

THE ENLIGHTENER

JANUARY 2024

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH Feeding our Soul

Grace and Peace from Christ our Lord....and Happy New Year to you all,

John F. Kennedy rather famously pointed out that the Chinese printed character for the word "Crisis" also contains the same character as the word "Opportunity". His point being that historically people have understood that momentous times are both trials, and blessings depending on how well one adapts to the challenge. Linguistically JFK's Chinese skills were somewhat lacking and that isn't exactly a true interpretation of the complex Chinese written symbols, but the sentiment is valid. When circumstances make a chaotic mess of our calm day to day life we can either see that chaos as a destructive force that wipes away the good, or as an opportunity to build better.

I always feel like the New Year somehow is a bit of a crisis. All of the progress of the last year comes with us, but somehow it feels like we are also starting at square one...for better and worse. Every year we all feel that newness goading us to make better choices, healthier actions, smarter decisions. Hopefully we see last year's failings as a lesson to inform this new year, and not as a gloomy harbinger of future failure. We always have the chance to start over and do better. Even as we face greater challenges than remembering a new year date to write on all of our checks we may see the opportunities that abound.

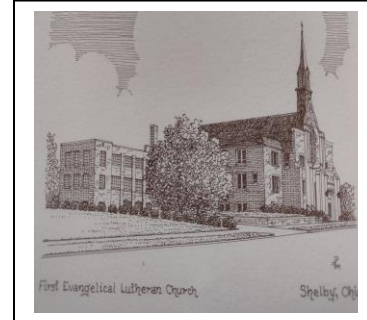
But, most of us don't face challenges and crises with a smile and a spring in our step as we tell ourselves, "look at this marvelous opportunity!" Because, of course, a crisis almost always means the end of something we value. Maybe it is our health, a relationship, financial security, or even the loss of a loved one. All of these crises are validly sad, all of them are validly frightening. The loss of something precious is a valid place to experience grief. But after grief, then what?

Do we remain in our grief or do we look for the opportunity in the crisis? Yes, something we treasure may have ended, but every act of creation is an act of destruction, and every act of destruction is an act of creation. Think of it this way, when an artist paints a picture the first thing they have to do is destroy a blank canvas. From the moment the brush touches the canvas the change has been made and that blank canvas will never be a perfect white square again. When we begin the construction of a building we call it "breaking ground", as in, the ground is now broken and will never go back to what it was. What is the first step of a home remodel? Demolition. We fear a crisis because we know what came before it, but we do not know what comes after it.

To find peace in the chaos is to remind ourselves that we may not know what comes after the crisis/opportunity....but we know who was there before, during, and will be after. The author of the Book of Hebrews says, "So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13). Know that we have a savior who will walk through our deepest, chaotic crisis and support us with his love and strength when we need it most. So have a happy New Year, crisis, opportunity, and future.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr. Russel Yoak





FOOD PANTRY – Louise Hunter, Food Pantry Director

Starting in January, the First Lutheran Food Pantry will have a basket in the narthex for donations. We will choose one donation each month that we are asking you to bring. The items will change monthly. One of the congregations suggested that we do this instead of asking for so many different items at one time.

January - Paper towels



FINANCE – Brian Crum, Treasurer

Happy New Year! While I haven't finished the books for 2023 yet, it appears we will have a similar situation to previous years where expenditures outpace our revenues by a decent amount. We are still waiting to receive our Employee Retention Credit, which will help greatly. The ABC Center did receive a grant for \$89,000 in December, which will cover a good portion of their shortfall for 2023. I will get into all the details on numbers in the annual report in a couple of weeks.

On a personal note, after 17 years with my accounting firm in Dublin, I have decided to open my own practice. It is certainly kind of sad, a little scary, and certainly exciting. For those of you who don't know, the Church has contracted with my previous accounting firm to essentially have me as a Treasurer. So now it will be contracting with my new firm, and nothing will change on the service end of things. I spoke with Pastor and the Finance Committee, and they were okay with me operating my practice out of the Church office building. My hope is that if I can grow the firm a little bit, I can make enough money to cover the expenses the Church has from maintaining this building. If anyone has any questions or thoughts, I am certainly all ears and open to your opinion. Additionally, while I don't want to take clients from my neighboring accounts and I don't want to mooch off all my friends at Church, if anyone is in need of any accounting or tax services, I would love to chat with you. As it is a little scary going out on my own, I am grateful for any support. Thank you so much for everything!

Sincerely,
Brian



YOUTH GROUP – Brian Crum

Youth Group finished up 2023 with some traditional activities like decorating cookies and watching Christmas movies. We also made a trip to The Shelby Q BBQ restaurant and Pastor delivered a lesson while we ate. We have a full slate of activities for spring of 2024 including an overnight at the Church, various activities at our local food and entertainment venues, and retreats at Kalahari and Cedar Point. We normally have about a dozen kids on any given Sunday. I am hoping to do more activities with Sarah and the younger kids as well in order to cut down on the manpower needed to plan events.



