

The Spirit....

St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church



65 East Street Road
Feasterville, Pa. 19053

Reflections and Resolutions for a New Year

New Years Eve has come and slipped by us. Wherever you were that night seems to convey mixed emotions as countdowns everywhere brought light to 2010. It was a time of beginnings. It was a time to close the reflective door on the mistakes, difficulties and sadness of the past. As we journey into this New Year before us, let us make a commitment to extract only the elements of good from the past. The rest? Give to Christ Jesus who creates all things new to handle by His grace.

New Year's Eve was a time between farewell and new greetings. It was a summation of days – that with a midnight turning of our hourglass begins a new portion of our lives and of ourselves. You are new. This is a new hope and a new beginning.

A good character is not given at birth. It is a daily and yearly creation. It is an achievement in growth. It is the making of ourselves. It is a mental, emotional, and spiritual growth. Where are we going in this New Year? How can we grow in this New Year?

Jesus brought the winter roads of Palestine a New Year in His birth. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus gives direction of that and our New Year; “But strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” In facing the New Year, we need to seek the things of the Lord first. For spiritual prosperity and Christian growth: for a life that is truly rich and full; for a New Year that truly results in “new” beginnings resolve to:

- 1. READ THE WORD FAITHFULLY.** “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalms 119:105
- 2. PRAY BELIEVING.** “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” John 15:7;
- 3. WITNESS REGULARLY.** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witness...to the ends of the earth. “ Acts 1:8.

When we read the WORD, God talks to us. When we PRAY, we talk to god. When we WITNESS, we talk to someone about God.

It is a time to reflect and fuse together our personal treasures from the past. Let us each make a heart-signed resolution to live in the present to the full extent of our opportunities – always seeking God's kingdom first for the benefit of our homes, our church, our community and eventually the world.

The second hand has touched the “12” and has moved on. It is a new beginning. With a surge of hope let us walk into the New Year with faith in God, faith in His Spirit at work in us and His church, and faith in the future.



Happy New Year – Happy New Beginnings!

Pastor John

To my dear Church Friends
Thank you so much for all your prayers and love and cards. I'm getting better and better because of all your caring hearts. You have been a blessing to me and I know God is with me every step of the way.

God Bless
Edith Witzel

We Give Thanks

As we close the old year and start a new it seems an appropriate time to thank all those who work all year to make better the lives of others....

Thank you **Al G., Florence Dudley and Walter Klemm** for being St. Stephen's representatives to Thrivent. By their efforts our church receives matching monies for projects that help our community.

Charlie Baun Steps Down

Effective this month Charlie Baun completes his two year term as Council president and passes the baton to Gary Bowman. Thanks, Charlie for all your knowledge and diligence and good ol' fashioned hard work! Does this mean more time on the golf course? Probably not since Charlie begins a new term serving as Council VP under Dr. Gary Bowman, our newly appointed Council President.

Dr. Bowman comes to us with impressive credentials in public education. A longtime member of St. Stephen's, his service to the church continues with this new position.

Many thanks to other council members who leave at the end of expired terms: Jenn Schneider, Dawn Boger and Paul Boger. We appreciate the effort and the many hours you have given to St. Stephen's.

Welcome to new council members: Christine Strobel, Ray Shipley, Laura Brynes and to Helen Gallagher who stepped in last year to complete a vacant position.

A big Thank you to all board members, old and new! The congregation sends congratulations, prayers and good wishes for continuing its business of God's work.

- ❖ They gave out 39 baskets of food for Thanksgiving. They gave a Christmas party for all the food bank families. They work hard all year to administer the food bank but especially at holiday time. Thank you **Conrad and Virginia Adami** for all your good works.

But they couldn't have done it without others. We also thank those who helped to host the Christmas party and for those of you who gave food and gifts to make a happier Christmas for many families.

- ❖ It was a moving and inspiring performance of "Messiah". All who came were uplifted and blessed by the music. Thank you to **all the musicians** who participated in the special concert on December 13th.

