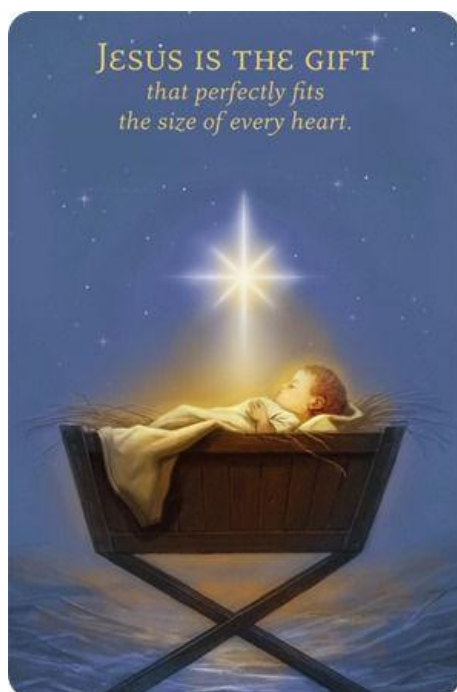


# **BERN LUTHERAN CHURCH**

820 West Leesport Road

Leesport, PA 19533

*Address Service Requested*



# BERN BUGLE'S

December 2025

# JOYFUL NOTES

Volume 28, Issue 12

## **MAILING ADDRESS:**

Bern Evangelical Lutheran Church  
820 West Leesport Road  
Leesport, PA 19533  
Phone: 610-374-4343 / Fax: 610-374-1014  
Email: [bernlutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bernlutheranchurch@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.berchurch.org](http://www.berchurch.org)  
Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Bern-Lutheran-Church-103625754955228>

## **WORSHIP:**

In-Sanctuary Worship on Sundays at **10:00 a.m.**

## **MINISTERS:**

ALL THE MEMBERS EVERYDAY

## **DESIGNATED PASTOR:**

Pastor Gary Rarick, Phone: 610-401-1545 (cell)

## **PARISH SECRETARY:**

Korinne Hotzman, 610-790-7195 (cell)  
Office Hours: Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

## **MUSIC DIRECTOR:**

Jane Battaglieri, Phone: 610-370-0965

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

Brenda Reichart, President  
Richard Gruber, Vice President  
Jane Battaglieri, Secretary  
David Hartman, Treasurer  
Pat Yocum, Financial Secretary  
Christopher Becker  
Richard Greener  
Matthew Kasisky  
Linda Lash  
Erin Readinger  
Theresa Shurr

## **BUILDING PRINCIPLES:**

- Devotion to Jesus as Lord and Savior
- Compassionate Sharing and Community Service
- Persistent Faithfulness
- Courageous Witness
- Flexible Leadership

## **PURPOSE STATEMENT:**

God's purpose for our congregation is to:

Learn God's mission

Share God's love

Witness through Word and Service

Welcome all to a fellowship of forgiveness and thankful praise

## **Bern Bugle's Newsletter Sponsor**

The December *Bern Bugle's Joyful Notes* is sponsored in honor of JoAnn Ketz's 79<sup>th</sup> birthday by Phil Ketz.

## **Council Meeting Highlights**

The following discussions took place and decisions made at our Council Meeting on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup>:

- Approved adding a lending library stocked with books outside of the church. Books available will include Bibles.
- Discussed needed repairs to the heating system. Will evaluate options when more information is available.
- Appointed Beverly Moyer to the vacant council seat. She has agreed to fill the 3-year term that is available.

**The next Council Meeting will be held on Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

## **Wreaths Across America**

The **deadline to order** wreaths to remember our military veterans is coming up on **Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>**. The laying of the wreaths will take place on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. A service will take place before the laying of the wreaths at 1:00 p.m. at Bern UCC. Please come into the church building at 1:00 p.m. for the service and your assignments. If you are interested in helping to lay the wreaths, contact Barry Shurr at 610-372-7229. See the order form included in this newsletter for more details and to place your order.

