
The Parish Echo

Millcreek Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 399, 221 N. Sheridan Rd., Newmanstown, PA 17073

January 2025

“Helping God restore and renew our community, our congregation, and ourselves.”

Pastor: Rev. Scott Paradise
Cell: 540-335-1693
Home: 717-628-1241
pastorscottparadise@gmail.com
Church: 610-589-2570
Office Administrator: Linda Sheetz
Secretary@millcreeklutheran.com



Lay Leader: Susan Long
Website: Frank Hoffman
www.millcreeklutheran.com
Parish Echo Editors:
Aislinn & David Staaby
mlc.parish.echo@gmail.com

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:00 AM

WORSHIP AT 10:15 AM

You can **listen to the worship service** over the phone patch at 9:30 AM. Just dial **717-628-0125**. You will hear a message welcoming you to Millcreek. At that point you are connected to our church sound system, so just stay on the line.



PARADISE CORNER

One of the challenges I face in writing these little reflections is gravitating toward events at the beginning of the month. This usually comes at the expense of events at the end of the month. Events at the beginning of the month seem like a quick win over writer's block, but that sometimes leaves events at the end of the month without the same focus.

This issue of *The Echo* is the one for January and therefore coincides with the start of the calendar year. The start of the calendar year is always a good time to refocus and, when refocusing, it is always a good idea to begin with the end in mind. The important date that we have to consider at the end of January is this congregation's annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 26.

Our *Constitution and By-Laws* list eleven (11) specific things only a meeting of the congregation can authorize. Most of these are not regular occurrences (e.g., calling a pastor and buying or selling real estate, etc.). Two (2) of these specific things are regular occurrences. They are approving an annual budget and electing members of the Congregation Council. These also help us refocus on the "Helping God restore and renew our congregation" part of our mission statement.

Doing those two (2) things is an annual requirement and certainly the bare minimum, but the annual Congregational meeting does more. The annual Congregational Meeting gives us a chance to look gratefully at the many good things we accomplish because of those who give generously in many ways Time, talent, and treasure being the most tried and true. The annual Congregational Meeting is a time to look at our overall work in connection with our mission and see if we are fulfilling our mission. If we find that we are fulfilling our mission, then we step into the next year continuing the work. If we find that we need to reset the fulfilling of our mission, then we step into the next year with eyes refocused on what God calls us to do in this time and place.

I have my thoughts about answers to where we find ourselves, but these are not my questions to answer alone. The answers are with all of us together. That is why the task of the annual Congregational Meeting is so crucial and well placed within our annual calendar.

God's work through this congregation goes on all year long. Getting a chance to look at how we are helping most faithfully with God's work is a gift that comes during the time we may have already forgotten Christmas gifts, but when we hear the stories of God's ongoing gift to us in the baptism, presentation, and transfiguration of Jesus. We glance back to Bethlehem's manger and forward to Calvary's cross.

The church continually celebrates God's good news, which, in the church's wisdom has helped resolve my conflict. January starts and ends with opportunities to see the fullness of God at work in our community, in our congregation, and in our selves. The beginning and the end matter, but so does everything else in between.

Live as children of light!
Pastor Scott Paradise

PRAYER LIST

Please remember the following **MLC members** in your prayers: Lorraine Eberley, Debbie Hartman, Violet Hepler, Abbie Keath, the Leibig Family, Ronald Merkel, Barbara Potteiger, Norm Sharp, Debra Webber, Stewart Wolf, Aaron Yiengst, Devon Yiengst, and Michael Yiengst Jr., Greer Zellers.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Annual Congregational Meeting

Please see the below announcement regarding the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 26th following worship.

I want to express my gratitude to the council for their dedication and hard work over the past year, particularly in the development of our annual budget.

In recent years, MLC has been operating with a substantial deficit, and we understand that this is not a sustainable approach for the future. This year, we were faced with some tough decisions – decisions that were not made lightly – as we worked to reduce the deficit we are currently facing.

Acknowledging the deficit, it is essential to have a plan for the future. Council approved a committee to create a culture of generosity which begins with creating a Strategic Plan. This committee is focused on identifying immediate action steps to address the 2025 deficit. The success of this initiative will help ensure the long-term financial stability of our church.

We understand that any budget changes can raise questions and concerns. With that said, it is important for you, the congregation, to attend the upcoming congregational meeting on January 26th, where we will discuss the 2025 budget and immediate strategies to address the significant deficit.

Additionally, we have three open positions on the council for 2025. Serving on council is a wonderful opportunity to bring new ideas to life and have your voice heard. I strongly encourage everyone to consider taking on a position, especially if you feel that you can contribute to the future of our amazing church! - Susan Long

Weather Alerts

In the event of bad weather, please listen to WLBR 1270AM for a notice of cancellation of church services. Pastor Scott will send out an email to those on the email address list. You can also tune to Channel 27 WHTM (Comcast Channel 12) for notices of church service cancellation, which scrolls across the bottom of the TV screen. When church is cancelled due to the weather, there is no one at the church for a service on the Phone Patch.

