



THE LAMPSTAND



Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church

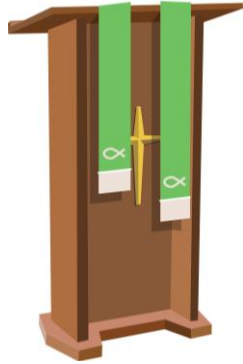
80 Gockley Road ☩☩ Stevens, PA 17578

Volume 19 Number 11

December 2025

Pastor's Meditation

A Season of Hope



There are few things more powerful and life giving as hope. Maybe you are reading this now and you have no or little hope. Perhaps you have lost your job or a loved one or your health is poor.

Maybe you are overworked and don't see meaning in what you are doing. Perhaps you are just depressed because you see everything, including yourself and all around you, decay over time. Politics is as ugly as it has ever been. Well, that's what we see and it surely can be tough.

While we see and experience many wonderful blessings in life which God has given us, the transitory nature of our life on this earth and the frequent pain and confusion (which happens) can get anyone down from time to time.

One day I was driving through the beautiful fields of Lancaster County on a magnificent day. The sun was shining in a bright blue sky and the temperature was enjoyably mild. The cows and animals occupied the fields. The creek gently flowed. It was a perfect day.

Suddenly all the problems of life occurred to me and the thought of people dying began to haunt me so that even though the sky was bright, a dark cloud seemed to cover everything in my mind. I began to panic and was afraid. I arrived at my destination and greeted the people I was visiting and all was clear. I was brought back to hope.

When Martin Luther was hiding in a castle in the woods from those who wanted to kill him, he said that he was beset by demons. As he prayed the Name of Jesus, his

Inside this issue

Pastor's Meditation.....	1-3
Readings & Psalms.....	4
Parish Notes.....	4
Hymn of the Month.....	5-6
Prayer Corner.....	7
Usher Schedule.....	8
Church Council.....	8
Sunday School Scoop.....	9
Calendar.....	10
Thank You.....	11
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	12
Contribution Opportunities.....	13
Recipe.....	14
Coloring Page.....	15
Important Contact Information.....	16

NEWSLETTER

ARTICLES

**January's newsletter
article deadlines will be
Thursday December 18th**

Your articles can be emailed in

fears dispelled and disappeared just like the smoke and mist did from the Thuringian hills in the distance on that day in medieval Germany.

My purpose in this article is to inform you that there is hope, that God loves you, although the **appearances are often to the contrary**. The trick is that there is no pamphlet, doctrine or sermon which will convince you of this. Faith in God is a gift from God. *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God- not the result of works, so that no one may boast.”*

–Ephesians 2: 8

There is hope because God, who is eternal and all powerful, loves you despite all the turmoil which we experience. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” - John 3: 16. This is the meaning of Christmas.

One of the problems is that no one can explain this no matter how long we study Scripture. There is much mystery in our relationship with God. Martin Luther used to say, “That which is above is none of our business” and talked about the “hidden” nature of God in the Cross of Christ even though God is revealed in Jesus and the Word. At the end of time all will be revealed. Until then, we walk in faith.

Hope

The best way to acquire faith is to pray that God bless you with it. Be on the look out for those whom God sends to you to be **messengers of hope** in your life. Don't be blind and deaf when God sends you a message. Maybe it's an article in the paper, maybe it's a word from a clerk at the grocery store or somewhere where you least expect it. One place you can expect to receive hope is in God's Holy Church. Find a church and go fill up on faith when your tank is empty. Then stick around and share some of that endless hope with someone else who needs to hear it. Believe it or not, probably a lot of people are more hopeless than even you! Many times God uses the once hopeless to be messengers of hope for others.

Faith

Beware of associating with people who think they have God all figured out. These folks are dangerous. In order to have a real faith we have to acknowledge our real doubts. One of my favorite verse in Scripture is I Thessalonians 4: 13, in which we

learn that we are to “grieve but not as people without hope.” Paul understands that we grieve. It’s alright to grieve. Even Jesus wept in John 11: 35 at the death of Lazarus just prior to raising him from the dead. You and I are certainly not as strong as Jesus. So go ahead and cry! Paul tells us, however, that we have hope even though we hurt. Again, no one can explain this. Yet this is the teaching and belief of the Holy Church and it is something for you to hold on to today even though you might have no clue that such a wonderful thing could happen to you.

