

Christ Lutheran Lamplighter



Christ Lutheran Church
400 Barclay Avenue
Forest Hills, Pennsylvania 15221

September 2026

Contact Information

Phone: 412-271-7173

Web: www.christlutheranfh.org

Facebook: ChristLutheranChurchFH



Staff

Pastor: Rev. Ronald Bright
pastor@christlutheranfh.org

Missionary: Rev. Vincent Mroz
pghdeafoutreach@gmail.com

Assistant to Pastor: Barb Mitchell
assistant@christlutheranfh.org

Office Assistant: Jana Savelkova
officeassist@christlutheranfh.org

Officers and Committees

President: Jim Law

Treasurer: Stephanie Caton

Secretary: Barb Mitchell

Financial Secretary: Dee Law

Elders: Cal Eggers, Glenn Filler, John Crawford, Richard Mueller

Trustees: Lee Caton, Megan Elaschat, Michael George

Education: Annette Bowen, Lori Schriver, Gloria Stern, James Sheets

Finance: Cal Eggers, Stephanie Caton, Barry Schoenthal, Richard Mueller

Outreach: Ruth Hirko, Kathy Kaclik, Karen Dadey, Zakary D'Alessandro

Endowment Committee: Cal Eggers, Glenn Filler, Kathy Sourbeer

Celebrating 93 years in Forest Hills

Why Come to Church?

Some people say, "I don't need church. I can believe in God and worship Him privately at home." Certainly, Christians should pray at home, read Scripture, and call upon God throughout the week. But private devotion was never intended to replace the gathering of Christ's people. At home we cannot give ourselves Holy Absolution or Holy Communion. Christian faith is deeply personal, but never merely private.

Others say, "I worship God in nature." Creation displays God's wisdom, power, and beauty. But the woods cannot preach Christ crucified for sinners. The mountains cannot speak Holy Absolution. The lake cannot place Christ's Body and Blood into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins. Nature may fill us with awe, but it cannot replace the place where Christ gathers His people and gives His saving gifts.

Still others allow worship to become optional, fitted around everything else. Yet Christ knows how easily faith becomes tired, distracted, and weak. He calls us together to hear His Word, receive His forgiveness, strengthen one another, and be sent into the world in His name.

Inside this issue, "26 Reasons to Come to Church" explores why worship belongs at the center of Christian life.

In the worship of Christ,

Pastor Ron Bright

Why Come to Church?

Some people say, “I don’t need church. I can believe in God and worship Him privately at home.” Certainly, Christians should pray at home, read the Scriptures, sing hymns, teach the faith to their families, and call upon God throughout the week. A healthy Christian life does not begin when we enter the church building and end when we leave it.

But private devotion was never intended to replace the gathering of Christ’s people. At home we may pray and read God’s Word, but we cannot give ourselves Holy Absolution or Holy Communion. We cannot encourage fellow Christians while remaining apart from them, nor can they strengthen and encourage us. Christian faith is deeply personal, but it is never merely private.

Others say, “I worship God in nature.” Certainly, creation displays God’s wisdom, power, generosity, and beauty. The heavens declare the glory of God, and Christians rightly receive the natural world with wonder and thanksgiving.

But the woods cannot preach Christ crucified for sinners. The mountains cannot speak Holy Absolution. The lake cannot place Christ’s Body and Blood into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins. Nature may fill us with awe for the Creator, but it cannot replace the place where Christ has promised to gather His people and give them His saving gifts.

Still others gradually begin treating worship as optional—something to attend when nothing else is scheduled and when they are not too tired, too busy, or pulled in another direction. Sports, travel, landscaping, sleeping in, work, entertainment, and family activities slowly take priority. We may continue saying that Christ is first in our lives, but the pattern of our lives can begin saying something different.

Christ never intended us to believe alone.

He knows how easily faith becomes tired, distracted, discouraged, and weak. He knows how quickly the demands of ordinary life can crowd Him toward the edges. He knows that we need to hear His promises from outside ourselves. We need His forgiveness spoken to us. We need the prayers, encouragement, and presence of other Christians—and they need us.

The Third Commandment calls us to “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.” Martin Luther explains that we should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. The New Testament likewise urges Christians not to neglect meeting together, but to encourage one another all the more as the Day of Christ approaches.