BUS STOP MINISTRY - Brian Crum

The Bus Stop ministry is also moving along well. A Church member donated 24 stockings for the kids to grab on their last day of school. We handed out 22 of them and the kids were thrilled. Thank you so much! In addition to the constant need for snacks, we have a couple other needs. I

do have about a half a dozen kids that are hanging out for a bit in the afternoon. I would love to have some old board games in the office to give them something to channel their energy since they are confined to the conference room. Also, with the cold weather, we have noticed the kids have a shortage of hats, gloves, and sometimes socks. Pastor thought it would be a good idea to have a little basket of those items for the kids in case someone is in needed. So, we are looking for donations for those things if anyone ends up seeing some at the store.



RUBY'S PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Our Father, we have so much this season of the year, for which to be thankful. You have given us so much, Dear Lord, give us one thing more – grateful hearts. Make us not just thankful when it pleases us; give us the grace to thank You every hour of every day, for all that we have and enjoy. Give us grateful hearts that sing your praise as the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

LET US PRAY...Prayer request for the month of January

Fred Beeching	Jackie Davies	Jim & Patti Schaub
Sally Barley	Dorothy Foreman	August Schreiber
Barb Davies	Cohen Lewis	Bob Stover

PRAYER REQUEST - Every January the prayer list is cleared, and we begin again. If you or someone you know would like to be put on the prayer list, please contact the church office. (419-347-7675)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



90th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

You are invited to a 90th birthday celebration for one of our own, Jackie Davies. This luncheon celebration will take place Sunday, January 28th, right after the church service. Please contact Pam Copper via phone or text at 419-561-1222 if you can attend. Cards will be appreciated, but please no gifts.

SPECIAL EVENING WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY - January 9, 2024, 6:00pm
MEET ME ON MONDAY.... January 22nd at Diner 39, at Noon
CHURCH BREAKFAST ... January 20, 8:00am to 10:00pm

THANK YOU

HOLIDAY BELL RINGERS

A BIG Thank you to everyone that volunteered to be bell ringers at the Sportsman Den.

Barb Burky

THANK YOU to everyone that thought of me during my surgery recovery. I really appreciated the meals, flowers, cards, and ice machine (which was wonderful!), your thoughts, and prayers. A very special thank you to the volunteers that took my hours at the office and kept our church office open.... Nancy Medley, Shirley Huskey, Pam Blankenhorn, Mary Lee Barr, Carol McLaughlin, Gaye Shira, and Sue Vogel.

Debbie Crum

GOOD SHEPHERD MINISTRY – We are looking for people to be part of the Good Shepherd Ministry. “Shepherds” send out cards to church members. Please contact the church office if you are willing to be part of this meaningful group.

A big thank you to those who are currently good shepherds!!

ENLIGHTENER SPECIAL NOTICE!!

PLEASE NOTE THAT BEGINNING JANUARY 2024 WE WILL BE MAILING OUR ENLIGHTENERS TO SHUT-INS ONLY. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE AN EMAIL, PAPER COPIES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE CHURCH FOR PICK UP. DUE TO THE EVER-RISING COST OF STAMPS, WE MUST REDUCE OUR NUMBER OF COPIES THAT WE MAIL. WE ALSO WANT TO LET YOU KNOW THAT THE MONTHLY ENLIGHTENER WILL BE ON OUR WEBSITE - (FLCSHELBY.ORG). IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AT ALL, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE. WE WANT EVERYONE WHO WANTS THE ENLIGHTENER TO RECEIVE ONE!

ALSO, IF YOU RECEIVE YOUR ENLIGHTENER BY EMAIL AND HAVE HAD ISSUES RECEIVING IT, PLEASE CHECK YOUR JUNK/SPAM FOLDER. IF IT IS NOT THERE, CALL THE OFFICE AND WE CAN CHECK TO MAKE SURE WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS.

OUR SYMPATHY

To the Family of Adelio DeFranco

To the Family of Jacque Hoover

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY...

January 14th - Douglas and Laura Lewis

January 24th - Scot and Carrie Sifferlin

January 31st - Daniel and Deborah Crum

HAPPY BIRTHDAY...

January 2nd - Brian Stover

January 4th - Shirley Huskey, Findley Pena, Kathy Snyder

January 6th - Marjorie Baird

January 10th - Brienna Dodds

January 11th - Richard Furr

January 12th - Olivia Meddles

January 13th - Judy Hoover, Patrick Shira

January 14th - Glenn Westfall

January 15th - Peggy McKown, Linda Striker

January 16th - Shirley Stine

January 17th - Richard Simpson

January 18th - Kay Green

January 19th - Robert Burky, David Keinath

January 21st - Patricia Schaub, Denise Thompson

January 24th - Catherine Dodge, Jay Huss, Brody Schroeder

January 25th - Patricia Ross, Joseph Tyler, Kristie Yoak

January 26th - Wyatt Love, D.