## **Poinsettia Orders Due**

Don't forget to place your orders for your poinsettias for our Christmas Eve service. An order form is included in this newsletter. **Orders are due on Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.**



## Sunday School

All children are invited to join us for Sunday School after the worship service from 11:00-11:30 a.m.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There will be no Sunday School on **Sunday, December 28**, due to the Christmas holiday.

## Staff Christmas Gifts

If you would like to contribute towards monetary Christmas gifts for our Designated Pastor, Gary Rarick, our supply pastors, Kenneth Gould, William Fryer and David Kistler, our organist, Jane Battaglieri, or our Secretary, Korinne Hotzman, please place your donation in an envelope and mark the amount you are contributing to each staff member's gift. The supply pastor donations will be divided evenly between them. Envelopes can be found on the offering table in the narthex. You may place your contribution in the offering plate or mail it to the church. **Contributions will be due by Sunday, December 14th.** Thank you!

## Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the January *Bern Bugle* are due by **Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**.

## Christmas Eve Worship Service

Join us on **Wednesday, December 24, at 7:00 p.m.** for our Christmas Eve worship service. We will be celebrating the birth of Jesus. Pastor Kenneth Gould will be leading our worship service which will include Candlelight, Holy Communion, and a Children's Sermon.



## Office Closed

The church office will be closed on **Thursday, December 25**, in observance of the Christmas holiday. The office will reopen on Tuesday, December 30<sup>th</sup>.

## Annual Committee Reports

It is time to begin thinking about and preparing the committee reports to be included in our 2025 Annual Report. Please have your reports submitted to the church office no later than **Sunday, January 18**, so they can be assembled and available for members prior to our Congregational Meeting in February 2026. Thank you!

## Offering Envelopes for 2026

Member offering envelopes for 2026 are now available for pick up in the hallway at church. Please pick up your envelopes as well as any family

members. You can also stop into the office to pick up your envelopes if you would like.

## Angel Tree

We will again be participating in the Berks County Children & Youth Services Christmas gift program. There will be a tree in the narthex with names of children who are in need of some Christmas cheer. You will find some gift suggestions to pick from. If you would like to participate, please select a name from the tree that you would like to shop for. Please sign your name on the sheet next to the tree with the name of the child you are purchasing a gift for. Gifts will be due to church by Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your generous support!

## Bulletins and Newsletter Sponsorships

Sign-up sheets for 2026 are now available on the bulletin board in the hallway. A decision is still being made about the Altar Flowers. Please sign up if you would like to sponsor any items and dates.

## Harvest Home - ELCA World Hunger

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Harvest Home collection for ELCA World Hunger. Through your generosity, we collected a total of **\$286.00** to help support those in need. Your contributions make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families facing hunger.

## Safe Berks

Thank you to those who contributed to the Safe Berks purple ribbon campaign for domestic violence awareness during the month of October. A total of \$37.00 was raised.

## Bern Church T-shirts

Some members have expressed an interest in purchasing Bern Church t-shirts. These shirts would then be worn when we are out and about in the community sponsoring



outreach projects, such as assisting at the Food Pantry. The Outreach Committee is exploring options, but wanted to first determine interest since some options are based on volume ordered. Cost per shirt may range from \$15-\$20 based on shirt size. If you think you might be interested in purchasing a t-shirt, please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway.



## CHRISTMAS AT EPLER'S UCC

### *Epler's UCC Food and Faith Worship Service*

You are invited to join along with the members of Epler's UCC on **Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>**, for their Food & Faith fellowship meal at 6:00 p.m. followed by a worship service at 7:00 p.m. The theme will be "Blue Christmas." Music provided by Linda Hammond on harp. All are welcome!

### *Christmas Camp*

Epler's UCC, 1151 W. Leesport Road, is hosting their free Christmas Camp on **Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** Parents can drop off their kids for the day and wrap presents, go shopping, clean, or just take a break from the holiday rush. Potty-trained children through age 17 can spend the day playing games, doing crafts, listening to stories, singing, and more! Even though the camp is free, registration is still required. **No forms will be accepted after Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>**, so get your forms in early. Registration forms are available on their website at [www.eplerschurch.org](http://www.eplerschurch.org). If you have any questions, contact Brea Rarick at 570-441-1980 or at [brea.rarick@gmail.com](mailto:brea.rarick@gmail.com).