Pray to God; or as Luther said, “Pray, let God worry.” Pray the Name of Jesus and your fears will fade like mist on the hills. God loves you and so does God’s Holy Church. You were not created to die but to live in the Holy Spirit of God Almighty.



When we say “Merry Christmas” we are really saying, “This and every season can be a season of hope in Christ.”

Also, it is easy to develop the blues by yourself. You are not alone in Christ. Seek out those whom you trust and who can comfort as well as challenge you. Don’t sit around alone moping because then it’s much easier for the devil to grab

you by the tail. Everyone, including myself, gets down and discouraged. Through the great power of the Holy Spirit, the wind, the breath of God which created life itself (Genesis) and continues to sustain us today, we live forever like the wind.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him....The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it...He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.” - John 1: 1-3a, 5, 10

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea....The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

- Psalm 46: 1-2, 11 -Amen

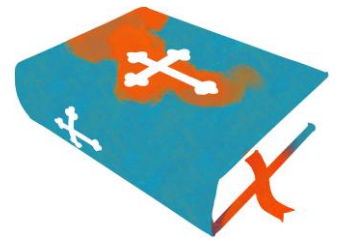


Bible Readings for the month of December

December 7 – 2 Advent: Isaiah 11:1-10, Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19, Romans 15:4-13 & Matthew 3:1-12

December 14 – 3 Advent: Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm 146:5-10, James 5:7-10 & Matthew 11:2-11

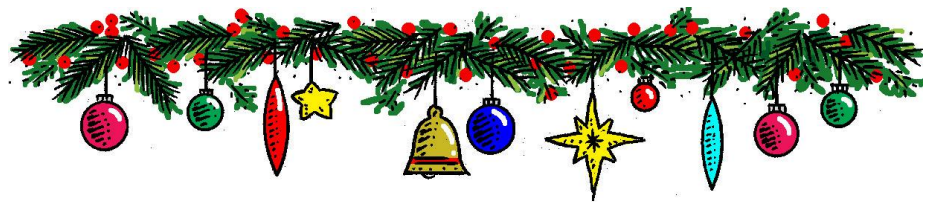
December 21 – 4 Advent: Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19, Romans 1:1-7 & Matthew 1:18-25



December 24 – *Christmas Eve*: Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14 & Luke 2:1-14

December 25 – *Christmas Day*: Isaiah 62:6-12, Psalm 97, Titus 3:4-7 & Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

December 28 – 1 Christmas: Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 148, Hebrews 2:10-18 & Matthew 2:13-23



Parish Notes

Decorating the Church, Christmas Party and Congregational Meeting

‘Tis the Season. We are hoping to see everyone on December 7th after worship we will be decorating the Church for the Season.

After everything is hung, we will have the Christmas Party and a meal at 11:00. If you are planning to attend the meal please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex by Sunday November 30th or call the Church office (717-336-8800).

On December 14th after worship we will have our Annual Congregational Meeting at which time we will elect Church Council members and discuss the 2026 Resource Allocation (Budget). We hope to see you participating in these important congregational events.

Christmas Worship

December 24 4:00 pm Family Service of Holy Communion

December 24 7:00 pm Candlelight Service of Holy Communion

December 28 9:00 am Readings and Carols

Hymn of the Month for December

“Joy to the World”

The accidental Christmas hymn

According to church history, Isaac Watts was one of the most prolific and celebrated creators of hymns. However, his most famous creation, “*Joy to the World*” was born of coincidence, rather than desire. In 1719, Watts published The Psalms of David a collection of poems where each verse was based on a psalm. But, instead of translating the original texts of the “Old Testament,” he made some subtle adjustments. His poems referred more explicitly towards the works of Jesus, thus seeking inspiration from the New Testament.



The majority of the hymns of The Psalms of David have now fallen into obscurity, except for the second part of “Psalm 98.” Ironically, the poet had no intention of creating a Christmas carol when he composed the verse. However, in 1836, Lowell Mason composed a riveting melody for this second part and combined with its popularity in the church. “*Joy to the World*” started its journey into the music stratosphere.

The musical origin of “*Joy to the World*” is somewhat mystical. Lowell Mason’s version remains the most prevalently utilized to date, which was the fourth revised interpretation of the carol. Lowell named it “ANTIOCH,” the tune of which is attributed to George Frideric Handel. The choruses of Handel’s oratorio, titled “*Messiah*” shared a chance resemblance with “ANTIOCH.” A theme of this musical accompaniment also portrayed an eerie similarity with the orchestral inception of “*Comfort ye*”, a recitative.

