

# the Voice parish newsletter



**Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church**  
975 Washington Road Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania 15228

*“You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf.” –John 5:39*

The above verse from John makes the point that we can know the Bible but still lack a relationship with Jesus Christ, the distinction between knowing *about* Jesus but not *knowing* him. Salvation doesn't come from any book, including the Bible, but from a relationship of faith in the living Lord.

The 40 days of Lent are about self-examination and the fine distinctions of faith such as what we find in John 5:39. The nuance of this verse is helpful to explore as well as parallels from daily life...

Think of marriage where two inhabit a home, but live separately with no love; or think of a workaholic, absentee parent (*any man can be a father, but not every father is a dad*). In both cases, a relationship is missing. Think of how COVID-19 stultified learning—students sitting in front of computer screens, but with no personal attention from a teacher.

Christ knows us, but wants us to know him; to experience his grace in a community of believers. Americans increasingly *hear* of God, know *about* God, but do not *know* God. The rip tide of secularism has pulled us from the shoreline of true faith.

In a recent book, *The Territories of Science and Religion*, research professor Peter Harrison outlines how religion, once the experience of God and the cultivation of inner, moral dispositions, became over time arid doctrine to which we assent. Science changed too. Once an inquiry into God's creative wonders, it's now an expanding realm of knowledge driven by profit with no thought of God.

Lent is for self-examination, to think about faith and the direction of our lives. Mostly, it's a time to repent of sin, pursue holy living, and to humbly return with gusto to the source of our faith and life, Jesus Christ. Jesus is eternal life; nothing else, no one else is, not even the Bible. Christ is our salvation.

In Christ, with you, during Lent and always,

Pastor Doug Heagy



**March, 2023**

# FROM THE STEWARDHIP COMMITTEE

## Consider percentage-basis giving

No matter how or what amount you give to your congregation, thank you! Your offerings sustain important ministries, and there is no such thing as an inappropriate or inadequate offering.

But if you are among the many who give regularly on a “lump sum” basis, consider giving on a percentage basis instead.

The “lump sum” basis is when donors give a fixed amount – say, \$50 a week – to the church, regardless of what percentage it represents in their annual income. The advantage of lump sum giving is that it’s simple to calculate and keep track of. But lump sum giving reveals little about the generosity behind the gift. For a poorer family, \$50 a week may be significant, whereas it could be a pittance for a wealthy family.

Since the Bible lifts up the principles of sacrificial giving as well as tithing, giving by percentage provides a better measure for giving. Once a family has calculated their gift as a percentage of income, it’s easier to track it and, over time, build up to a tithe. Here’s how to get started with percentage giving:

- Calculate your regular offering over the course of the year.
- Divide the total yearly offering by your total annual income. This will give you a figure.
- Multiply that figure by 100 to determine your percentage giving.

When planning your offering, consider increasing it by 1 percent a year. If you do, in less than 10 years you will be tithing. Whatever you give, thank you for supporting God’s ministries.

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# *Musical Musings—March 2023*

## *by Chris Keenan*

The prelude on March 26th will be J.S. Bach's Partita on Sei Gegrüsset, Jesu Gütig (Hail to You, Kind Jesus). This 20 minute work starts with a chorale, followed by 11 variations in different styles. The work dates to 1705, when Bach was 20 years old and working as an organist at the Bonifatiuskirche in Arnstadt. This was the same year Bach requested leave to hear Buxtehude play in Lübeck (a leave he overstayed by 3 months, and for which he was punished for insubordination!) The translation of the text is below:

1. Jesu, Saviour, heed my greeting!  
 Kind and gentle is Thy being.  
 Long the torture Thou hast suffered,  
 Deep the insults to Thee offered.  
 Let me all Thy love inherit,  
 And meet death in Thy sure merit!

2. Jesu, Master, dearest treasure,  
 Christ, my Saviour, my heart's pleasure,  
 Hands and piercéd Side, O show me,  
 Should r tempted be to doubt Thee!  
 Let me all Thy love inherit,  
 And meet death in Thy sure merit!

4. O Thou fountain ever flowing,  
 Gracious comfort e'er bestowing,  
 When Death lays his hand upon me  
 Help me then to meet him boldly!  
 Let me all Thy love inherit,  
 And meet death in Thy sure merit!