### *Cookie Walk*

Epler's Church Youth Group would like to invite you to their Cookie Walk on **Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**. Stop by the church between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to choose from a variety of homemade cookies to purchase. Select your favorites or try something new. Boxes will cost \$8.00 each or two for \$15.00. This is a great opportunity to purchase a variety of homemade cookie types without having to bake them yourself and support the youth of a neighboring church at the same time. We hope to see you there!

### *Traveler's Christmas Eve Worship Service*

Do you travel for Christmas and are unable to attend Christmas Eve worship? Epler's UCC is offering an opportunity to experience Christmas Eve worship in person on **Thursday, December 18 at 7:30 p.m.** This service will include all of the regular Christmas Eve worship experiences including a choir anthem, singing Christmas hymns, hearing the Christmas Story, and the candlelight singing of Silent Night. All are welcome to join in this service.

## SV Food Pantry Collection

Thank you to everyone who continues to donate food for the SV Food Pantry. For the month of November, Bern Lutheran Church donated 297

food items to the SV Food Pantry broken down as follows: 59 cans of soup, 132 cans of vegetables, 11 cans of fruit, 16 jars of pasta sauce, 55 cans of tuna, 20 cans of chicken, and 4 bags of cookies. Thank you to Doug Myers who delivered the food. The food pantry thanks the Bern members for the continued support.



## Baptism Congratulations

Congratulations on the baptism of Calvin James Gardner, which was celebrated on Sunday, November 30, with Pastor Kenneth Gould officiating. Surrounded by family, friends, and members of the congregation, Calvin was welcomed into the family of God with gratitude and joy. We also give thanks for Matthew and Rowbee'C Kasisky, who were honored to stand with the family as Calvin's godparents. Please continue to keep Calvin and his family in your prayers as they walk together in Christ's love, seeking God's guidance and blessing in the years ahead.

## Thrivent Choice Dollars

Just a reminder to consider designating your "Choice Dollars" to Bern Lutheran Church. This program continues to benefit our church through your quarterly designations. Thrivent's phone number is 800-847-4836. When you hear the menu of options, simply say "Choice Dollars" and you will be connected to an operator to conduct the transaction. To make your designation by email, go to [www.Thrivent.com](http://www.Thrivent.com) and fill in the necessary information. Thank you for your contributions.

## INCOME AND ATTENDANCE

<u>For the Week Ending</u>	<u>Income toward Budget Expenses</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
10/05/2025	\$4,453.00	47
10/12/2025	\$1,025.00	46
10/19/2025	\$ 760.10	30
10/26/2025	\$2,330.10	41

***\$3,259.19 is needed per week to meet 100%  
of the Budgeted Expenses***

### Budget Report – Year to Date

	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$26,007.00	\$123,465.00
Congregational Fundraising	.00	4,068.00
Total Funds	<u>\$26,007.00</u>	<u>\$127,353.00</u>

<u>Actual Income / Expenses</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budgeted Income	\$10,167.00	+\$95,781.00
Non-Budgeted Income	15,840.00	+31,572.00
Budgeted Expenses	25,744.00	-114,638.00
Non-Budgeted Expenses	80.00	-7754.00
Benevolence to be Paid	848.00	-848.00
Surplus/Deficit	+496.00	+4,113.00

<u>Benevolence to Oct. 31</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>2025 Pledge</u>
Synod and ELCA	\$915.50	\$3,000.00
World Hunger	1,364.50	1,500.00
Mission Field	908.50	1,300.00
W.B.M.D.	453.50	600.00
Other	870.25	.00

<u>Capital Improvement Acct.</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Member Contributions	\$100.00	\$ 1,205.00
Interest	94.52	960.07
Expense	<u>.00</u>	<u>.00</u>
		\$49,052.82

<u>Savings Account</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$ .00	\$ 1,161.00
Interest	.00	7,533.72
Expenses	.00	<u>.00</u>
		\$284,711.94



(\* Denotes 80 years young)

