



Spreading Branches

The Newsletter of Lansdale Presbyterian Church

450 Oak Park Road

www.lansdalepres.org

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"I am the Vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me bears much fruit..." John 15:5

November 2018

Vision Update - by Pastor Keane

In 2015 our church launched the vision statement *Gathering a Community to Live for Christ*. In one sense this statement does not contain anything new. The vision we share at LPC is the vision that God has for his church worldwide. Different church congregations may say it differently and with different emphases, but if we are being faithful to God's calling, then the goals of every local church should be the same.

Gathering a people for himself is the work that God is engaged in at the present time - gathering a people whom he pardons from their sins through the cross of his Son, and a people who are being renewed by his Spirit to live lives for the advancement of his purposes to establish a kingdom and to make all things new. Such a vision has both an outward and an inward focus.

On the one hand we look **outwardly** beyond our church community to those who have not yet embraced Christ. We do that with the hope that by God's grace more and more people will be gathered into our midst to share in the life, the righteousness, the peace, and the joy that come with being united with Christ. Among our four key words (*encourage, grow, equip, and go*), the word "**go**" is the one we have chosen to emphasize at the present time. Our goal is to be a church that has "going" as the orientation for all that we do. And so we are asking how we as individual believers, and also how all of our church ministries can be more inviting, more welcoming, and more accessible to others. We look for the best ways to connect with people outside us. And we continue to learn how to better communicate the good news of Jesus in a culture that is increasingly less aware of him and his word. Our recent focus on telling our stories fits with this emphasis on "going." We believe that as others hear of how God has been at work in our lives, they will see him for who he is and be drawn to him.

On the other hand as a church community we continue to look **inwardly**, giving attention to the health and spiritual growth of our community. We seek to grow in our love for God and one another, living lives in obedience to his commands. We seek to be competent managers of the gifts and resources that he has entrusted to us. We look for ways to encourage one another in this, and to equip one another to serve the Lord in our homes, our jobs, our schools, and our communities.

Our current plans for a new pastoral staff reflects this dual focus. We are looking for two men, one whose primary focus will be more outward, and one whose primary responsibility will be more inward. There is of course no hard line between these two foci, and effective involvement in one must mean involvement in the other. A church looks outward to gather people in, and a church looks inward to equip people to go out.

A healthy church must be both outward and inward looking, and care must be taken that attention to one does not lead to the neglect of the other. Our hope is that by assigning each pastor a distinct focus that neither emphasis will be lost, and that a proper balance between the two will be achieved. May the Lord grant us the wisdom and resources to fulfill our calling as his fellow workers in building his church!

Vote Tuesday November 6!



Online Voter Guides Available at
pafamilyvoter.com

Hard Copy Voter Guides Available at Church

God, Civil Government, and Voting on November 6

Pastor Tom Keane

Our government in the United States is becoming increasingly secular, and many people think that this is a good thing. A secular government is one that leaves God out of the political picture. Such a government is more neutral, they say, and so they think that it better protects the individual rights of citizens. But such is not the case. What is thought to be neutral is really just a commitment to one more set of values – values that intentionally exclude God rather than include him.

Often past abuses perpetrated by those who claimed that they were acting in faithfulness to God are used as arguments to remove God from public life. A Government's acknowledgement of God is seen as something that necessarily leads to oppressive limitation of rights and freedoms. But when tested, these arguments will not hold up. Yes, there are examples in history of governmental abuses wrongly committed in God's name, but that was not because God was in the picture. To the contrary, while God's name may have been present, he himself was clearly absent. If God's revealed will had been faithfully practiced, those abuses would never have occurred.

Furthermore, the absence of God from government is no guarantee against governmental abuses. The atrocities and oppression of atheistic and secular governments have been well documented. Under those governments, people who do not support the secular beliefs and goals of the state are often forcefully persecuted. Communist regimes of the modern era are examples of this. Under these governments millions of their citizens, including Christians, lost their livelihoods, were imprisoned, and put to death simply because their beliefs did not align with those of the government. This illustrates the grave danger of states that

attempt to exclude God from their societies. Without the wise and good laws of God to guide us, we are left to the caprice of individual leaders or groups. Without God's law as a foundation, even democracy can just mean oppression by the majority.