5. Sweet refreshment floweth freely  
 To Thy children stayed upon Thee.  
 On Thy Passion, Lord, relying,  
 Nought I fear the hour of dying.  
 Let me all Thy love inherit,  
 And méet death in Thy sure merit!



### **SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE:**

**March, 2023**

If you cannot serve as scheduled, please switch with another server. If you cannot get a substitute call the church office at 412-563-0300 or Pastor Doug at [412] 926-5440; or email the church at [mtleboluth@aol.com](mailto:mtleboluth@aol.com)

	8:30	10:00
March 5-Crucifer	Milo Bucher	Finn Darcy
March 12-Crucifer	Max Bruno	Owen O'Brien
March 19-Crucifer	Sam Wetzel	Luke Frankovitch
March 26-Crucifer	Easton Darcy	Quin O'Brien



The worship links to Facebook & You Tube can be found on our website:  
[www.mtlebanonlutheran.org](http://www.mtlebanonlutheran.org)

**Sunday's**  
**8:30 AM & 10:00 AM**  
*Virtual Worship 8:30 AM Facebook LIVE*  
*Posted later on our YouTube channel*

**THE WORD of the LORD**

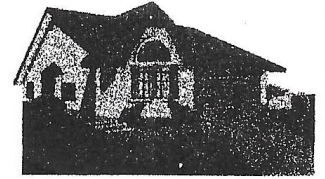
- March 5            Second Sunday in Lent  
                       Genesis 12:1-4a  
                       Psalm 121  
                       Romans 4:1-5, 13-17  
                       John 3:1-17
- March 12          Third Sunday in Lent  
                       Exodus 17:1-7  
                       Psalm 95  
                       Romans 5:1-11  
                       John 4:5-42
- March 19          Fourth Sunday in Lent  
                       1 Samuel 16:1-13  
                       Psalm 23  
                       Ephesians 5:8-14  
                       John 9:1-41
- March 26          Fifth Sunday in Lent  
                       Ezekiel 37:1-14  
                       Psalm 130  
                       Romans 8:6-11  
                       John 11:1-45

Sunday School 10:00 AM

*The Liturgy may be viewed on our Facebook page and YouTube Channel*



**Nurturing Faith in the Home**



It is in home that we ought truly to be able to be ourselves, because it is in the home that we sense our rootedness. And, therefore, we ought to be able to admit our failures, celebrate our joys, acknowledge our despair, and experience illness and even death.

It is in the home that we have the daily experiences of life — not text book examples — for the growing recognition of God at work in our own life and in and through the lives of others.

And therefore, the home should be a place of intentional, planned study and reflection in which we can articulate and experience faith and daily life.

For children especially, home is their primary world. And it is from the interactions in this setting, that the primary life stance of the child develops. While researchers vary in the exact age, they all agree that the major developmental tasks and primary values are established in the preschool years.

Without a doubt, it is in the home that the basic sense of love and trust are developed.

**7 Goals For Nurturing Faith In The Home**

1. *Each person will be encouraged to know her/himself as a child of God who is forgiven and saved by the death of Jesus Christ and daily strengthened by the Holy Spirit.*
2. *We will regularly study the Scriptures and seek to apply this good news to our daily life.*
3. *We will learn to recognize and experience the love of God in members of our household. We will honor, love, and respect each member of our home.*
4. *We will grow in faith and relationship to one another as we learn to trust, resolve conflicts, forgive, work, and play together.*
5. *We will be a home of prayer and praise.*
6. *We will experience and care for our neighborhood and world. We will be advocates and workers for ethnic appreciation and solidarity, peace, justice, and the environment.*
7. *We will be willing, able and eager to share the good news of Jesus Christ.*

Our faith journey is never-ending, but we do go it alone. We are called and set in families of God.

## **NEW COLUMBARIUM - South Chancel Wall**

Interment is available in the new columbarium and open to church members and extended families. The policy for the columbarium niches is available upon request from the church office.

The cost of each niche is \$1,000 for interment of a single individual and \$1,500 for the interment of two.

**Please contact the church office to indicate your interest.**



### **Altar Guild Members and Ushers Needed**



Volunteers are needed to serve on the Altar Guild or as an Usher Team Member.

Altar Guild members serve as part of a two-person team for an alternating month, two or three times throughout the year. Responsibilities include setting up the altar for worship services and preparation of Holy Communion elements, typically one to two hours weekly.