3	Andrew Kasisky
7	Margaret Hey *
12	Owen Steiger
15	Theresa Shurr
17	Pastor Kenneth Gould
17	JoAnn Ketz
18	Nicholas Braucher
20	Nancy Malandra *
21	Matthew Reichart
23	Jeffrey Shurr
27	Beverly Moyer
27	Barbara Speicher
27	Brooke Steiger
31	Marke Wismer



7	Richard and Christine Gruber (51 years)
7	Jeffrey and Sandra Schucker (51 years)
14	Richard and YuYun Greener (23 years)
26	Michael and Brenda Reichart (44 years)



"The light of Christ fills us, but is always meant to shine through us as well." - Tripp Prince

# IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

## **MEMBERS:**

Greg Knabb, Peggy Reagan, Evelyn Drobnick, Tina Hissinger, Berry Hey, Sally Koch, Margaret Hey, Richard Greener, JoAnn Ketz, Donna Marks, Pauline Shuman, Lisa Miller, and Ruth Keeney.

## **FAMILY AND FRIENDS:**

Jessica Keller, Joanna Fryer, Joel Koch, Pastor David Kistler, Cynthia, Bill, Charlotte, Kathy, Dolores Neidig, Lara and Drayton Pappas, Sheila Becker, Joan Ponzurick, Dick and Janet, Jean, Mary, Delores Kistler, Kathy Sutphin, Eddie Kissling, Nick Odagis, Danielle Roberts, Sheri Mafeo, Eleanor, Glenva, Courtney Davis, Giselle Davis, Matt DeLeon, Pastor Joyce Seip, Philip Triantis, Mike, Peggy Deemer, Joe and Karen Young, Brian, Jamie Hey, Glenn Jones, Kailey, Renee Fullmer, Patrick, Susan, and Joyce.

*(If you would like to add anyone to our prayer list, please contact Korinne in the church office. Please also notify her of anyone that could be removed.)*



Dear Bern Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for hosting and facilitating a clothing drive for Hope Rescue Mission. Your thoughtfulness and kindness are deeply appreciated, and your contributions will directly help those in our community who need it most. We want you to know that your gift of clothing, warm coats and sweaters are already making a difference by providing comfort and warmth to our residents. With donations like yours, we can better provide essential supplies and help us continue our mission to support individuals transitioning out of homelessness.

We are so grateful for your support and for helping us create a more positive environment for everyone we serve.

Thank you,

*Diane Schenk*

Director of Hope Thrift Distributing

**PURPOSE STATEMENT:** We show compassion to empower and transform, serving the homeless and reflecting Christ's love.

## **ALTAR FLOWER, BULLETIN, AND NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIPS**

You can sponsor Altar Flowers for \$35.00/week, Bulletins for \$20.00/week, or our monthly Newsletter for \$40.00/month.

### **Altar Flower Sponsors:**

December 7 – Rick and Chris Gruber  
December 14 – Bob and Tina Hissinger  
December 21 – Phil and JoAnn Ketz  
December 28 – Barbara Auchenbach

### **Bulletin Sponsors:**

December 7 – Sonja and Emily Starr  
December 14 – Barry Shurr  
December 21 – The Reichart Family  
December 24 – Nancy Malandra  
December 28 – Beverly Moyer and Barbara Speicher

### **Newsletter Sponsor:**

*sponsor needed*

### **Church Openers:**

December 7 – Richard Gruber  
December 14 – Christopher Becker  
December 21 – Christopher Becker  
December 24 – Theresa Shurr  
December 28 – Linda Lash

### **Church Greeters:**

December 7 – Barbara Auchenbach  
December 14 – Barbara Auchenbach  
December 21 – Barbara Auchenbach  
December 24 – Barbara Auchenbach  
December 28 – Nancy Malandra

### **Lectors:**

December 7 – Beth Hartman  
December 14 – Tracey Leh  
December 21 – Jay Field  
December 24 – David Greenwood  
December 28 – Richard Gruber

### **Communion Assistants:**

December 7 – Hannah Lash  
December 14 – Tracey Leh  
December 21 – Dianne Leininger  
December 24 – Linda Lash