Further, the first four notes also bear a striking similarity to the opening of the choruses “*Glory to God*” and “*Lift up your heads*”, all belonging to the same oratorio. However, this claim has its loose ends, since no autographed score by George Frideric Handel exists. This, added with zero documentary evidence suggesting Handel’s involvement offers “ANTIOCH” the benefit of the doubt. In 1986, John Wilson further unearthed the fact that the initial publication of “*Joy to the World*” was in two separate English collections. One of these versions, titled “*Comfort*” is dated back to 1833. This again creates a theory excluding Lowell Mason from the list of the composer, as his first version is dated three years after.

Although Isaac Watts is well appreciated today, he was considered to be a black sheep back in his time. He severely disturbed the status quo of his contemporary musical culture and was also termed as a heretic for his lyrics. He grew up in a society that consisted only of sections of scriptures and psalms being incorporated with music. Watts broke this hegemony, as he noticed a certain lack of emotion among the congregants who performed it. He hated this monotonous and dull negligence that was prominent upon the faces of the performers. His father challenged him to do something about this, and eventually, he started tweaking his verses, opening a whole new frontier of possibilities.

Another widespread debate that is most associated with this hymn is its origin as a Christmas carol. Although it clearly depicts the Second Coming of Christ, it doesn't have any trivial connection with the Christmas story. However, contrary to popular opinion, there lies a correlation - a "Second Coming" cannot be manifested without a "First Coming." The piece is all about fulfillment, depicting the notions of a supernatural phenomenon, of what could be achieved from its impact. Similarly, Christmas does not only dwell in the past attainments but also looks forward to the grace that was achieved subsequently. The song proclaims the ultimate joy that is yet to be revealed, establishing a strong connection with the festive period.

The poem in focus was an adaptation of "Psalm 98." The poet interpreted this particular verse to celebrate of the impact of the Almighty on the world. After a century, the second part of this verse was adapted to music, which culminated in one of the most celebrated Christmas carols of all time.



Advent

Although the historical record is sketchy, it appears that our Advent arose out of a season of fasting to prepare for baptisms at Epiphany. By the sixth century, an eschatological emphasis was present. Our Advent comprises the four Sundays before Christmas. Each year, the first Sunday contains the theme of readiness for divine judgment, the second Sunday the ministry of John the Baptist, the third Sunday the Baptist's call to a repentant life and only on the fourth Sunday a narrative concerning the birth of Jesus. God comes, in the past in the history of Israel and the incarnation of Jesus, in the present in the word and sacrament of each Sunday, and in the future at the end of all things. The lectionary appoints readings to fit this pattern, and its tone stands in stark contrast to our society's weeks of preparation for Christmas.

Submitted by Vickie Kissinger

PRAYER CORNER

Please pray for the following people:

Linda Netzley, Shannon Brown, Johan Spotts, Ruth Hollinger, Shirley Sweigart, Mike Leed, Betty Cordes, Amy Weik, Molly Brown, Carl Mohler Jr., Jay Weaver, Dave Haldeman, Vivian Gehr, Tom Parrish Sr, Elaine Haldeman, Clair Miller, Skip Hutchinson, Jane Goshert (Home Hospice), Jay Stoltzfus, Theda Raffauf, Mary Weidman, Roy Latshaw, Marty Leed & Family and Fay Weitzel.

Artman Lutheran Home, Ambler: Sally Wealand

Brethren Village: Beverly Sweigart

Ephrata Manor: Iris Weaver, Dorothy Hutchinson, Shirl Tobias and Pauline Sawyer

Gardens at Stevens: Pat & Nevin McQuate

Keystone Villa: Betty Firestine & Janet Hirneisen

Luther Acres Personal Care: Judy Meckley

Johns Hopkins Hospital: Bob Farr

Neffsville Rehab & Nursing: Pauline Martin

Phoebe Berks: Nick Rampolla

Penn State Hospital; Lancaster: Sharlene Miller

Dale Firestone (Hospice Care), Steven Fassnacht, Vickie Kissinger, Barb Mertz, Elsie May Sensenig, Cory Sensenig, Rachel Landis, Carol Schaeffer, Lorna Buohl, Richard Sockriter, Liz Roman-Reich, Mike Messner, John Rachal, David Taimuty, Keith Freeman, Paul Reefer, Helen Blank, William Sockriter, Dave Bentz, Doug Cody, Fred Leathery, Karen Velez, Ron Neidigh, Kara Trowbridge, Mary Morton, Brenda Sweigart, Nancy Bolotine, Bea Hassler, Karen Leonhard, Mary Sanger, Andy & Brenda Gabig, Brian Fetter, Pastor Karen Larson, Brian Kerns, Mary Lou Crum, Bob Bos, Curtis Townsley, Robyn Redcay, Margaret Weller and Cynthia Peters.