Tolerance of others who do not believe or think as we do does not arise out of secularism. Instead it arises out of a commitment to God who at the present time is himself tolerant even of unbelievers. He is kind to them and calls on us to do likewise (Matt. 5:43-45). At present God is kind to the just and to the unjust, calling and giving opportunity for the wicked to turn from their ways and live (Ezek. 18:23; Rom. 2:4).

In other words, the Christian faith allows for a government to be both committed to God and his word, and at the same time to permit a measure of tolerance for those citizens who are not so committed. How the details of this idea work out in practice is not always obvious, and there is still much room for discussion about how to apply it. But my point is that it is only a nation's commitment to God (and not his absence from society) that provides a foundation for such tolerance. Secularism on the other hand has no inherent mechanism that allows for tolerance in a society. To the contrary, the vehement and hate-filled rhetoric launched against those of us who want our government to endorse godly living reflects the intrinsic intolerance of the secular mind.

Thankfully in the United States our pledge of allegiance contains the words "under God," and our currency contains the words "in God we trust." The formal decision to add that language was not made by Congress until the 1950's, but it reflects the attitude that we should have in our nation. It was right for our government to do this – to formally acknowledge our nation's dependence on God. Personally I regret that similar language does not also appear in the U.S. Constitution. The Declaration of Independence does acknowledge that our rights as individuals are endowed to us by God who created us. So even though there is no mention of God in the Constitution, it is clear that he was in the minds of our nation's founders as they crafted the shape of our government.

For a nation to acknowledge God is an act of humility, admitting that it is not sufficient in itself – that it stands or falls by the will of God, and that its governing principles and laws, if they are to be valid, fair, and just, must stand on the word of God. This is why it is appropriate for state and federal capitol buildings and court houses to have depictions of the Ten Commandments. Right above the bench in the courtroom of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court there is a large painting of Moses receiving the commandments. What a powerful reminder that our laws and court justices answer to a higher law and to a higher

judge! Psalm 2 calls the rulers of the nations of the earth to serve the Lord, and to “kiss” his Son. Regrettably, however, these rulers too often reject the higher authority of the Lord and his Anointed One (Ps. 2:2).

As people who live in a republic, we have the privilege of voting for those who govern us. Certainly we should vote for people who have practical wisdom in the matters of day to day life, but we should also vote for those who care about the things that are important to God. We should be voting as people who believe that all of life, including human government, should reflect the God who created us in his image. In my opinion our nation is on a dangerous trajectory, increasingly adopting the secularist mindset that God is to have no place in politics. As a result, we have come to the point where we are seeing some of our state and city governments imposing fines on Christian business people, and threatening the closure of businesses, schools, and charitable organizations simply because these Christians are trying to live out their faith consistently in society.

I am pleased with and encouraged by the strong statements and policies of President Trump regarding the support of Christians in our country and around the world. In my lifetime there has never been a U. S. president who has addressed this matter so directly and with such clarity. The great lengths to which he went to bring home pastor Brunson detained in Turkey were unprecedented. In addition to this, he has been a strong voice for the rights of the unborn.

Under the previous administration and justice department there was a growing atmosphere of oppression in our country against those who wanted to consistently live out their faith in Christ. State and city governments along with federal agencies and certain advocacy groups quickly learned that Christians were fair game. Under the current president and attorney general, however, that toxic atmosphere is being diffused. We need legislators and judges who will support the president in this new trend. And that makes the 2018 midterm elections very important. While we do not look to earthly governments to be our savior, we should expect that they govern consistently with the One who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Sometimes it’s not clear where a candidate stands on all of the things that matter, and sometimes they are not consistent in their views, but below is a list of things that I try to look for when I go to vote. I commend it to you as you go to the polls this month. The list follows the principles given to us by God in the Ten Commandments.

1. I prefer a candidate who puts God first, and who is not afraid to say that he or she is a believer. I prefer that their view of government and society (including tolerance) is shaped by what God has revealed. But even if the candidate is not a

believer, I want someone who will at least say that the Christian faith has a place in public life, and who supports the idea that Christians should have the freedom to live out their faith in society. I would never vote for a secularist who attempts to marginalize or even exclude God from the public square.