### **Supply Pastor Schedule:**

December 7 – Pastor William Fryer  
December 14 – Pastor Kenneth Gould  
December 21 – Pastor Kenneth Gould  
December 24 – Pastor Kenneth Gould  
December 28 – Pastor William Fryer



# DECEMBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Wreaths Across America Orders Due to Barry Shurr	2 Social Hall and Kitchen reserved for cookie mixing	3 Social Hall and Kitchen reserved for cookie baking	4	5 Social Hall and Kitchen reserved for cookie baking  6:00pm-"Blue Christmas" Food & Faith Fellowship Meal  7:00pm-"Blue Christmas" Food & Faith Worship Service	6 9:00am-3:00pm-Epler's UCC Christmas Camp
7 <u>Second Sunday of Advent</u> 10:00am-Worship Service -Poinsettia Orders Due  11:30am-12:30pm-Epler's UCC "Cookie Walk"	8	9 9:00am-Berks Quilters Guild All-day Workshop (Social Hall reserved)	10 6:00pm-Hawk Mountain Boy Scouts (Social Hall reserved)	11	12	13 1:00pm-Wreaths Across America, Bern UCC
14 <u>Third Sunday of Advent</u> 10:00am-Worship Service -Staff Christmas Gifts due -Angel Tree Gifts due	15 7:00pm-Council Meeting	16   Newsletter Deadline	17	18 7:30pm-Epler's UCC Traveler's Christmas Eve Service	19	20
21 <u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u> 10:00am-Worship Service	22	23 4:30pm-Berks Festival of Faith (Social Hall reserved)	24 7:00pm-Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service	25   OFFICE CLOSED	26	27
28 <u>First Sunday of Christmas</u> 10:00am-Worship Service -Social Hour after worship  NO Sunday School	29	30	31 			



We are planning to adorn our sanctuary with red and white poinsettias for our Christmas Eve service. If you would like to order any plants, please return this form with your payment and place in the offering plate or mail to the church office by **Sunday, December 7th**. The price for each plant is \$6.50. Thank you!

Number of poinsettias at \$6.50 each: red\_\_\_\_\_ white\_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

ENVELOPE #: \_\_\_\_\_

DEDICATIONS (*In Honor of, In Memory of, or To the Glory of God*):

In honor of:

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In memory of:

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Given to the Glory of God:

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**PLEASE NOTE: A minimum of 60 poinsettias are needed in order to decorate the poinsettia tree, with 25 of those being white for the cross in the middle. Thank you!**





# NATIONAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025

Each December on National Wreaths Across America Day, our mission to Remember, Honor, and Teach is carried out by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at more than 1,600 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea and abroad.

### WHY WE DO IT

We understand we have Veterans Day in the fall and Memorial Day in the spring, but our service members sacrifice their time and safety every single day of the year to preserve our freedoms. In many homes, there is an empty seat for one who is serving or one who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. There is no better time to express our appreciation than during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. We hope you will join us at any of our more than 1,600 participating locations to show our veterans and their families that we will not forget. We will never forget.

Please help Bern Cemetery Company remember our military veterans by sponsoring a wreath in either Bern Cemetery or the Bern Historic Graveyard this holiday season.

**The cost for the wreath is \$17.00.** They are live wreaths from Maine and are 22" in diameter with a red bow. **The Wreaths Across America service will begin at 1:00 p.m. at Bern Reformed UCC, on Saturday, December 13, 2025.** Wreaths will be placed at the graves following the service.

**Please make checks payable to "Bern Cemetery Company" and give to Barry Shurr or place in offering plate.** Checks may also be mailed to: Barbara Reed, Treasurer, Bern Cemetery Company, 3 Brossman Lane, Wernersville, PA 19565 or Barry Shurr, 118 Berkley Street, Reading, PA 19605. **The deadline is Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.** If you are interested in assisting with the laying of the wreaths that day, please let Barry Shurr know.

Please return this bottom portion with your check by Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Thank you!

-----  
Sponsor (your name): \_\_\_\_\_

Place on grave(s) of \_\_\_\_\_ or where needed \_\_\_\_\_

Number of wreaths \_\_\_\_\_