Pray also for the grieving families of:

Larry Rabold, Zach Caflin, Bob Weaver, Pastor Conrad Youse, Karen Krater, Vesta Reber, Jean Shober, Joyce Boyer, Joan Wentzel, Jeff Moyer, Anna Weinhold, and Kenton Shaffer.

Ushers for December

December 7 Head: Lowell Yost, Troy Adair and
Alternate: Randy Brubaker

December 14 Head: Vic Richard, Dave Weidman and
Alternate: Nancy Eberly

December 21 Head: Piper Leonhard, Kristi Leonhard and
Alternate: Jean Lausch

December 24 Christmas Eve Head: Linda Weaver, Jill Showalter and
Alternate: Lowell Yost

December 28 Head: Troy Adair, Vic Richard and Alternate: Joan Moore



COUNCIL NOVEMBER 13, 2025

Lowell Yost called the November meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Linda Weaver read Psalm 23 and shared a prayer.

Treasurer Jon Hogan will be researching grant funding towards the parking lot replacement.

Kristi Leonhard reported the garden is done for this season. She did not hear a final weight total from EASS & Peter's Porch for this year.

Andy Leonhard reported the tractor shed was repainted, the Gockley Road front door lock was repaired and an outside receptacle was replaced.

Next Meeting is Thursday December 18th at 6:30 pm. We adjourned the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Council Term ending in 2025: Jill Showalter - 3rd term ends December 2025

If you have any interest in serving on Church Council, please contact Pastor Tim or another Council Member.

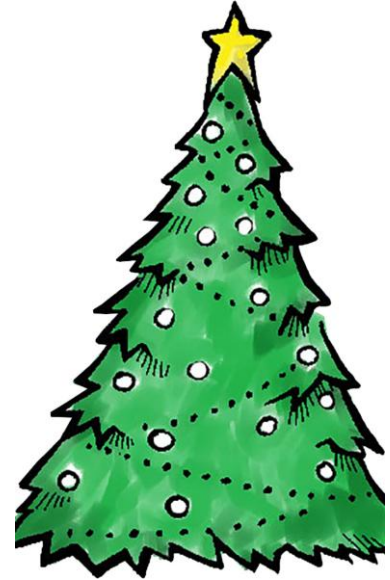
Sunday School Scoop

~ During the past few months, our children's Sunday School class studied several Bible stories including: Creation, The First Sin (Adam & Eve) and Noah's Ark. We explored these stories by reading the Bible and expanded on these themes through games, art and even cooking.

~ In October we also did a Halloween craft and in November the children were able to decorate a stand-up Fall Blessings wooden art display to take home.

~ At the end of November the kiddos began creating decorations for Christmas which we will use to adorn our classroom tree during the Hanging of the Greens on December 7th.

~ We will finish out our 2025 classes learning about the birth of our Savior with the use of Bible stories and videos.



**** NOTE:** There will be no Sunday School classes on December 28th ******

Christmas Gifts for Children

You choose the gift of your choice for newborn up to the age of 15 years old. Return new and unwrapped gifts to the church by Sunday December 14th.

Suggested gifts include coloring books, puzzle books, body wash/lotion and diapers for newborns, toys etc.

There will be box to put the items in by the Sanctuary door in the Narthex. We will deliver them to EASS for their Santa's Room Program. Children will come in and choose the gift they want.

Thank you and God Bless,

Social Ministry.



Sunday

December 7, 14, 21 & 28

9:00 am Church Services



December 7th 10:15 am Hanging of the Greens & 11:00 am Christmas Party

December 14th 10:15 am Annual Congregational Meeting

Final day to bring in EASS toy drive gifts for kids.

