



Spreading Branches

The Newsletter of Lansdale Presbyterian Church

450 Oak Park Road

www.lansdalepres.org

(215) 368-1119

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

January 2021

Two Important Meetings

– by Pastor Tom Keane

Town Hall Meeting

On Saturday morning, December 19, our church held its first ever virtual town hall meeting. Approximately 60 people were in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to review the 2021 interim staffing plan approved by the Session. This plan was developed to move us forward in our staffing plans as we wait for the Kennedys to arrive in the US, and until the new pastoral team is fully in place. A written statement of the plan was sent to church members in advance of the meeting. Printed copies of this plan are available in the church lobby. If you did not receive an electronic copy and would like one, please contact the church office.

At the meeting, Pastor Hand presented the plan, and fielded questions. Written responses to those and other questions are also available in the church lobby. Contact the church office if you prefer an electronic version.

In summary, the interim staffing plan involves Pastor Keane retiring as of January 1, 2021. While he will no longer be church pastor, he will continue to preach most Sundays, lead a Wednesday morning men's group, and assist with the transfer of knowledge about our church to incoming Pastor Kennedy. During the interim, Pastor Keane's other pastoral and administrative duties will be shared by Pastor Hand, and by Ruling Elder JJ Zeller, who has been hired as a temporary and part time "Strategy and Operations Manager."

If you have questions about this plan, please speak to Pastor Hand, or to one of the elders. We would love to hear from you, and we'll do our best to keep you well informed. And please keep this whole process in your prayers. We are looking to the Lord for his wisdom and guidance.

Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, December 20, we gathered after the morning worship service to conduct some important church business. Pastor Hand chaired the meeting, and two retirements were acknowledged.

The first was the retirement of Ruling Elder Charlie Miller who served on the Session of our church for 13 years. His retirement was marked by the adoption of a resolution acknowledging and thanking God for his many faithful years of service.

The second retirement acknowledged by the congregation was that of Pastor Keane who served on the pastoral staff of our church for 34 years. Pastor Keane read a formal statement of resignation and thanks to God for the opportunity to serve at LPC (this statement is printed elsewhere in this newsletter). Ruling Elder Will Liegel made the motion to dissolve the pastoral relationship as of January 1. This is a formal act that is required by our denomination when a pastor leaves a church. Teaching Elder Dave Brewer then offered prayer. Both RE Liegel and TE Brewer participated in Pastor Keane's ordination service at the start of his ministry, and so it was appropriate that they share as well in his retirement from that ministry. The meeting was closed with the singing of the Christmas Hymn, "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence."

Retirement Statement

The following statement was read by Pastor Keane at a special congregational meeting held on Sunday, December 20.

It is with joy and thanksgiving that I announce the ending of my time as your pastor, effective January 1, 2021. This announcement is tied with my intent to retire from the pastoral ministry.

The joy and thanks do not arise from something coming to an end, but rather from the privilege and blessing it has been to have served the Lord together with this congregation over 34 years. Cathy and I have experienced kindness, support and encouragement from so many. It has been our delight to be part of a fellowship of people who are so obviously committed to Jesus Christ, being attentive to his word, servant minded, loving, and sacrificial in the use of time, talents, and resources. It has been our joy to see children baptized in this church grow to walk with the Lord and then go on to raise children of their own to know Christ. The study and teaching of God's word has been my passion from a young age, and I am grateful to the Lord that he gave to me the opportunity to pursue that passion among all of you. And by God's grace, in my retirement he will allow me to continue in that pursuit in some new ways. One way already will be to continue to serve you as Stated Supply until the new pastoral team is fully in place. In addition I will continue to serve our presbytery by assuming the role of Stated Clerk of the Eastern PA Presbytery beginning in January.

The joy and thanks accompanying my retirement also arise from knowing that I leave all of you in the best of hands. I could not be more pleased and confident in the new pastoral team you have called. Along with them, the elders and deacons whom you have elected to lead you are all humble and godly men, committed to the word of Christ, and who have the hearts of servants. It has truly been my joy to have worked with them, learned from them, and to have watched as God's plans for this congregation unfolded through them. I encourage you to press on in following their lead, and so to add to their joy as you have added to mine.

