Alane Riegel, Becky Rebman, and Chloe Brown help in our Preschool class and Debra Wengert and Patti Timmins help in our Pre K classroom. Thank you to all of these wonderful ladies for sharing your time and love with the children each week! The students love having you in their classes!

Inclement Weather




Please familiarize yourself with our INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSING POLICY. It can be found in the Preschool Handbook which you received at the beginning of the school year (and is also on our LSP website.) Policies for closings and modified class schedules are listed there. We will also make an attempt to post on our Preschool Facebook page if there is a closing or modified schedule due to inclement weather.

**Illness Reminder**

Please do not send students who have a temperature of 100.4 or more. If vomiting/diarrhea have occurred within the past 24 hours, please keep your child home from preschool. Thank you for helping us keep all of our friends as healthy as possible!

Little Swatara Church of the
Brethren

November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 8:30am Off the Hook Service/Fellowship Hall	30	31	1 8:45am FH / Women's Exercise Class 10:00am FH / Seated Exercise Class	2 8:30am Quilting 12:00pm Craft Group / FH	3 12:00pm Christmas bazaar setup	4 8:00am Christmas bazaar
5 8:30am Off the Hook Service/Fellowship Hall 10:30am Jr High Youth Sunday	6	7 7:00pm LEADERSHIP TEAM Mtg	8 8:45am FH / Women's Exercise Class 10:00am FH / Seated Exercise Class	9 8:30am Quilting	10	11  1:00pm 50+ club mtg/FH
12 Food pantry collection 8:30am Off the Hook Service/Fellowship Hall 1:00pm W. Lingle / FH & K	13 7:00pm EVERY MEMBER COUNCIL MEETING	14 11:30am Widows Luncheon/Ctry Fare	15 Newsletter Deadline 8:45am FH / Women's Exercise Class 10:00am FH / Seated Exercise Class	16 8:30am Quilting 9:30am Packing food bags for Bethel Food Pantry / Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bethel	17  8:00am Feed Them / Kitchen 3:00pm Bethel Food Pantry 4:00pm R.Brown / FH	18 9:00am C. Anspach / FH 9:00am Women's Christmas brunch / Country Fare 10:30am Trim Healthy Mommas class / Preschool office area
19 8:30am Off the Hook Service/Fellowship Hall 12:00pm Church Potluck Meal / FH	20	21 9:00am women's fellowship meeting	22 8:45am FH / Women's Exercise Class 7:00pm Community Thanksgiving Service / Salem Reformed Church	23  THANKSGIVING Day	24	25 7:00am Men's Prayer Breakfast / Cafe
26 8:30am Off the Hook Service/Fellowship Hall	27	28 Ministry Team Minutes Due	29 8:45am FH / Women's Exercise Class 10:00am FH / Seated Exercise Class	30 8:30am Quilting	1	2 9:00am 50+ club mtg/Christmas banquet / FH & kitchen