2. I’m looking for a candidate who recognizes that it is God (and not the state) who by his word regulates how he is to be worshiped.
3. I look for a candidate who is careful to associate God’s name only with the things that God clearly endorses. For example, it is right to associate God’s name with the idea of caring for the poor, but it is not right to say that God expects us to care for the needy by collecting taxes for government welfare programs. To say the latter is to connect God’s name with something he has not clearly said, and so it is to take his name in vain. Even more serious, I have actually heard some prominent people say that the legalization of abortion is the “Christian” thing to do. But to say that is to associate the name of Christ with the wrongful taking of human life, something that he clearly forbids.
4. I want a candidate who is willing to make and enforce laws that protect the Christian who believes he should not work on the Lord’s Day. The trend in our society is to make Sunday like any other day of the week. And so, to make a living some Christians are being compelled by their employers to miss times of worship.
5. I’m looking for a candidate that is ready to promote a healthy view of the family, and of authority relationships in society. The breakdown of families with absent husbands and fathers is a significant factor in the erosion of our society. The primary structure for passing on godliness and wisdom to the next generation is the relationship of fathers (not the state) to their children. There is also a breakdown in respect for the authority of local police. Abuses in authority should always be addressed, and abusers should be removed from their positions of authority, but care must be taken to preserve and promote the authority structures that God has instituted.
6. I look for a candidate who sees human life as more valuable than other life, and so is to be protected. That would include the protection of those who are handicapped, elderly, terminally ill, or unborn.
7. I want a candidate who is willing to endorse and promote that man was made male and female, that sexual relationships should only take place

between a man and a woman and within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. The breakdown of society in this area of gender, sexuality, and sexual practice is linked with the breakdown of the family that I mentioned under commandment 5, and has done much to unravel the fabric of our society.

8. I'm looking for a candidate who understands the concept of private property, and the responsible acquisition and management of wealth. According to Scripture, governments have the right to tax their citizens, but they do not have the right to eliminate private property. More and more we are hearing that wealthy people do not have a right to their wealth, and that the government should have control of it to distribute to others. But in Scripture, God-ordained giving to the poor is to come cheerfully from the heart and not from the coercion of government. In support of this, statistics show that private generosity given from the heart in our country far exceeds and is far more effective than government generosity. Governments can have a role in promoting and assisting the private sector in this work, but they should not coerce citizens to get the resources to do their work.

In addition, the level of debt that our federal government owes is rapidly approaching 22 trillion dollars (\$217,000 per citizen), a sum that is morally irresponsible, and indicates that as a nation we are living beyond our means. God calls

us to be responsible managers of our finances, and also to be content. Knowingly incurring debt that we will not be able to repay is not only irresponsible, it is immoral – it is theft.

9. I look for a candidate who speaks the truth about others, and who preserves the good reputations of others. The brazen attempt to destroy the reputation of Brett Kavanaugh, our most recently appointed Supreme Court justice, was in direct violation of the ninth commandment. Political officials who would allow and endorse this kind of practice have no place in government. Too often candidates and officials lie or bend the truth about the character and motives of their opponents for political gain. But someone who is willing to break the commands of God and to destroy someone else to gain political power is a danger and not a help to our nation.
10. I prefer a candidate who is personally content with what he or she has, and is not interested in gaining political office to advance their covetous desires for power, status, or wealth. I'm looking for someone with the heart of a servant – with someone who wants to use political office to give and not to get.

In addition, I want a candidate who promotes contentment rather than envy in society. While Scripture exhorts the wealthy to be generous toward the poor, there is no right that everyone must be equal in wealth and possessions.

Please vote on November 6, and do so thoughtfully and prayerfully. If you want some insight into the views of the various candidates, there are voter guides available at church and online. A link to the online voter guide can be found in this newsletter in the box on page 2.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY
Holiday Progressive Dinner
SATURDAY, DEC. 1, 4 - 8PM

 Join us for a fun night out! Our first stop will be at the church at 4pm. Then, we'll carpool to our next stops, and finish up at the church for dessert! It will be a night of friends and good food!