PREVIOUS MONTH'S HAPPENINGS:

Congratulations to Jocie and Trey McElwee! Their baby girl, Lily Sophia McElwee, was born on 12/16/24. The Grandparents are Cheryl and Jack Stoudt!



HAPPENINGS in JANUARY:

Church Breakfast

The next church breakfast will be held at Country Fare Restaurant on **Saturday, January 11th at 8:00 a.m.** Everyone is welcome & no advanced notice is needed. Ask the hostess for the Millcreek Lutheran group & you will be directed to our table. We'd love to have breakfast with you...a nice way to start the day!

Nancy Deiter



Sweet Second Sunday

Sweet Second Sunday will be held in the multi-purpose room after worship on **January 12, 2025**. All proceeds go to the church. Thank you, Charmayne!

Evangelism

The Evangelism Committee will not be meeting in January. The Evangelism committee would like to remind you that there are many opportunities for you to share the WORD with friends and family members. - Evangelism Committee

Parish Echo



Deadline for items you want in the **church newsletter for January 2025 is Wednesday, January 15.** Newsletter items sent via email should be addressed to mlc.parish.echo@gmail.com. Items may also be submitted by placing a written note in the newsletter mailbox in the church office or by phone.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Friends of Spang Crest

As many of you have already heard, Luthercare has decided to sell off Spang Crest Nursing facility and wants to focus more on the childcare facilities particularly in Annville and after school program in Lebanon City. Spang Crest has been sold to a for-profit organization and will be the 18th facility for that group. Their only other local facility is formerly the Jewish Home in Harrisburg. The name change was scheduled in mid-December and it will be now called Tri-Valley Pre/Post. It will focus more so on short term rehab.

Sadly, the official organization Friends of Spang Crest will cease, and it will no longer be connected in any way to the Lebanon Lutheran congregations. The Friends of Spang Crest January meeting will further decide future plans for our group. As of now we have no future plans because of it being now a for-profit organization, but things are still being discussed with the possibility that, as a group, we can still be a helping hand somewhere in our community. Our Friends of Spang Crest Organization thanks everyone that has helped in any way in our support of the residents of Spang Crest in the past. – Margie Kriss

New Library Additions

The newest book in the church library was written in 2023 by Mark Harmon (of TV NCIS fame) and Leon Carroll Jr. titled Ghosts of Honolulu. It is a history of counterintelligence prior to and during the U.S. involvement in World War II. It features Japanese Americans living in Hawaii.

If military books are of interest to you, the following are recommended:

- 1) The Greatest Generation by Tom Brokaw profiles those who grew up in the U.S. during the Great Depression and then went on to fight in World War II.
- 2) War Dogs by Rebecca Frankel features stories of military working dogs.
- 3) Faith of My Fathers by Senator John McCain chronicles his life, especially as a POW for 5 1/2 years after his plane was shot down over Vietnam. It also features the stories of his father and grandfather, both 4 star admirals.

THANK YOU LETTERS

It is with deep appreciation and a sense of bitter sweetness that we announce the retirement of our dedicated Church Secretary, Linda Sheetz, after 12 years of faithful service to our church family.

During her time with us, Linda has been the heart of our church office, providing invaluable support, exceptional organizational skills, and a warm, caring presence to all. From overseeing schedules to coordinating events and managing communications, Linda has played a vital role in ensuring the smooth operation of our church. Her attention to detail, kindness, and tireless dedication have made an immeasurable impact on the church community.

Please join us in expressing our heartfelt thanks to Linda as she enters this exciting new chapter. Her commitment and service will always be remembered, and she will remain an important part of our church family.

Thank you, Linda, for everything you've done. You will always be a cherished part of our church family!

MLC Church Council

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

3	Ariana Warnick	16	Joseph Tice
4	Pat Sharp	18	Mark Sova
8	Layne Strickler	21	Brigitta Scheib
	Scott Johnson	23	Angie Bentz
10	Brett Flory	24	Rachelle Keath
11	Dotti Hogle	25	Stephanie Sheetz
15	Linda Hable		
26	Sierra Tice		



If you would like to be included on the birthday list, please contact David and Aislinn Staaby by email at mlc.parity.echo@gmail.com, or place a slip of paper in the Newsletter mail slot in the church office.

JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 	2	3	4
5 - Communion Congregation Council	6	7	8 - Choir 7PM	9	10	11 - Church Breakfast 8AM
12 - Sweet Sunday - 3PM Girl Scouts	13	14	15 - Choir 7PM - Echo Deadline	16	17	18
19	20 - MLK Day - Inauguration Day	21	22 - Choir 7PM	23	24	25
26 - Communion - Congregational Meeting	27	28	29 - Choir 7PM	30	31	