This is not merely a command intended to burden us. It is God’s loving direction for people who need what He gives. The Lord calls us away from the countless voices, pressures, and distractions of the week so that we may hear His voice again. He calls sinners to receive forgiveness, the weary

to receive rest, the grieving to receive hope, the confused to receive truth, and the lonely to be joined to the family of God.

In the Divine Service, God Himself comes to serve us. Christ meets His gathered people through His Word, His forgiveness, His Body and Blood, and His blessing. Worship is not merely another activity on the calendar. It is where Christ gathers His people, gives them His gifts, joins them to one another, and prepares them to live as His people in the world.

The 26 reasons that follow explore God's good and righteous will for us, the truth by which He forms us, the mercy Christ gives us, and the life of love and service into which He joins us. Each of these reasons will be presented one-by-one in the weekly news bulletin. Watch for them starting in September.

Unless we are truly prevented, may our settled answer be: "Yes, we are going to church. This is where Christ gathers His people, and this is where we belong."

This Is Where We Belong

We come to church because Christ has called us. We come because we need His Word, His forgiveness, His Supper, and His peace. We come because our brothers and sisters need us, and we need them.

We do not come because our attendance earns salvation. Jesus has already earned salvation for us through His perfect life, His death upon the cross, and His victorious resurrection. We come because the risen Christ still gathers sinners to receive the gifts He purchased for them.

One day, sorrow, illness, crisis, or death will come to every one of us. We will need the Church to carry us when we no longer feel strong enough to carry ourselves. What a blessing it is to be known, loved, prayed for, and surrounded by the people of God—and, above all, to be held by Christ, who has promised never to leave us or forsake us.

This is who Christians are: people gathered by Jesus, forgiven by Jesus, fed by Jesus, joined to one another by Jesus, and sent back into the world in His name.



Financial Snapshot from July 1 2026 to July 31, 2026	Actual	Budgeted
Offerings and other income	\$16,643	\$16,981
Missions	\$0	\$0
Staff	\$5,474	\$6,058
Operations	\$7,742	\$9,855
Total expenses	\$13,216	\$15,913
Net Gain/Loss	\$3,427	\$1,068

NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

We welcome Zakary D'Alessandro to Outreach Comittee. Many thanks to all elected officers and committee members of our church, both old and new, for their time and dedication to Christ Lutheran Church!



Frank Elaschat Obituary

Frank S. Elaschat, of East Pittsburgh, peacefully passed on Monday, July 20, 2026, at the age of 74. Frank was the loving father of Meghan Elaschat. He is also survived by his brother, Ted Elaschat, and many friends. Frank was preceded in passing by his beloved wife, Melissa (Baldwin) Elaschat, and parents, Theodore "Hank" and Betty Elaschat. Frank was a loving and devoted father and husband. He enjoyed going to his cottage in Harmerville, Pa. He was also a devout member of Christ Lutheran Church in Forest Hills.



Thanks to everyone who came to Susan Robotzen's surprise birthday party! You all made Susan's day even more special.



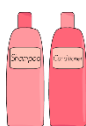
Women's Service Guild

LWML MITES—If you think pocket change is insignificant, just look what the Women's Service Guild has done! We have collected \$515.41 in change to support missions. If you have a heart for missions, you can pick up a Mite Box in the narthex or in the entry area by the office. One hundred percent of the money collected is sent to missions voted on at the district and national level. To drop off your money, put it in the blue box in the narthex. No amount is too small. Together Women in Mission make extraordinary things happen.



ALTAR GUILD – Contact Ruth Hirko about serving on the altar committee. They set up for Holy Communion, change altar paraments, launder the communion napkins, etc. New members are needed.

HOTEL TOILETRY ITEMS – The WSG distributes hotel toiletry items to veterans in need. There is a bin in the library for donations or see Dee Law for more information.



BOX TOPS EDUCATION – The Box Tops for Education has been phased out, and your grocery bill is now being scanned for Box Tops items that you have purchased. There is a bin in the library for the Box Tops for Education. Give Lois Frerking your grocery receipt to scan. Monies collected goes to Redeemer Lutheran Church school. See Lois for more information.



PRAYER SHAWL/LAP ROBE MINISTRY – Even though many of us cannot physically comfort a loved one or friend, we can still do so by giving them a shawl or lap robe. These were lovingly made by women of the congregation. Contact Linda Bright if you know someone who may need one or enjoy getting one.

