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February 2019 LMD NL news will be due January 16, 2019.
E-Mail information to imd.newslettereditor@gmail.com.

One last message from St. Paul's – Thanks for everything!
Grace to you all, and Peace. On behalf of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Allentown, please accept our gratitude for your partnerships over the years, and more recently, for prayers and good wishes **as we prepare to close on December 30, 2018.** The congregation's decision to disperse throughout the area means that some of you may have visitors, and perhaps eventually members, who find their way from our home to yours. I trust that you will be as blessed by their presence and gifts as I have been. **Blessings on you and your congregations. Pastor Steve Shusett**

***NEW** - Sharing Life at St. Mark, Allentown extends a **big thank you** to all the LMD congregations for the gifts we received from **Christmas Ingathering.** It will make the lives of our clients a little bit brighter this year. Thanks so much! Merry Christmas to you and yours!

Set of Bells Wanted - St. Mark, Allentown, is starting a bell choir and is looking to purchase a set of bells from a congregation that may no longer need them. If you can help, please contact John Harkins at dubbada@aol.com.

The LMD Council is looking to add a few additional members to its ranks (Lay or Ordained) and needs a new treasurer. This group normally meets about 5 times a year on Sunday evenings at Western Salisbury Church. If you can help, please contact Dean Gade by phone [610-966-3030](tel:610-966-3030) or email stpeters@ptd.net.

Come Away To A Quiet Place – Centering Prayer is a particular form of quiet, receptive prayer as taught by Father Thomas Keating and Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault. A portion of each one-hour gathering will include some discussion about centering prayer. So, whether you are a beginner or an experienced pray-er, all are welcome. **First Fri., of each month Jan. 4, 2019 10:30 - 11:30 AM.** Led by Rev. Maritza Dolich and Rev. Dr. Tom Lichner. Center for Spiritual Awakening at Christ Lutheran Church, **1245 W. Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18102.** Parking in Lot across Hamilton St. from Church. Enter on 13th Street, look for the sign "Schantz House/Ruhe Annex". **Please let us know if you will be joining us.** Inquiries to Rev. Dr. Tom Lichner, Director Center for Spiritual Awakening tllichner@rcn.com / [610-533-9362](tel:610-533-9362).

***NEW - Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk News:** Thank you to all who generously supported the 2018 Walk. More than 260 walkers and other volunteers participated, involving 27 congregations and raising over \$28,660, one quarter of which will return to the Allentown area to help support the Lehigh Conference of Churches Soup Kitchen and the Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank. **Please Save These Dates for 2019!** Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk: Sun., Oct. 13, 2019, CROP Recruiters' Pizza Party/Kick-off: Sun., Aug. 25, 2019, both at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown. Thank you for your support of our neighbors in need locally and around the globe!

***NEW - Beyond Dementia - Sat. Jan. 26, 2019** (snow date Feb. 2) from **9am - 3pm.** Center for Spiritual Awakening, Christ Lutheran Church, **1245 W. Hamilton St, Allentown.** Join us for a contemplative day to explore ways we can journey in the sacred with those who are cognitively different. The day will be led by Elizabeth Buss, spiritual director and retreat leader, who has been companioning these persons for many years both in individual and group settings. A dynamic speaker, she will share her experience of working and being with these individuals in a spiritually centered way. Questions and registration email Mary Howe mhowe@rcn.com.

Updated - Can you provide an hour or two per week to help someone who wants to change their life? St Luke's at 417 Nth St, Allentown still has an ongoing need for volunteers to assist as tutors or substitutes for our growing multi-level ELL Program for individuals who desperately want to learn English. No foreign language needed. **ELL days and hours are, Monday and Thursday 9:30-11:30 a.m. this part of the program is in JEOPARDY due to insufficient volunteers. Wednesdays from 5:00-7:00 pm We always need help and are especially looking for people who are comfortable around computers.** Contact Leslie Talago or Pastor Lamb at [610-434-3943](tel:610-434-3943) or stluke@enter.net

***NEW – Bingo Social: Sun.- Jan. 27, 2019.** Doors open at 12:30p.m. – Games begin at 1:30p.m. Refreshments available. Tickets \$20 in advance/\$25 at the door. St Mark, 201 E Juniata St, Allentown, Luther Hall. **PLEASE** see attached **Flyer or pick up at your church.**

**** Please see more information on page 2 ****

2018 to 2019 REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

As we change the calendar from one year to the next, we are inclined to do a little reflecting about the changes taking place. We find ourselves looking back on the events of the past year and projecting our hopes for the New Year.

