

Linden Letter

Linden Heights United Methodist Church

April 2019

Mission Statement: *To be a community of prayer, love, and forgiveness committed to leading persons to a living relationship with Jesus Christ and reaching out in acts of compassion and service.*

A Note from the Pastor

Matthew 28: 5-6 (NRSV) But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.”

I am always amazed by daffodils this time of year. They bravely and persistently push through the cold ground, shooting their sturdy green stalks into the air. Then they open their happy, yellow flowers. It seems as if nothing daunts them. They are not defeated by howling winds, pelting rain, or an overnight frost. We know that winter may make another appearance, after all, at this time last year there was snow on the ground with more in the forecast! The daffodils, however, do not seem to care that the weather is fickle or that winter may not yet be finished. They grow and bloom anyway. They remind us that even though everything in nature may seem cold or dead, spring and new life is on the way.

If you think about it, Easter is kind of like that. We look around our world and we see sin. We see the anger and hatred that seems to run unchecked. We see people struggling to survive or living in deplorable conditions. We see people suffering with physical illness, mental illness, and addictions. We see violence, terrorism, and war. We see damaged relationships and hurting people. We may even see ourselves in some of these situations. It might feel like and look like everything around us is cold and dead. We may even begin to think that there is no hope, no possibility of their being anything better. Jesus, however, was not daunted by the conditions of our world 2000 years ago and He is not daunted by the conditions of our world today. Jesus breaks through the coldness of our hearts and the violence of our world to bring new life. Because of the first resurrection, in Jesus we find love, light, joy, and hope. In Jesus, we know that the best is yet to come.

I pray that this Easter you will experience once again the presence and the power of our risen Lord.

Pastor Alicia

Children, Youth, & Families

Community Easter Egg Hunt

Our Community Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, April 13, 2-19, at 10 AM – **RAIN OR SHINE**. This event attracts many children and their families in the neighborhood! The Family Ministries Team hopes that every church member will be on hand - even if only for 15 - 30 minutes – to help greet our friends and neighbors and show them the love and caring you share so easily.

We do not need any plastic eggs; we have more than enough. This year, the Missions Ministry Team is supplying the candy and other goodies for the kids. **However**, in case some of you still want to donate, we are having a hard time finding affordable foil-wrapped chocolate eggs. We are hoping to put together 150 goody bags since we went through 100 of them last year – in the pouring rain, no less – so some chocolate eggs would be welcomed! Thanks!

We need some volunteers ahead of the event to help cut out some paper craft pieces. Please see Sarah Hamlin before or after church on April 7 to get the items for cutting. Event helpers will be needed before the event begins to set up a few tables and chairs and help hide eggs around the church grounds. We also need help during the event at the craft table, greeting our community friends who come to the hunt, handing out candy and drinks, sitting with the Easter Bunny to help with picture taking, monitoring the playground (make sure only the youngest go in to hunt for eggs and play) and any other task that might pop up. Any and all are welcome to help. Please sign up on the bulletin insert or let Pastor Alicia know what you would like to do to help. Please contact Sarah Hamlin if you have any questions at sehamlin17@gmail.com or (410) 254-0851.

A planning meeting for this year's VBS will be held this coming Sunday following the combined 10 am worship service.

If you would be interested in helping with this year's VBS program, held June 24-28, please plan to attend the meeting. If you cannot attend, please talk with Barb Yingling or the Pastor.

Youth Group will meet on April 7th and 14th this month.

On the 7th youth should wear old clothes, we may be dyeing Easter Eggs!

On the 14th we will be getting a preview of the Stations of the Cross.

Youth will not meet on April 21st. Plans for April 28th are still being made

Mission & Outreach

March & April Collection: We will continue to collect food and snack items for the schools in our area. This food helps feed hungry children on evenings and weekends when school is not in session.

In addition to food, we are collecting underwear, sweatpants, and leggings to give to children who have accidents in school so that they don't miss class time waiting for someone to bring them clean clothes. These items go to Pine Grove Elementary. The school would love to have items sized 4T-12. Gently used, clean leggings and sweatpants are fine. Please place any donations in the grey bin in the breezeway.

Church Events & Activities

Spring Clean Up

We have a lot to do in order to get our grounds ready for spring and summer. **Please join us this Saturday, April 6th, from 9 am-1 pm to help!** Even if you can only stay for part of the time, all help is welcome!

