
The Parish Echo

Millcreek Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 399, 221 N. Sheridan Rd., Newmanstown, PA 17073 December 2023

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

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



Lay Leader-Scott Johnson
Website-Frank Hoffman
www.millcreeklutheran.com
Parish Echo Editors: Roy & Dotti Hoglund
Newsletter@millcreeklutheran.com

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:00 AM

You can **listen to the worship service** over the phone patch at 10:15 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.

WORSHIP AT 10:15 AM

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE NO SUNDAY SCHOOL ON DECEMBER 24 OR DECEMBER 31.



PARADISE CORNER

What better symbol of home, of generosity, of freedom of worship, and of prosperity than the Christmas tree? Author Karal Ann Marling asks that question as she writes about Christmas Eve in 1941. Seventeen days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill at his side, President Franklin Roosevelt set the National Christmas Tree ablaze with colored lights, as millions listened to the carols and the speeches on the radio and imagined a beacon of joy and hope shining over a darkened Washington. “Let the children have their night of laughter...before we turn again to the stern tasks and the formidable years that lie before us.” That is what Churchill told our nation that night. Then, the lights were hastily turned out again. After 1941, a Christmas tree was not lit at the White House for the duration of the War.

Things have changed. We are no longer limited to listening to the radio. We can also light as many Christmas trees as we want in our homeland of generosity, freedom, and prosperity. Our church family has celebrated this with two trees in our congregation’s home—one tree in worship space and another tree in the narthex. (The church’s historic way of referring to the “lobby.”) I was especially pleased when I learned that one of those trees (the one in the worship space) was decorated by the members of our church family with ornaments that somehow represented their families. The other tree (the one in the narthex) was decorated with ancient symbols for Christ or some part of Christ’s ministry (chrismons). I enjoyed seeing family ornaments on the tree at the front of our worship space during the Christmases of 2021 and 2022. (Christmas 2020 was my first Christmas here, but the tree had to be outside because of the pandemic.) I also realized that hardly anybody gets to see the ornaments representing our church family because the tree was at the front of our worship space where hardly anybody sits. (Let’s be honest, friends!)

Hoping to add a little more personality to this tradition this year, we will have two trees, but will switch where they are. The tree with the Chrismons will be at the front of the worship space. The tree with the ornaments representing our families will be in the narthex. This way everyone can see the ornaments we have brought. (Plus, some props will be available so that families can take photos with our church family tree while including the beautiful stained glass windows in the photos.)

Our decorating committee is hard at work on this, but there's something for the rest of us to do. That is to look for an ornament to represent your family on our church tree. People will be able to see it, so please bear it in mind as an opportunity to share about your family with everyone who comes into our building during the Advent and Christmas seasons. The Christmas tree is indeed a wonderful symbol of generosity, freedom of worship, and prosperity, but especially home. With this "tree tradition" we welcome Christ to the home of our church family and celebrate the people that are part of it!

Live as children of light!
Pastor Scott Paradise

PRAYER LIST

We remember the following **MLC members** in our prayers: R. Hart Beaver, Debbie Hartman, Violet Hepler, Abbie Keath, Shad Kreitz, the Leibig Family, Ronald Merkel, Barbara Potteiger, Norm Sharp, Daryl Strickler, Thomas Tice, Debra Webber, Stewart Wolf, Aaron Yiengst, Devon Yiengst, and Michael Yiengst Jr.



*The congregation extends our sympathy to the family and friends of member **Lois Garloff** who died on October 26, 2023. Services were held November 3. Contributions may be made to Millcreek Lutheran in her memory. Her son is member **Ricky Garloff**.*

*We also send sympathy to Millcreek members **Theresa and Sheldon (Butch) Frederick and Baylee Marderness** on the death of Butch's mother, **Marian Frederick** on October 30, 2023.*

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES: The envelopes are available starting **November 19** on the table in the narthex. If you do not see yours, please let me know and I will issue a box to you. I may be reached at 610-589-2570, secretary@millcreeklutheran.com or see me personally. You may also put a note in my mail slot in the office. Thank you, Linda