The gift of life...Over 70 people gave to the Blood Bank on December 4th. What greater gift!

- ❖ The pastors want to express thanks for all the beautiful Christmas cards and gifts from members of the congregation. "We really appreciate your kindness to both of us. **It is a real joy to be pastors at this church!**"

And to all those who contributed to Aid for Friends or brought gifts for soldiers and to those with generous hearts and unclaimed deeds we say "Thank You!"



*Let your light shine before men that they might see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:16*

The lamp, symbolizing the illuminating power of God and His precepts, has a rich history in the bible where it was mentioned as far back as Leviticus. An “eternal light” stood in the Tent of Meeting when the Israelites were still in the desert. The tending of the lamp in the Jerusalem Temple was a sacred duty performed only by the Levite priests.

In the New Testament Jesus referenced the lamp as a symbol of the “eye of the body” (Matthew 6:22). Luke 12:35 compares the burning lamp to the vigilance of a faithful servant. And in Matthew 5:14-16 the disciples are instructed to be the light of the world and to give light to all.

Our Sanctuary lamp, a beautiful gift from a church member, continues the custom from ancient Jewish times of always having a light burning near the altar. Our lamp burns throughout the week and symbolizes Christ’s living presence in the church.

The Census Then and Now

The year 2010 is a census year as was the year 539 BC. From this we know there were over 2 million people following Moses under God’s direction to Canaan. Join our Bible Study at 9:30 each Tuesday morning as we learn of the struggles and challenges of the journey to God’s promised land.

*****MAY ALL YOUR TROUBLES LAST AS LONG AS YOUR NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS - JOEY ADAMS**



ATTENTION READERS

Book Review

The Shack by William Paul Young is a fascinating story of Mack whose daughter was abducted and murdered. After years of blaming himself and God, Mack came face to face with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. A new concept of the Triune God and eternal life evolve as one reads on. The Shack is a very thought provoking novel.

Florence Dudley

With Sympathy

The congregation would like to extend its sympathies to the family of Harry Laughlin, Jr. on his death and entrance into Everlasting Life.

Sympathy is also extended by the congregation to the family of Rita Brown. Rita was a sweet woman who will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

George Schneider, a long, long time member and good friend to the church, has also entered into eternal Life. George will be remembered at a Funeral Service on January 9th, 10:00 a.m., at St. Stephens’.



**St Stephen's
Lunch Bunch**

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Our meeting will be held in Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m. We will be playing Bingo as our weather is always iffy in January.

Lunch will be at the Chinese Buffet near church. Our price per person is \$10.00. Please sent check for St. Stephen’s Lunch Bunch to Ann Stellwagen, 432 Walnut Ave, Trevoese, Pa. 19053



First Holy Communion News

First Communion classes will be held on February 14th, 21st and 28th. Communicants will take their first communion on Sunday, March 7th.

Now Hear This

When inclement weather occurs, please tune to KYW TV and watch the screen for our closing on their community list. They begin to run at 5 AM the day of closing, and it could take until 7AM to see it posted.



Make a New Year Commitment

Imagine the “Legacy of this Congregation” if every member would include the Endowment fund for the future of St. Stephen’s in their estate plans. Remember, no estate is too small.

Just What are those Kids up to?

Our young people have been very busy these past two months. Under the direction of Dawn Boger, they conducted both services on November 22nd. All those who attended will agree it was a great job! On December 6th, they held a hoagie sale and cleared over \$350.00. They went caroling and took home made cookies to our shut-ins. A much deserved retreat to the Poconos is planned for January 15th through 17th.



CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD

The Financial Report each month will be posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please be sure to keep current with your offerings.

Visit Our Church Website

www.ststephenslutheranchurch.org

If you are an individual or group that would like events/announcements/pictures on the church website please contact Paul Boger at:

Paul@aktivewebdesign.com or call 215-230-9186

You are Invited

The Feasterville Ministerium will sponsor the Martin Luther King Jr. Ecumenical Service on January 18th, 7:00 PM, at Linconia Tabernacle Church, 2460 Paris Ave in Trevoese. Please come and worship with others in our Christian Community.