Ushers serve individually or as part of a two-person team at one church service for an alternating month, three times throughout the year. Responsibilities include greeting worshipers, directing to Holy Communion, counting attendance and delivering offering to treasurer's office.

Please contact the church office or Cindy Brown at 412-779-2020 or [cindysgb@icloud.com](mailto:cindysgb@icloud.com) to volunteer or for additional information. Your service to the church will be gratefully appreciated. THANK YOU! ♥



# ONLINE GIVING

*Is now available in association with*



myEoffering

[www.mtlebanonlutheran.org](http://www.mtlebanonlutheran.org)

## WHAT IS myEoffering?

myEoffering is a service we've teamed up with to give you the ability to send your offerings online in the same way that many of you already pay bills and purchase products. We chose to use myEoffering because they are part of a trusted, Christian family-owned company, who have been serving the needs of churches for nearly 100 years. Their product is solid, secure, easy, and convenient.

## WHY SHOULD I USE myEoffering?

Many of you already pay for most of your purchases electronically, whether online or with a credit or debit card. So we have decided to offer this service as a convenience to you - you can stop writing checks or having to remember to bring cash every Sunday. Simply log in to our service and set up your offering. You can set the donations to match your pay periods, and even send your one-time donations to the special offerings we may have from time-to-time. This new service allows you to give any amount, at any time, from home or on the road, with your computer or even your mobile device. Now you can control how and when you give your tithes.

## HOW DOES IT HELP?

Online giving is the future. In the lifetime of our young people, we will see electronic payments overshadow traditional methods of paper payments. In order to position ourselves to continue doing the work of God in the future and to make it as convenient as possible to be a cheerful giver to God's work, we have decided to offer online giving to you. In addition to easier access to giving and more engagement with young stewards, online offering has many benefits for the church. It allows us to more easily track contributions for budgeting. It saves us from manually tracking those contributions every week. It saves us from large fees on check processing and allows us to more accurately forecast expenditures and needs.

## HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Signing up is as simple as going to our church website listed above and look for the green computer mouse icon. That button will take you to the myEoffering page for our church. Simply sign up and begin giving online today! Or scan the code to the right with your mobile device to get started now.



SCAN THIS  
CODE WITH  
YOUR MOBILE  
DEVICE NOW



# **BIBLE STUDIES FOR LENT**

## ***Monday Nights & Thursday Mornings***

### **MONDAY NIGHT**

***Stories of Faith from the Gospel of John***

#### **7:00PM-8:00 PM**

March 6	Nicodemus in the Night
March 13	A Woman of Samaria
March 20	A Man Born Blind
March 27	Lazarus of Bethany
April 3	A Woman Caught in Adultery

### **THURSDAY MORNING**

***Share the Love***

**SCI Fayette Inmate Testimonies of Faith**

We will read faith testimonies composed by inmates of the SCI Fayette Prison. Bibles will be provided or participants may bring their own.

#### **10:00 AM-11:15 AM**

March 2	Craig Elias
March 9	Wayne Smith
March 16	Robert "Spider" Chin
March 23	Caleb Fairley
March 30	Eric Schrack

Pastor Heagy will lead these study groups.  
Participants are encouraged to invite family and friends to these sessions.





## WE REMEMBER in our prayers:

Lord of all Life, we are grateful for the wholeness of life and for the gift of good health. Aware of the unity of body and spirit, we affirm our constant need for their harmony. We are grateful for your gift of the marvels of medicine and for all those who possess a healing touch and practice the arts of healing. As we thank you for your son Jesus, who moved among us as both teacher and healer, we pray for the restoration to health for:

Bishop George Bashore; Craig Elias; Deb Cecotti; Scott Halapin; Patty Pavlak; Kalie Radigan; Cheryl Poenisch; Rian Dankert; the family of Annabelle Santos; Aurora Schultz; Janice Seigle; Elena Getz; Nancy Ingles; Levi; Maria Simbra

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES** for the April issue of the *Voice* are to be submitted by Sunday, March 19th. Articles may be left in the church office or email: mtleboluth@aol.com.



### Daily Bread Ministries Meal March 12th

This month's menu will be: Chili, crackers, ham sliders, fruit and dessert. Please look for the sign up sheet in the Narthex for volunteers to help serve the meal.



Donations are now being accepted in the donation box in the Narthex. Or you can mail checks to Church office and mark memo line with the words, *'Daily Bread Ministries'* Thank you for remembering this much needed ministry.