December 21st Ahava is playing

2:00 pm Pastor Tim will be preaching at Keystone Villa, Ephrata

December 28th 9:00 am Reading and Carols Service

The Holy Baptism of Maggie Josephine Biles

Tuesday

December 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

6:30 - 8:00 pm Pastor Tim Zoom Bible Study Topic: The Gospel of Luke

December 9th 5:30 pm The Social Ministry Committee Christmas Party at The Lincoln House

Wednesday

December 3, 10 & 17

1:30 – 3:00 pm In Person Bible Study at Mellingers in the Library Topic: Advent

6:00 pm Choir Practice

7:00 pm Bell Choir Practice

December 24th Christmas Eve Day

2:00 pm Pastor Tim will be preaching at The Garden's at Stevens

4:00 pm Family Service of Holy Communion

6:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

6:30 pm Choir Practice

7:00 pm Candlelight Service of Holy Communion

Thursday

December 18th 6:30 pm Council Meeting





To my Mellingers Church Family,

My sincere thanks for all of the prayers and cards during my recent surgery.

Thank you to Pastor Tim for the prayers and visits.

All of the prayers were felt. I went into surgery with "peace".

It's an honor to serve this congregation. Love,
Vickie

Vickie Kissinger our Music Director

COMMUNION



If you can help with Communion set up once in a while please contact Lisa Reed or the Church office.

SCHEDULE

Also we need help to continue our very nice coffee/snack time after Worship. Please contact the Church office if you can help with setting this up and/or with donations of snacks.



Scout Troop 115 Calendar

December 15- Christmas Party (Troop & Pack 115)

March 7, 2026- Spaghetti Supper



December 1
 Scott Engle
 Jeffrey Gehman
 Elle Sawyer

December 2
 Kellie Nichols

December 4
 Thomas Parrish

December 6
 Caitlin Stafford

December 7
 Polly Gunzenhauser

December 8
 Alex Emberger
 Martha Petery

December 9
 Judy Hibshman

December 13
 Nathan Nichols

December 15
 Mary Weidman

December 16
 Barbara Getz
 Verna Kieffer

December 17
 Melissa Weber



December 18
 Grace Burkholder

December 19
 Zoey Cruz

December 22
 Paige Derr

Randy Zerbe

December 26
 Lynn Spotts

December 27
 Shawn Jeffers
 Wendy Zerbe
 Whitney Zerbe

December 28
 Jonah Hogan

December 29
 Gail Harker
 Douglas Leed

December 31
 Haleigh Leisey



December 17
 Mary Latshaw



December 4, 1993 Michael & Judy Hibshman

December 6, 1986 Chris & Tess Freeman

December 9, 1967 Barry & Darlene Kreider

December 16, 1989 Michael & Lisa Reed



January 1 Maddy Brown & Ruth Buchter

January 2 Ashley Leed

January 3 Sherry Stewart

CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITIES AT MELLINGERS

Contributions may be made to the following funds at any time and may also be used to aid people in designating monies for memorials. Should you wish to donate to any of these funds, please place funds in an envelope and provide the name of the fund in which you would like your donation placed, your name and envelope number.

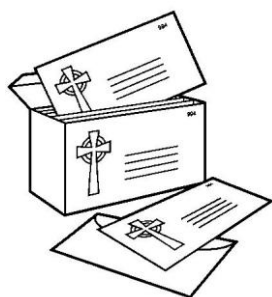
✝ Parking Lot / Driveway

✝ Builders of Hope

✝ Lutheran World Relief

✝ Needy Fund

✝ Maintenance and Building Fund



2026 Giving Envelopes

You will find your envelopes in your mailbox.

Volunteer Opportunities at Church

We are a blessed congregation to have hard working individuals involved in our volunteer opportunities. If you ever feel like lending an extra hand, here are the areas:

·During Sunday Services: Communion Assistant, Scripture Reader, Soundboard & Video operator

·Worship & Music: Choir, Handbell Choir, & Special music

·Coffee Time: Servers, Donations of Baked Goods or Monetary Contributions

·Discipleship Committee: Help with fund raisers like the Goat Program and Great Eight Lenten giving.

·Social Ministry Committee: Help serve at social functions and memorial service luncheons. Help with Lutheran World Relief collections.



Sausage Pinwheels

An idea for Christmas morning breakfast

Serves: 32 **Prep Time:** 15 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

These pinwheels are quick, easy and only require 4 ingredients.