Lawn Mowers Needed

As good stewards of our property and our financial resources, we cut our own grass instead of hiring out to have that work done. We are in need of people to help mow throughout the summer. If you can help, please sign up on the sheet sitting on the stand behind the sanctuary or contact the church office. If you have questions about the time commitment, equipment, etc. please talk with Joe Discher. If you need his contact information call the church office.

Paint Day Scheduled for April 28th at 2 pm.

Join us in creating a fun spring time painting. The cost is \$25.00 per person. We are asking that, if possible, you preregister and prepay by April 24th so that we can ensure enough supplies.

Family Camping

This year we will once again be camping at Gifford-Pinchot in PA. We are in loop A, mostly in the general area of sites 20-28. If you would like to join us, please go online and make a reservation and then contact Sarah Hamlin at sehamlin17@gmail.com or (410) 254-0851 so that we know to expect you!

New Yoga Class Meeting at the church. Laur, a member of our greater community, will now be holding yoga classes on Tuesday mornings at 10 am. There is a fee to participate. Laur sends this message to us: “Come open your heart to Jesus. This class involves very light to mild stretching. Allow yourself to be still and immerse yourself closer to the presence of God. While listening to Christian music and meditating on scripture you will leave feeling lighter and closer to our good, good Father. For more information you may contact, Laur at 443-904-3055.”

Worship

We will have one, combined service at 10 am this coming Sunday, April 7th. Our children’s choir will be singing as we worship together!

Holy Week & Easter

We have a lot of wonderful activities and worship opportunities planned for you during Holy Week. I invite you to join us for all of them! Walk with Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem and hear the shouts of Hosanna! Sit with Jesus and the disciples in the upper room and share in Holy Communion. Kneel at the foot of the cross as Jesus dies. Journey with the women to the tomb while it is still dark. See the empty tomb and the risen Christ! Worship God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit on this, the most holy week of the year!

Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 13th at 10 am.

This is a large outreach event where members of the community join us for an egg hunt. We also offer pictures with the Easter Bunny, light refreshments, crafts, and prayer. We would like to have everyone in the church join us in greeting our neighbors and running the event. You have the opportunity to serve by helping with set up & hiding the eggs, running an egg hunting station, helping with crafts, serving refreshments, greeting people, talking with people, and cleaning up. Please sign up to help on the Opportunities Sheet and let us know where you would like to serve!

** This year, the Missions team is supplying the candy and other goodies for the kids. **However**, we are having a hard time finding affordable foil-wrapped chocolate eggs. We are hoping to put together 150 goody bags, so some chocolate eggs would be welcomed! Thanks!

Palm Sunday is April 14th. We will celebrate Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem with the waving of palms at the 9:15 am and 11 am services.

Stations of the Cross will open on **Monday, April 15th** and run through **Friday, April 19th.**

Hours are:

Monday-Wednesday– noon– 8 pm.

Thursday & Friday– 1 pm- 6:30 pm

The Stations of the Cross is a journey through the last hours of Jesus' life, beginning with his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane and ending with his burial in the tomb. Each of the 14 stations contains a scripture passage that tells a portion of the story, a short meditation, and a prayer. Each station also includes an interactive element, something that you can do to become a part of the story. We will once again be featuring original art work at each station as well.

Prayer Vigil: The 2019 Lenten Prayer Vigil will be held during the Stations of the Cross April 15-19. You can choose to pray inside or outside, weather permitting. Visit the Stations and stay to pray!

Holy Thursday is April 18th.

We will have two different worship opportunities to remember the Last Supper and Jesus' gift of Holy Communion.

* At noon we will have a quiet, contemplative communion service here at Linden Heights.

* At 7:30 pm we will have a Taizé service with communion at Arnolia UMC, off of Joppa Rd.

Good Friday is April 19th.

We will have two worship opportunities on Good Friday as we remember and give thanks for the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. Both services will be here at Linden Heights.

* Our noon service will be quiet and contemplative.

* At our 7:30 pm service, Arnolia UMC will be joining us. We will have handbells and the combined choir as part

Easter Sunday is April 21st. We have three different worship services on Easter Sunday. **There is no Sunday School on Easter!** We will all worship together.

* 6:00 am Sunrise Service– an informal service held outside in the garden, weather permitting. Please dress casually (and warmly). Feel free to bring a comfortable chair.

* 9:15 am– an informal family service geared towards children. Children and youth will participate in the service. Child friendly activities related to Easter will be available.

* 11 am– a traditional worship service. Our handbell and vocal choirs will participate in this service. We will also continue our tradition of singing Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus.”