TELEPHONE & E-MAIL COMMITTEE – If you know a member's new address, phone or e-mail address give it to Barb Mitchell or Rosalie Filler. If you move or change information, please remember to notify the office.



SHUT-IN CARD MINISTRY – A new packet for 2026 is available. Included in the mailing is a mailing schedule, names, addresses, and birthdates. Participants are asked to mail only one or two cards a month. Contact Lee Bognar or Kathy Sourbeer if you wish to participate this year.



STAMPS – Remember to slit open the bottom of the envelope, cut the envelope in half and give the canceled stamps to Lois Frerking or put them in the box in the library. These stamps enable the Canadian Bible Society to raise funds to purchase Bibles for prisoners and foreign missions to get Bibles in their native language.



UPDATE TO RECYCLING – The Lutheran Women's Missionary League is still accepting ink cartridges for recycling, but they are no longer accepting electronics. Thank you for all your help in the past.



PORTALS OF PRAYER – Current and back issues of the Portals of Prayer are available on the table in the library. Feel free to take a copy or two for friends or neighbors you feel could benefit from these.

HELPING HANDS – When there is a funeral luncheon or special occasion, women are needed to set up and prepare things, etc. Contact Rosalie Filler to become part of this very important ministry in our church.



ALTAR FLOWERS –The flower chart is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex of the church. Please check the chart for available dates. The cost of the flowers remains \$40. Make checks payable to WSG and put check in locked mailbox by the far office door.



QUILTING – No experience necessary. It is like sewing on a button - in and out and tie two knots. We are in need of old king and queen size mattress pads (for batting), top and bottom sheets for the back. If twin size sheets are donated, they will be pieced together to make 64x84 back. Regular batting material is also greatly appreciated. Pictured is the latest quilt made for the veterans. Contact Dee Law if you will be able to attend.



2025–2027 Mission Grant #9
Introducing Muslims to the Savior
Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Global — \$100,000

About This Mission Grant

Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) supports the mission of the church — bringing Christ to the lost so that, through the Holy Spirit and the Word, they may believe in Christ their Savior. For over 30 years, LHF has been extending the ministry of God's Word by translating and publishing Lutheran books that help explain the Bible. They have translated and published more than 1,500 titles in over 150 languages, which have been distributed at no cost to churches, pastors, individuals, and missionaries.

About a quarter of the world's population — over 1.9 billion — identify as Muslim. They are living in spiritual darkness and starving for the love of Jesus Christ.

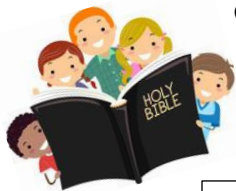
This grant will fund publication of over 20,000 Lutheran books, like the *Small Catechism*, *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, and devotions translated into the Arabic, Farsi, Bahasa Indonesian, and Kazakh languages that will be distributed in the United States and worldwide.

Rally Day

Join us for Rally Day Luncheon

on Sunday, September 13th, after Divine Service.

Together, we will kick off another year
of Sunday School and Bible Studies.



Classes begin on Sunday, September 13th, at 8:45am.

Grace upon Grace – A study of essential spirituality –
Pastor Bright, Room 4/5

A Book of the Bible – Barry Schoenthal – Library

Psalms – Confirmation Room

Important Dates in September 2026

Check the online calendar on the church website for up-to-date information

Sep 2 – Education Meeting 4:30pm
Sep 7 – Labor Day
Sep 13 – Rally Day, Sunday School and Bible Studies start
Sep 14 – Vocal Choir Rehearsal 7pm
Sep 15 – Lamplighter Deadline
Sep 15 – Council Meeting 7pm
Sep 21 – March For Life
Sep 21 – Vocal Choir Rehearsal 7pm
Sep 24 – Outreach Meeting 4pm
Sep 27 – Worship Assistant Meeting 11:30am
Sep 28 – Vocal Choir Rehearsal 7pm



Full Calendar:

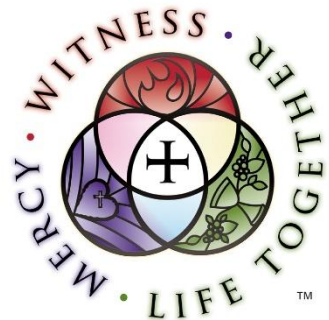


Church and Bible Class Times

Sunday
10 am Divine Service

Adult Bible Studies
8:45am-9:45am

Sunday School/Confirmation Class
Sunday-11:30am



Addresses for our Shut-Ins

Catherine Ertman

3000 Locust Ave. Apt 319
Braddock Hills, PA 15221

Bob Lindke

2190 Ipnar Road
Irwin, PA 15642

Ann Tubbs

41 Central Avenue
N. Versailles, PA 15137-1101

Lynn Fisher

Harmar Village
715 Freeport Rd
Cheswick, PA 15024

Carol Logsdon

Point Pleasant Asstd.Living, Rm 331
120 Mossie Blvd.
North Versailles, PA 15137

Sandra Uram

1516 Brinton Rd
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Robert & Bette Hamill, Jr.

1413 Maple Ave.
Turtle Creek, PA 15145

Audrey Marvenko

846 Joan Drive
North Versailles PA 15137

Jim and Evelyn Wise

Sheridan @ Bethel Park
2000 Cool Spring Drive, Room 355
Bethel Park, PA 15234

June Kolb

Goodwill Retirement Rm 4106
891 Dorsey Hotel Rd.
Grantsville, MD 21536

Katherine Mastrocola

200 Union Avenue
North Versailles, PA 15137

Anyone wishing to be added to the pastoral visitation schedule, please call the church office at 412-271-7173.



September Prayer Petition

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Celebrating in September 2026

Birthdays

9/2	Richard Mueller	9/20	Pauline Kuenzi
9/2	Kathleen Sourbeer	9/20	Lori Schriver
9/4	Jonathan Breight	9/24	Vivian Lehman
9/12	Katherine Mastrocola	9/25	Lynn Fisher
9/12	Dylan McNutt	9/28	Stephen Giovanetti
9/13	Carol Sapanara	9/28	Michael March
9/14	Carolyn Burr	9/29	Lori Logsdon
9/15	James Chick	9/29	Cody Schoenthal



Oktoberfest 2026

Saturday, October 3, 4 - 8 p.m.
Haven I



For your Enjoyment: The Mikey Dee Polka Band

For your Appetite: German-Themed Menu, Bake Sale

For your Kids: Bouncy Castle, Balloon Artist, Games, Pumpkin Decorating, Free Food and much more

For your Curiosity: Haven I Open House

Fireworks at 7:45 p.m.

Flu Shots (4-6 p.m.)

For more information call 724-352-8268

www.ConcordiaLM.org • Haven I - 112 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023



Serving Christ in September 2026

Altar Guild
September: Kathy Sourbeer



Date	Worship Assistant	Lector	Acolyte
6-Sep	Rich Mueller	Lois Frerking	Julia Stoner
13-Sep	Barry Schoenthal	Gloria Stern	Ryder Giovanetti
20-Sep	John Crawford	Annette Bowen	Madeline Stoner
27-Sep	Timothy Bright	Annette Bowen	Nate Patsko

The McKeesport Lions Club is still collecting the pop tabs that are then given to Ronald McDonald House. They use the tabs because they have more pure aluminum than the cans themselves. There is a box in the library. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



Please contact the church office by Friday at 10am at 412-271-7173 if you cannot fulfill the duty to which you have been assigned. If you are able to volunteer for any of these services, please let Jana know either by calling the church office or via email at officeassist@christlutheranfh.org. Thank you for your service. If you are interested in serving your church as a lector or an acolyte, please contact the office.

Please remember to **update your address and/or email address if you move**. If you have an email address you can share with us, it makes it easier to communicate with members.



As always, if you have any news you are willing to share, please email or give it to Kathy Sourbeer, ksourbeer@aol.com, or send it directly to Jana Savelkova at officeassist@christlutheranfh.org. Deadline is the 15th of the month. **NEWS**

How to Stay Connected to Christ Lutheran

Christ Lutheran has help for those who are institutionalized or staying at home. Sunday services are available on our Facebook page, ChristLutheranChurchFH. You can view the service live on Sunday mornings at 10am or watch a recording of the service later at your convenience. Bulletins, sermons, worship service booklets, and puzzles are mailed each week. If you would like to receive this weekly mailing please call the church office. All of these resources are also available on our church website, www.christlutheranfh.org, under the news section. Home communion is also available to all members after each communion service. Ask someone from church to bring it to you or call the church office. If you would like a visit from Pastor Bright, please also call the church office at 412-271-7173.