It is my prayer that the Lord will preserve the light and witness of this assembly of his people for many years to come, and that his word will continue to dwell richly in all of you as you walk in faithfulness to the Lord.

And so I'll leave you with these words of encouragement that I have spoken to you so many times before: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Tom Keane



Ruling Elder Charlie Miller Retiring

Charlie Miller has served as a ruling elder on our church Session for thirteen years. He and his wife Phyllis had faithfully used their gifts among our congregation years before Charlie even became an elder. And their plans are to continue in active service in our church following his retirement. As an elder, Charlie was passionate about communicating the good news of Christ to others, and so was especially active in the teaching ministry of our church, and in our small group ministry. He chaired our Board of Christian Education, and oversaw our adult education ministry. In addition, he showed the compassion an elder should have by visiting the sick and the homebound, praying with them, and encouraging them from God's word. And not to shy away from a task that needed to be done, he took on the thankless, but so needed role of Clerk of Session, faithfully taking minutes, keeping records, setting meeting agendas, and carrying out the correspondence and communications of the Session. Through all of this Phyllis was at his side, supporting him in his work, giving herself to hosting, leading, teaching, visiting, and caring. So thank you Charlie and Phyllis for your faithfulness to our church over the years. We are so grateful to the Lord for you both!

Congratulations to Pastor Keane

Congratulations to Pastor Tom Keane on his well earned retirement! Tom, has been the devoted Senior Pastor of Lansdale Presbyterian Church for 21 years. Tom has faithfully served at LPC since he and Cathy became members in 1978, he became a ruling elder in 1983, then Associate Pastor in 1989, and Senior Pastor in 1999. He also served as a Youth Leader and Sunday School Superintendent. Throughout the years, Tom has made a meaningful difference in the lives of so many people. The LPC members and friends that Tom has pastored over the years are a testimony to his faithful service for the sake of Christ.

Tom's patience, willingness to listen, wisdom, and commitment to the truth of God's Word have honored the Lord and blessed so many. Tom's legacy includes the growth of many ministries and ministry leaders, a multigenerational congregation known as a welcoming community of faithful believers in Christ, a significant building renovation, and the forward focus of LPC's vision.

Consistent with his faithful service to the Lord and LPC, although ready to retire a year ago, Tom has continued to serve this congregation through the many unforeseen delays. Well beyond his significant notice of retirement and commitment to effective transition, due to the unprecedented circumstances, Tom has continued to lead LPC through 2020, a difficult year due to the pandemic.

Praise God that Tom will continue to serve through other ministries such as Stated Supply Teaching Pastor at LPC until Pastor Kennedy arrives and as Clerk of the Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery PCA.

Tom, you will be missed, thank you for your many years of dedicated service. Enjoy your retirement and thank you for deciding to continue to invest in LPC in your retirement.

Red Cross Blood Drive



One of the new ways LPC became a 'Going' church was by hosting blood drives with the American Red Cross. In 2020, LPC hosted four drives: June, October, November and December. The blood drive committee is thankful to have so many donors and volunteers in this effort to be a blessing to our local community and beyond. It was wonderful to see approximately 75% of donors were from outside of our church and what a great impression to be introduced to our church in this way of giving.

In our December drive there were 37 donors, three of which were power reds. Since June we have had a total of 137 donations out of 144 donor registrations. Several of these donations were power reds and many were first time donors. Our average units donated per drive is 34. We were also commended by the Red Cross for our commitment to this effort especially since so many blood drives in our area have been cancelled due to Covid-19.

Thank you to donors, volunteers, John Hathaway, the Building & Grounds Committee, and the Blood Drive Committee for helping to make this effort a success.

**Spoiler alert –
Next blood drive is the beginning of March.
Be on the lookout for announcements.**





New Staff Members Joining the Team in 2021



JJ Zeller
*Strategy &
Operations
Manager*

We are pleased to welcome JJ Zeller to the LPC team as the new part-time Strategy & Operations Manager.

JJ has helped to lead our strategic planning process since 2014. He'll now be taking on a number of responsibilities related to the regular operations of the church, ongoing project management and overseeing the planning of our weekly worship services. JJ is excited to help advance the LPC vision through effective planning during our time of transition.