Ingredients

1 pound pork Sausage

2 (8 ounce) package refrigerated crescent rolls

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened

1 cup shredded Cheddar Cheese (you can use another flavor of cheese)

Instructions

1. Add the sausage to a large skillet over medium high heat. Cook until browned and crumbled, about 10 minutes. Drain the excess grease and set aside.
2. Lay out a sheet of wax paper and spray it with cooking spray. Unroll on package of crescent rolls onto the wax paper. Pinch the perforations together to create a seamless sheet of dough.
3. Spread half of the softened cream cheese evenly over the dough, leaving a 1/2 -inch border around the edges. Sprinkle half the cooked sausage and half the shredded cheese over the cream cheese.
4. Using the wax paper to assist you, carefully roll the dough lengthwise into a log, encasing the filling. Wrap the log tightly in plastic wrap.
5. Repeat the process with the remaining ingredients to create a second log.
6. Refrigerate the wrapped logs for at least an hour or until they are firm enough to slice.
7. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Remove the logs from the refrigerator and unwrap them. Using a sharp knife, cut the logs into ½-inch-thick slices and arrange them on a baking sheet with space in between them.
8. Bake the pinwheels in the preheated oven for 10-15 minutes or until they're golden brown.
9. Remove the pinwheels from the oven and let them cool slightly before serving. Enjoy!



Important contact information

MINISTERS: The people of Mellingers

STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Craven (717) 738-3838 Cell: (717) 468-9049

Director of Christian Education: Diane Adair (717) 715-3124

Director of Music: Vickie Kissinger (717) 354-6575 vickiekissinger@gmail.com

Secretary: Ashley Weinhold (717) 336-8800 mellingerslutheran@gmail.com

Treasurer: Jon Hogan (814) 289-1646

Peace be with you!

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Worship Service

9 am

CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Lowell Yost (717) 471-7758

Vice-President: Troy Adair (717) 715-3126

Randy Brubaker (717) 314-3449

Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895

Mike Haller (717) 368-1572

Shawn Jeffers (717) 278-5000

Vic Richard (717) 951-8977

Kristi Leonhard (717) 940-7535

Piper Leonhard (717) 419-5691

Jill Showalter (717) 336-2839

Linda Weaver (717) 587-1319

Recording Secretary: Ashley Weinhold (717) 336-8800

LEADERS

Altar Guild: Kimberley Craven Chair: (717) 738-3838

Blood Pressure Check Coordinator: Susan Specht (717) 336-4601

Camp Person: Kimberley Craven (717) 738-3838

Coffee Social: Kristi Leonhard (717) 940-7535

Communion Set-Up: Lisa Reed (717) 341-1663

Finance Committee: Vic Richard (717) 951-8977, Pat Haller (717) 368-4975, Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895

Financial Secretary: Jill Showalter (717) 336-2839 **Assistant Financial Secretary:** Dawn Henry (610) 914-3218

Lawn Care: Pat Jeffers (717) 336-8170

Newsletter Editor: Office Staff (717) 336-8800

Offering Counters: Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895

Scout Liaison: David Haldeman (717) 733-8551

Scripture Reader Coordinator: Anita Soto (717) 419-5520

Snow Removal: Andy Leonhard (717) 336-8800

Special Flowers: Pat Haller (717) 368-4975

Treasurer: Jon Hogan (814) 289-1646 **Assistant Treasurer:** Skip Hutchinson (717) 733-5029

Web Site Editor: Office Staff (717) 336-8800

Wedding Coordinator: Brittany Hartlove (717) 715-3127

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Discipleship In Life: Robert H. Getz, Jr. (717) 925-4938

Endowment/Memorial: Randy Brubaker (717) 733-9222

Personnel: Nancy Eberly (717) 945-2895

Property: Andy Leonhard (717) 336-8800

Social Ministry: Shirley Sweigart (717) 538-1946

Worship and Music: Nancy Hain (717) 336-6270

Youth Group Advisors: Kristi & Paul Leonhard (717) 733-1260 Cell: (717) 940-7535 Pastor Tim (717) 738 3838

SCOUT LEADERS

Troop 115: Sheldon Brubaker (717) 468-5333 smb115@ptd.net

Pack 115: Daniel Marszalek. (717)-405-9724 scoutleaderdan115@yahoo.co



SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

WEBSITE: www.mellingers.org

FACEBOOK: Check us out on Facebook. We are listed under Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church.