YEARBOOK 2023-24: I will be starting to gather information for the 2023-2024 yearbook so I can have it to the congregation hopefully at the end of January or the beginning of February. I would prefer **all reports and information to me by December 31**. If you have changes in address, phone numbers, email addresses, weddings, births, or deaths in your family, please let me know so we may include the information in the new yearbook. It is very much appreciated. Again, all updated information may be put in my mail slot in the office, on my desk, or emailed to me at secretary@millcreeklutheran.com. Thank you, Linda

HAPPENINGS IN DECEMBER

Church Council

The next church council is scheduled to meet on **the FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT, December 3** after worship.

Church Breakfast

The breakfast group that meets monthly at Country Fare Restaurant will meet on **Saturday, December 9, 2023 at 8 AM.**

Nancy Deiter



MLC BAND

The band will be playing Sunday, **December 24 at 10:00 AM** for the Lessons & Carols Service. Brass choir will play at **9:45 PM** before our Candlelight Service at **10:00 PM. Rehearsals** are as follows: **Saturdays, December 9, 16, 23 at 10:00 AM.** For music or any questions, please call or text Julie Strickler at 610-207-9650 or email at juliestrickler66@gmail.com

HANGING OF THE GREENS

This annual Millcreek tradition will take place on **Sunday, December 10, 2023** during our worship service. As well as placing candles, wreaths and poinsettias in the church, we are asking you to **bring an ornament to decorate the Christmas tree in our gathering space. Please read the Pastor's message about this.**

A light luncheon will follow the worship service. The congregation is asked to bring the following: **sandwiches (individually wrapped or in baggies), food that would complement sandwiches such as chips, raw veggies, pickles, etc. and cookies.**

Parish Echo: Deadline for items you want in the church newsletter for January, 2024 is Friday, **December 15. Newsletter items sent via email should be addressed to either Newsletter@millcreeklutheran.com or millcreek.echo@gmail.com.** Items may also be submitted to the Hoglunds by placing a written note in the newsletter mailbox in the church office or by phone: **Roy 717-228-8175, Dotti 717-228-8177.**

CHRISTMAS CARD PROJECT

The Sunday School children and teachers are doing the Christmas card project this year, which includes "goody bags" for MLC members who are unable to physically attend worship. **Individual bags for each member are set up on a table in the narthex.** The members names are on lists next to the bags. No need to address the envelopes—just write the person's name on the envelope. **Please deposit cards before the church service on December 17. We would also appreciate volunteers who would be willing to make deliveries to these members after that date. There is a sign-up sheet on the table.** Please contact Nicole Johnson at blouch1986@hotmail.com with any questions. Thank you, Nicole Johnson

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM "The Real Christmas Story" will be presented by our children on **Sunday, December 17** during worship beginning at 10:15 in the multipurpose room. Invite family and friends!

HEALING SERVICE

Join us at Millcreek Lutheran on **Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM** for a service of healing. This is for both MLC members and other community members to experience the calming gift of prayerful anointing with blessed oil.

CHRISTMAS EVE MORNING WORSHIP--LESSONS AND CAROLS

This annual tradition at Millcreek Lutheran will take place during the regular worship service on **Sunday, Christmas Eve morning, December 24 at 10:15 AM. Band will play beginning at 10:00.**

CHRISTMAS EVE NIGHTTIME WORSHIP

The traditional Millcreek Lutheran Church Christmas Eve service with communion and candle lighting will take place at **10:00 PM on Sunday, December 24, 2023. Brass plays at 9:45.**

December Birthdays



3	Stewart Wolf
8	Charmayne Balsbaugh
11	Franklin K. Bergman
16	Nikki Johnson
17	Stephanie Gahres
	Dan Long
20	Violet Hepler
	Josh Tice
25	We celebrate Jesus' birth
26	Sierra Tice

If you want to be included on the birthday list, please contact Dotti at 717-228-8177, by email at Millcreek.ECHO@gmail.com, or place a slip of paper in the Newsletter mail slot in the church office.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOE BOXES

The total boxes completed this year was **69**. Many thanks to all who donated and to **Lisa Martin and Pat Ontkos** for being in charge of this project.