Read God’s Word

Jesus’ mother tells the wine steward: “do whatever he tells you”. When they did, the water turned to wine; not just any wine, but the best wine ever! Do you do what Jesus tells you? Do you think that if you did you might have a wonderful surprise in your life? Try it and see. Read John 2: 1-11



Just a reminder!

The deadline for submission to the February issue of “The Spirit” newsletter is January 9th. This is your newsletter! If you have a tidbit, a joy or concern to share with the congregation don’t hesitate to let us know.

Paper Whites



I've always loved the big bulbs that grow right on top of the soil - or moss - or stones, whatever they happen to be sitting on. And there they were...paper white bulbs! And they were 5 for \$6.00...reasonable enough.

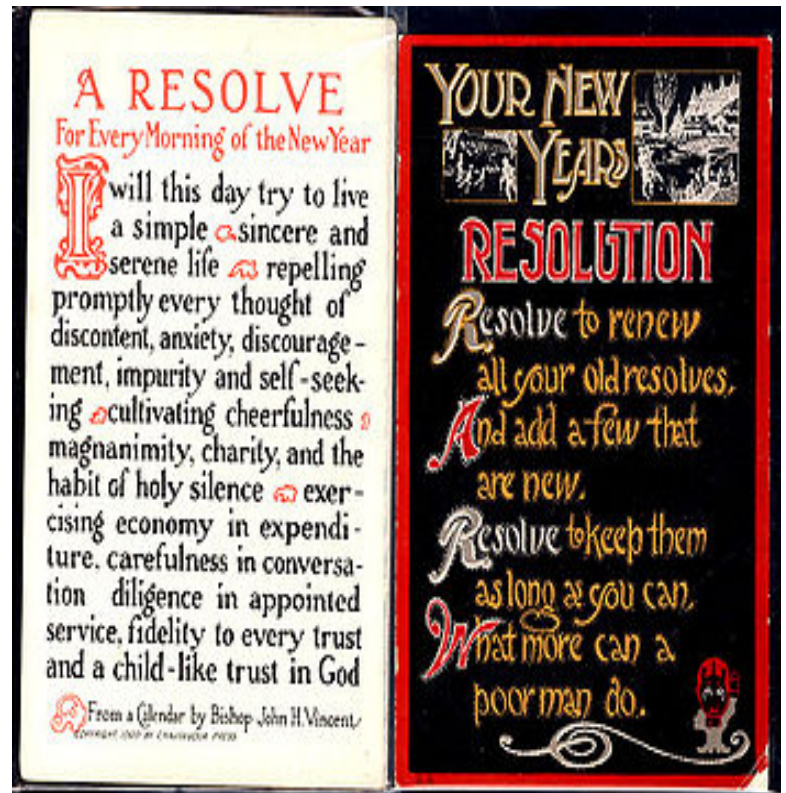
I brought them home but life intervened and they stayed in the brown bag for about 3 weeks. I probably blew it, I thought, but figured what do I have to lose? One day I arranged them in a small dish. Hmm, Crowded, but, then again, they are supposed to be.

JUST ADD WATER the instructions said. Okay. Almost immediately they started to grow...and grow...and grow. And then, bud bumps started to develop. Maybe I'll have paper whites for Christmas, I thought. But this was not to be. On December 25th, there were stalks and buds, just stalks and buds. By Dec. 28th the buds were just starting to burst but no flowers yet. By December 30th each bud had one little white flower perched on top but not impressive.

The big reveal presented itself on New Year's Day. I slept in after a late night New Years Eve. And as I awoke, there they were... Ten beautiful blooms. Ten Paper Whites for 2010! Ten large beautiful blooms to say Happy New Year.

Carol A. Dunn

It looks like we've been making (and breaking) New Year Resolutions for a long long time. Some things never change....



Early 19th century post card

HAPPY NEW YEAR