January 28th - Jacquelyne Davies

January 29th - Ryan Beeching

January 31st - Allison Uplinger, Russel Yoak

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS, ALTAR FLOWERS, AND ALTAR GUILD

GREETERS

Jan 7th – Cathy Dodge
Jan 14th – Carol McLaughlin
Jan 21st – Bobbie Clevenger
Jan 28th – Sue Vogel

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

Jan 7th – Pam Copper, Renee Nastasi, Sandy Cornett
Jan 14th – Nancy Crum, Ethan Beck, Maddie Beck
Jan 21st – Shriley Huskey, Pam Blankenhorn Mary Lee Barr
Jan 28th – Gaye Shira, Charlotte Butler, Cathy Dodge

LECTORS

Jan 7th – Renee Nastasi
Jan 14th – Sandy Cornett
Jan 21th – Pam Blankenhorn
Jan 28th – Gaye Sira

ALTAR GUILD

January & February
Gay Shira
Charlotte Butler
OPEN

ASSISTING MINISTERS

Jan 7th – Pam Copper
Jan 14th – Nancy Crum
Jan 21st – Shirley Huskey
Jan 28th Gaye Shira

RECEIPTS

Jan 7th – Pam Blankenhorn
Jan 14th – Mary Lee Barr
Jan 21st – Dana Pennell

ACOLYTE

Jan 7th - Ethan Beck
Jan 14th - Jena Cianflone
Jan 21st - Lillian Beck
Jan 28th - Jenna Cianfone

FLOWERS

Jan 7th – OPEN
Jan – 14th - OPEN
Jan 21st - OPEN
Jan 28th - OPEN

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
33 BROADWAY STREET
SHELBY, OHIO 44875
PH 419-347-7675**

**OFFICE HOURS MONDAY-FRIDAY 9AM TO NOON
PASTOR'S OPEN OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY – WEDNESDAY
9AM TO NOON**

MINISTRY TEAM

**PASTOR RUSSEL T. YOAK, SENIOR PASTOR: RUSYOAK@GMAIL.COM, 419-989-1575
GAYE SHIRA, LAY MINISTRY OF VISITATION: GSHIRA1@YAHOO.COM, 419-545-2277
PAUL MARTIN, MINISTRY OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC: FLCSHELBY@GMAIL.COM, 419-347-2924
COURTNEY WAFFEN, DIRECTOR ABC CENTER: ABCLEARNINGCENTERSHELBY@GMAIL.COM, 419-347-9246
BRIAN CRUM, TREASURER: BRIANCRUM83@GMAIL.COM 419-543-1819
SARAH MARTIN, CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: MRS.SARAHMARTIN@GMAIL.COM, 419-571-6796
LOUISE HUNTER, FOOD PANTRY DIRECTOR: WEZNJIM@NEO.RR.COM, 419-295-3019**

Website: FLCshelby.org Facebook: [First Lutheran Shelby](#) YouTube: [Pastor Rus Yoak](#)

JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Office open 9-12	2 Office open 9-12 Church office open 9am-Noon	3 Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6 pm Bells 7 pm	4 Office open 9-12	5 Office open 9-12	6
Adult Bible Study 8:45 am Worship 10 am Youth Group - TBA	8 Office open 9-12 Finance & ABC Committees	9 Church office open 9am- Noon SECOND TUESDAY WORSHIP & STUDY 6:00pm Council 7 pm	10 Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6 pm Bells 7 pm Quilting 9:00	11 Office open 9-12	12 Office open 9-12	13
14 Confirmation 8:45 am Worship 10 am Youth Group TBA	15 Office open 9-12	16 Office open 9-12	17 Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6 pm Bells 7 pm	18 Office open 9-12	19 Office Open 9-12	20 Breakfast 8- 10
21 Adult Bible Study 8:45 am Worship 10am Youth Group TBA Annual Budget Meeting	22 Office open 9-12 Meet Me on Monday - Diner 39, At Noon	23 Office open 9-12	24 Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9- 11:30 Choir 6 pm Bells 7 pm	25 Office open 9-12	26 Office open 9-12	27
28 Confirmation 8:45 Worship 10 am Youth Group TBA Annual Meeting	29 Office open 9-12	30 Office open 9-12	31 Office open 9-12	28 Office open 9-12	29 Office open 9-12	30

***I WILL SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.”
MATTHEW 11:10, NIV***

**An exciting opportunity has become available to
double your gift.**

**An anonymous donor will match dollar per dollar up
to \$15,000 to go toward the
Organ Repair Fund.**

**They are willing to count the funds raised in
December as part of the match.**

NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!

**Please use the envelopes in the pews, adding your
name or envelope number and indicate "Match Gift".**

**Let's see how quickly we can complete the match
and reach the goal of**

\$30,000.00!