Blood Drive on November 16, 2023

36 people registered, 29 pints collected, 87 lives saved.
Next blood drive is Thursday, January 18, 2024.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

"**Work with Us**" honored Millcreek Lutheran Church with its Small Employer of the Year award for our relationship with **Bryan Voydik** who provides our custodial services. The award recognizes our church's impeccable support to all employees regardless of disability. Award recipients embody



the spirit of advocacy as they devote their efforts to employ persons with disabilities and to making the challenge of working with a disability much easier. Award recipients commit themselves to helping individuals strive for great accomplishment and professional distinction.

Toys for Tots



A “Heartfelt” thank you from myself and my daughter Lindsay to express our gratitude to everyone that helped make our 8th annual Toys for Tots such a success. We do this to honor Stacey’s legacy as Toys for Tots was her absolute favorite charity. I had quite a carload of toys to take to Maryland from the generosity of our MLC Family. I barely had room for my suitcase, but I drove with a constant smile on my face!! Thank you to everyone. It will make a wonderful Christmas in Queen Anne County. **Steph Seldomridge**

Thank you

I want to thank everyone for their prayers, telephone calls, thoughts and cards sent to me during my recent hospital stay. I am recovering at home and doing okay. Thanks again, Lenny Ontkos

TRUNK OR TREAT

Thank you to Jen Rosengrant for organizing another successful Trunk or Treat event, and to Millcreek Lutheran church members who participated, assisted, and donated. There were 19 decorated trunks and 170-180 (estimated) kids in attendance!

ROSENGRANTS>>>>>>



ENGLES

BENDERS>>>>>



RELAY FOR LIFE NEWS



Relay for Life is celebrating 30 years of walking and fundraising in Lebanon County in order to put an end to cancer. The group is having a **30th Anniversary Gala on Saturday, December 16, 2023 from 6:00-10:00 PM at the Lebanon Valley Expo**. You can purchase an entire table or individual tickets. It includes a meal catered by Heisey's Diner, prizes, photos, and dancing. Dress is semi-formal and you must be at least 21 years old to attend. **Tickets are \$50 per person or \$380 for a table. If anyone is willing to donate a raffle basket, that would be greatly appreciated.** Talk with Deb Buffington or Mary Ream for more information on ways to help.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

There will be a ceremony at noon on December 16, 2023 at the Richland Cemetery to place wreaths on the graves of veterans. If you would like to sponsor a wreath for \$17, please contact Gary Althouse at 717-866-7050.

How did St. Nicholas turn into Santa Claus?

Dutch families took the tradition of celebrating the feast day of Saint Nicholas with them to New Amsterdam in the American colonies, beginning as early as the 17th century. They referred to him as Sinterklaas. That name became Santa Claus to the early United States' English-speaking majority.

Britannica.com

Nicholas Day is the feast day (December 6) of St. Nicholas, the 4th-century bishop of Myra in present day Turkey. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of Russia and Greece, a number of cities, and of sailors and children, among many other groups, and was noted for his generosity.

Britannica.com



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



-----2023-----

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT -Communion -Council 3 PM Girl Scouts	4	5	6	7 7:00 Choir	8	9 8:00 Breakfast -10:00 Band rehearses
10 HANGING OF THE GREENS/ LIGHT LUNCH	11	12	13	14 7:00 Choir	15 Deadline for January Parish Echo	16 10:00 Band rehearses -Relay for Life 30 th Anniversary Gala
17 CHILDREN'S PROGRAM	18	19	20	21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER 7:00 Healing Service	22	23 10:00 Band rehearses
24 LESSONS & CAROLS 10:15 AM -10:00 PM Christmas Eve Service/Comm. -31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	25 CHRISTMAS	26	27	28	29	30