TICKETS \$5 | PURCHASE IN THE LOBBY

Deadline to purchase tickets is Sunday, November 4th



THE FAITH PLAYBOOK

Join Dr. Paul Tripp + 7 Pro Football Players

TO DISCUSS LIFE OFF THE FIELD ▶

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LIFE AND FAITH



CARSON WENTZ
 NICK FOLES
 STEFEN WISNIEWSKI | JORDAN MATTHEWS | TREY BURTON | CHRIS MARRAGOS | JORDAN HICKS | DR. PAUL TRIPP

LANSDALE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH INVITES YOU TO THIS VIDEO STREAMING EVENT

SUNDAY, NOV. 4 [BYE WEEK]

4:00PM TAILGATE | 5:15PM SHOW BEGINS

FOOD PROVIDED | INVITE FRIENDS | CHILDREN WELCOME

TICKETS \$2 | PURCHASE IN THE LOBBY OR EMAIL LORI@LANSDALEPRES.ORG

Deacons' Angel Tree

The Deacons are once again sponsoring their own "Angel Tree" program. The tree will be displayed in the lobby beginning in the end of November. Gift tags for assorted gift cards can be selected from the tree and all gift cards must be purchased and returned to the church in mid-December. This will allow recipients time to purchase items for their family members for Christmas. Look for the tree in the lobby at the end of the month and for more details in your Sunday bulletin.



Thanksgiving Service

Sunday Evening,
November 18, 2018

5:30 pm - Fellowship Dinner

6:30 pm - Worship Service & Children's Ministry*

*Children will be dismissed during the second part of the service

A nursery will be provided during the service



Food From the Heart Dinner *

Date: October 28, 2018

Number of Guests: 48

Menu: Fruit cup, potato soup, meat loaf with gravy, parsley potatoes, corn, chocolate and vanilla cake

Head Chef: Rick Davis

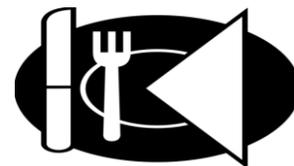
Speaker: Rev. Brian Hand

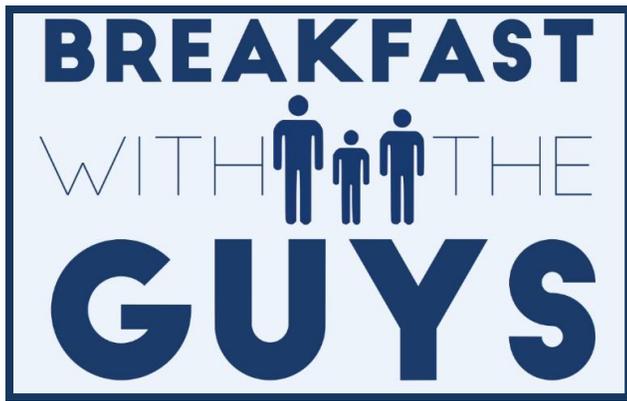
Topic: Mission trip to Belize

Special Music: Men's Group:

John Prall, John Hathaway, Ron Stotish, Albert Swartz, Daniel Eom

*Food from the Heart dinners are the last Sunday of each month at 1:00 pm.





Seniors Living in Christ (SLIC)

The seniors group at LPC, Seniors Living in Christ (SLIC), met on October 17th to hear a presentation by Sharon Comly, the Client Services Director of the Pregnancy Resource Clinic (PRC) of North Penn. She presented a video that explained their services to young women. She answered all our questions and we were all very inspired by their commitment to the Gospel and how it impacts their interactions with clients. The Lord recently provided a new headquarters building on North Broad Street in Lansdale which they are excited about. Since this is one of LPC's local missions, we were very glad to hear about their wonderful services, which are free. Our own Pam and Steve Smith are volunteer counselors there. For more information about PRC, see their web site at www.northcareclinic.org.

Breakfast With the Guys is Saturday, November 3rd, at 7:30am and we are inviting younger guys to join us for this event. The desire is to create space for guys from different generations to get to know each other and be encouraged as we share our stories. We want older guys to have an opportunity to share the significance of what God has done in their lives and younger guys to understand the significance of what God is calling them to in Christian manhood. Pastor Brian will give a talk about biblical manhood that will engage and make application to both younger and older guys.