Unfortunately, as we look back on 2018 it is easier to identify the concerns and issues with which we found ourselves coping than with the positives with which we were blessed. It included some of the most serious weather and weather-related issues we have ever experienced. The effect of several storms was overwhelming, and the fires in California were devastating.

From our perspective, we will associate 2018 with the closing of St. Paul's Church, Allentown, after 256 years of history. Some of us have been around long enough to recollect its strong days of mission and ministry. I remember, for instance, Lenten Seasons back in the 60s when members of the congregation were enlisted to call its members to remind them of the mid-week services which were, consequently, "full-house" ventures. We are also well aware of the community service which it has continued to provide to those in center city and beyond. Obviously, we join Pastor Shussett, the staff, and the membership of St. Paul's in lamenting the decisions which they have had to make, but we give thanks for their more than two centuries of very faithful service.

And, that leads us in the direction of attempting to vision what the New Year will hold in store for us. As we respond to those storms and the fires that were kindled in an area which had seen almost no rain or related moisture for a very long period, we find ourselves hoping that the new year will include a significant commitment to working on the climate, ecological and global-warming concerns which need our attention.

And from our perspective, we are hoping that 2019 will challenge and encourage us to support the kinds of changes which will facilitate the mission and ministry of the church for years to come. Obviously, this will need to include creativity and imagination as we project the future. Ironically, right alongside of the St. Paul's change, there has been a creative decision made with regard to facilitating the relationship between center city and the suburban world. Pastor John Lamb has been providing faithful and bi-lingual service to St. Luke's Church in center city, but their budgeting has become an issue. He will continue serving them part-time but has also agreed to serve Cedar Church in suburban Cetronia in a similar capacity. Let's pray that these shared ministries project a positive ministry for the future.

So, as we change the calendars, move on into a new year, and pause to reflect on the positives and negatives of a year which is now history, let's also take time to project our hopes and dreams for the new year. May these reflections lead to creative renewal of our mission. **God Bless!**

Pastor Stough

OPERATION SUNSHINE

**1933 Hanover Ave.
Allentown, PA 18109**

Phone: 610-435-9155

Open: Mon 11-3 Wed. 9-4

E-mail: LMDopsunshine@aol.com

Web site: www.LMDopsunshine.com

Paula & Dick Skelly Co-Trip Coordinators

!!PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS!!

Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers. Please join us and invite your friends as we enjoy a variety of venues together.

*******SOLD OUT*******

**Mar. 21 (Thru) – Bristol Riverside Theatre –
THE SUNSHINE BOYS**

*******SOLD OUT*******

**Apr. 24 (Wed.) – Media Theatre –
SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER**

New trips to come in 2019!!!

**** **Continued from page 1** ****

***NEW - Wisdom Way of Knowing - 1/25, 2/22, 3/29, 4/26 from 3-5:30pm.** Center for Spiritual Awakening, Christ Lutheran Church, 1245 W. Hamilton St, Allentown, PA. This monthly gathering will introduce the rhythm and tools of a 'Wisdom way of knowing', an integral way of knowing which engages and harmonizes our three intelligence centers: heart, mind and movement. This will be an experiential gathering with a balance of centering, teaching, Lectio Divina and gentle body prayer. Together we will explore ways to weave the different components of Wisdom into our daily life and spiritual practice. RSVP to marcellak2@aol.com

***NEW - The Gospel of Thomas Series -** The first and third Wed. of the month **1:30 to 3:00 beginning Feb. 6, 2019.** Center for Spiritual Awakening, Christ Lutheran Church, 1245 W. Hamilton St, Allentown, PA. Discovered in a cave in Egypt in 1945, the Gospel of Thomas is a collection of 114 sayings of Jesus. Rather than being narratives, they are more like koans or riddles. They appeal more to the heart and imagination than to reason. You are invited to attend ongoing gatherings to explore this gospel using the prayer form of *lectio divina* (Latin for Divine Reading). Direct questions and registration to Mary Howe: mhowe@rcn.com