JJ will primarily be working from home but will also have use of Pastor Keane's former office (room E12). He can be reached by email jj@lansdalepres.org and will soon be added to the LPC office phone directory.



Mary Hand
*Communications
Director*

We are pleased to welcome Mary Hand to the LPC team as the new part-time Communications Director.

Mary will be overseeing our communication strategies through our website, social media, and digital advertising as well as publications and marketing focused both on those within LPC and the broader community. Mary is excited to help advance the LPC vision by growing community through effective communication.

Mary will be working out of the center ministry office (room E14). She can be reached by email mary@lansdalepres.org and will soon be added to the LPC office phone directory.

Welcome, JJ & Mary !

We are proud to have you as part of the LPC Team.

Save the Date!

Sunday, February 7, 2021
Annual Congregational Meeting and
All Church Lunch

Boxed lunch follows the
10:30 am Worship Service

Congregational meeting: 1:00 pm
No evening groups or meetings

Watch the Sunday bulletin
for details.

Year-end Giving Statements

The 2020 statements will be available early in January for your review and tax purposes. Please review your statements right away. If you have any questions or find discrepancies, please direct your questions to Bob Wunderlich, Treasurer, or Sue Hathaway, Bookkeeper.

Offering Envelopes are the method the Deacons have for keeping records of your gifts and tithes. Each year you receive a statement for your tax purposes (acceptable by the IRS) from the records kept from your envelope giving. If you would like envelopes and do not have them, please contact Sue Hathaway in the church office:

sue@lansdalepres.org
or call # (215) 368-1119, ext. 21

Through the Bible

reading guides are now available!

You can pick one up in any of the seating areas throughout the church.

If you would like one mailed to you, please contact the church office.

Annual Reports 2020

Annual reports for January - December 2020 are due to Lori Davis no later than

Friday, January 15, 2021.

This will allow time to print and have them available to the congregation the week prior to the congregational meeting scheduled for Sunday, February 7, 2021.

Winter Weather Alert System

The church has an automated system to contact members and friends about weather related schedule changes. *There are two ways to sign up:*

1. Simply text the word: **snow** to (215) 631-3144. You will receive a link to provide your name, email, and mobile number.
2. Sign up on your connection card - just write the words: Weather Alert and make sure your name, email, and mobile number are on the card. You will automatically receive text and email alerts with the relevant details for any weather-related schedule changes.

Note: If you signed up last year, you do not need to sign up again!

Cancellations

In case of inclement weather and there is question as to whether services will be cancelled or modified, announcements will be sent by text and email, (see above for sign up information) OR you can call the church at #(215) 368-1119 and listen for updates.

January

COMING EVENTS:

- 1 New Year's Day
- 3 8:00 am Band Rehearsal (weekly)
9:15 am Sunday School in-person for children
(ages 4 – 5th grade), youth, and adults (weekly)
10:30 am Worship Service (weekly)
 - Rev. Tom Keane preaching
 - Deacons' Report/Offering
- 5:30 pm Youth Group (weekly)
- 5:30 pm Small Group in-person (McBride)
- 6 6:00 am Men's Ministry (weekly)
- 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (weekly)
- 7 7:00 pm Session meeting online
- 8 9:30 am Deacons' Executive Committee
10:30 am Small Group online (weekly)
- 10 5:00 pm Small Group online (Halvorsen)
6:00 pm Small Group online (Berg)
- 11 7:00 pm Moms Together
7:00 pm Mission Committee meeting
- 15 Annual Reports Due to Lori Davis
- 17 Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
- 18 7:00 pm Full Board of Deacons' Meeting
 - Deacons' Mercy Ministry meeting
- 21 10:00 am Ladies Bible study resumes in-person
and online
7:00 pm Ladies Bible study resumes online
7:00 pm Session meeting online
- 25 7:00 pm EPP Admin Team (Presbytery)
- 26 7:30 pm Finance Committee meeting



- 4 Paul Koehrsen
- 5 Phil Mooney
- 7 Betsy Falk
- 9 Lillian Hathaway
- 11 Larry Snell
- 13 Darla Mooney
- 20 Sunie Eom
- 27 Michele Wunderlich
- 30 Bill Jones
Hugh Wessel (MTW)
- 31 Jessica Bard



- 18 JJ & Theresa Zeller

**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.**