- This is *NOT* a Father-Son breakfast. This *IS* for all guys age 4+. Consider inviting a grandson, nephew, or neighbor to join you.

Cost is \$10 or \$5 for guys in 8th grade or younger. Breakfast is all you can eat and includes made-to-order omelets, waffles, and pancakes.

On **TUESDAY**, November 13th, all seniors are invited to the LPC library at 11:00 AM to hear speaker Joe Fisher as he shows his collection of American Flyer trains and other collectible antique toys. This will be followed by a hoagie lunch. Please sign up in the lobby and let us know what kind of hoagie you would like. Any questions, please see Martha Foote, 215-368-4936 or Dottie Finn, 215-855-8087.

Deacons' Harvest Home Ministry

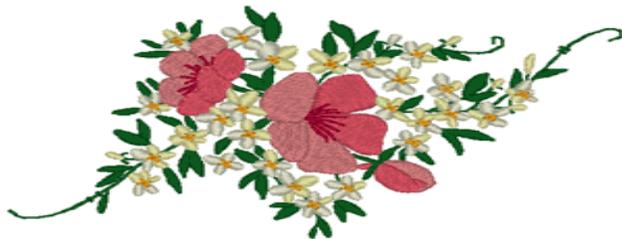
Once again, our deacons will be collecting donations for their Thanksgiving Harvest Home Ministry now through November 18th.

Donations of non-perishable food items can be brought in and placed on the table in the lobby. Turkeys (no coupons please) can be put in the kitchen freezer. Home-baked pies are also needed. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the lobby to bake either pumpkin or apple pies.

Special offering:

There will be a special offering on Sunday, November 18th to purchase additional items for food baskets.

Food baskets will be distributed to families who have a need the week before Thanksgiving.

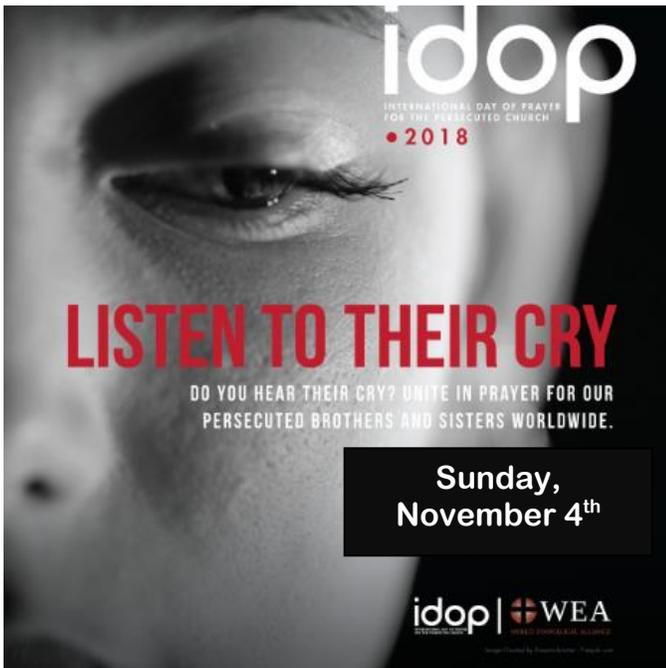


Thank you!

We would like to take this opportunity to say **thank you** to Sonya Menges and acknowledge all her work over the past eight months serving as the head of the Flowers and Decorations Committee. Beautiful flowers always decorated the worship center and lobby during the year and flower bouquets were often given to visitors to take home.

We have been blessed to have her share her talents with us and are so grateful for the time she served in this position. Thank you, Sonya!

WELCOME WENDY FOX as the new head of the Flowers and Decorations Committee. We are excited to have her share her talents with us! If you are interested in serving on this committee, please let Wendy or Pastor Keane know.



International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP)

Join thousands of other churches across the United States and the world in prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering persecution for their faith. This year, the international Christian community has set Sunday, November 4th, as the day for God's people to join together to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering persecution for their faith around the world.

Thank you for your willingness to pray with persecuted Christians on the International Day of Prayer (IDOP). Prayer is the number one request of persecuted Christians, and they are asking us to join them in prayer for strength and perseverance so that, despite difficult trials, Christians will continue to shine for Jesus and share the gospel in the most dangerous places.

Inserts from our denomination to remind us to pray for missionaries and ministries throughout the month, particularly for those in restricted-access countries, were in the October 28th Sunday bulletin (MTW "30 Days of Prayer"). Extra copies are available in the church lobby. There will be an insert from the Voice of the Martyrs with "10 Ways to Pray" in the November 4th bulletin. Other specific prayer resources may be found online at:

www.idop.org OR at: www.persecution.com

"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."

I Corinthians 12:26



Baby Bottle Boomerang

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Baby Bottle Boomerang program to benefit the Pregnancy Resource Clinic of North Penn. This year we had 25 bottles; all were taken to be filled and 23 were returned. *(If you forgot to return your bottle you may still return it to the church office.)*

This year LPC raised \$765.24! Our support will help provide medical services, counseling, and material aids to their clients. Thank you!

Did you Know?
Sermon recordings are available on our web site:
www.lansdalepres.org
You can listen each Sunday to
Engaging the Gospel,
a previously recorded LPC sermon,
at 8:30 am on 1440 AM or 98.5 FM

Remember to turn your clocks back one hour on Sunday, November 4th, at 2:00 am.

November

COMING EVENTS:

- 1 9:00 am Ladies Bible Study (weekly)
6:30 pm Session meeting
- 2 7:00 pm Ladies Bible Study (weekly)
- 2 10:30 am Small Group (weekly)
- 3 7:30 am Breakfast with the Guys (Henning's)
- 3 1:30 pm Meeting for Better Understanding
(MBU) Prayer at LPC
- 2:00 pm MBU at LPC
- 4 Daylight Saving Time ends
- International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church
- 9:15 am Sunday School (weekly)
- 10:30 am Worship Service (weekly)
- Deacons' report and offering
- 4:00 pm Tailgating
- 5:15 pm Faith Playbook video streaming
- 5 7:15 pm Mission Committee meeting
- 6 7:00 pm Board of Christian Ed. meeting
- 7 7:00 am Men's Ministry (weekly)
- 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (weekly)
- 7:30 pm LPC Band Rehearsal (weekly)
- 8 6:30 pm MOPS Craft Night
- 11 2:00 pm Meadowood Ministry
- 12 7:00 pm MOPS
- 13 11:00 am Seniors Living in Christ (SLIC)
Antique Toy Talk & lunch
- 2:00 pm EPP Presbytery at LPC
- 7:00 pm Pastoral Search Committee meeting
- 18 Special Offering for Harvest Home
- last day for Harvest Home non-perishable
food item donations
- 5:30 pm Fellowship Covered Dish Dinner
- 6:30 pm Thanksgiving Service
- Children's Ministry
- 19 Harvest Home Pies to the church
- 7:00 pm Deacons' Mercy Ministry meeting
- 7:00 pm MOPS Bible study
- 20 Deacons' Harvest Home Distribution
- 7:00 pm Finance Committee meeting
- 22 Thanksgiving Day
- 25 9:15 am Rev. Jeff Talley (adult class)
- 1:00 pm Food From the Heart Dinner
- 26 7:00 pm Men's Ministry
- 27 6:00 pm Licensure & Ordination (Presbytery)
- 7:00 pm Pastoral Search Committee meeting

1	Will Liegel
2	Abbegael Greene
3	Jinie Eom
4	Aric Gray
6	Christian Zeller
7	Cindy Miller
8	Carol Pfister
15	Steve Carroll
16	Esther Lee
18	Jeremiah Etherton
	Bruce Weinstein
22	Sue Hathaway
	Marilyn Rudolph
24	Michele Schwartz
26	Cassie Witner

Happy Anniversary!



- 2 Tom & Cathy Strohlein
- 9 Dennis & Carol Nice
- 16 Jason & Kellie Adams
- 16 Ron & Carolyn P.
- 19 Steve & Pam Smith
- 20 Larry & Sue Snell

If your birthday or anniversary does not appear on our list or if there has been an error, please contact the church office. Thank you.