## Spring Forward! Daylight savings time begins March 12th

### Easter Flowers and Tributes



Easter Flowers are symbols of the Resurrection and the new life we have in Christ, and they are used to adorn our Sanctuary for Easter Day celebrations.

In lieu of, or in addition to flowers, Easter Memorial or Tribute gifts may be made. Gifts of flowers and tributes will be acknowledged in a worship folder insert. *The deadline for contributing flowers, memorials and tributes is Sunday March 26.*

*Please indicate the flowering plants and quantity you wish to contribute.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Easter Lily [6 1/2" pot] at \$10.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hyacinth [6 1/2" pot] at \$9.50  
(white, pink, blue-3 plants per pot)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tulip [6 1/2" pot] at \$9.50  
(assorted colors)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mums [6 1/2" pot] at \$9.00  
(white, yellow, purple)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hydrangeas [6 1/2" pot] at \$19.00  
(pink, blue)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Azaleas [6 1/2" pot] at \$19.00  
(white, pink, red-pink)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10 " pot Large Lilies \$32.50

In addition to, or in lieu of flowers, I/We wish to present an Easter Memorial and Tribute Gift designated to:

*Suggested Funds:* Fine Arts, Memorial, Mt. Lebanon Lutheran Endowment, Stir Into Flame, ELCA Global Missions, ELCA World Hunger, Lutherlyn, SHIM, Daily Bread Ministries, St. Michael's Food Bank; Afghan Refugees Resettlement Fund;

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print the bulletin acknowledgement you desire:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Images of Lent

The ashes of Ash Wednesday remind us that we are repenting in order to follow Jesus. So, what does God want from us? The answer comes in our Lenten Bible readings.

God wants more than our presence in worship. Lent is an invitation to a fast, but the kind God wants is not merely an abstention from gluttony. Our fasting is to be a dedicated striving aimed at achieving justice for all God's children.

The prophet Isaiah told people they missed the point of repentance by their dramatic focus on personal suffering. Our focus should be on what's truly important: those who are poor, oppressed, hungry, and homeless. Sacrificing for others is a counter-cultural indictment of things the way they are.

The ashes of Lent remind us of our call to be servants, and lead us also to acknowledge that, no matter how hard we try, we cannot save ourselves.

In truth, the discipline of keeping Lent is intended to clear away what is extra so that we might focus on what is essential: our relationship with God. Lent invites us to fast because we do not live by bread alone. Lent calls us to give offerings in response to what God gives us in Christ. Lent reminds us to pray, not to get something from God, but because God is God and worthy of our prayers of thanksgiving.

Those who bear the cross know this truth. It is the truth we must not forget even though so much of the world is swept up in glib psychology. Isaiah knew the temptation to ignore the truth, and it is hard to resist that temptation, and difficult to do God's will, and painful to work for justice. But the faithful will follow God, empowered by their baptism, and marked with the cross of Christ.



**LENTEN MIDWEEK  
VIRTUAL DEVOTIONS**  
**Beginning March 1**  
**7:30 pm**

## How to prepare for fasting...

Genuine, Spirit-filled fasting calls for intentional preparation. Such fasting calls for the following as a minimum:

- Examine your motives (Isa. 58:3-7)
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior (Rom. 12:1,2)
- Ask God to reveal your sins to you (Ps. 19:12)
- Confess your sins (1 John 1:9)
- Seek forgiveness from those you have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 17:3,4)
- Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads (Matt. 5:23-26)
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18)
- consult with your physician before beginning a fast of any length.

## What to do while fasting...

- Pray (Dan. 9:3; Acts 14:23);
- Meditate on the Word of God (Ps. 1:1,2; Col. 3:16).
- Meditate on the attributes of God: love, grace, wisdom, compassion, sovereignty (Pss. 48:9, 10; 103:1-13).
- Expect God to bless you and reveal Himself to you (Heb. 11:6).
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition (Gal. 5:16, 17)
- Refuse to yield to your worldly nature (Rom. 12:1,2).
- Exhibit an attitude of joy (Zech. 8:19; Matt, 6:17,18).

## HERO HOTLINE

Called Together to Serve God

### Vacation Bible School

July 10-14, 2023



*“So let’s strive together for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.”*  
Romans 14:19

**CALLING ALL SUPERHEROES!**

CONTACT DEB HAZLETT TO VOLUNTEER!  
[drhazlett@verizon.net](mailto:drhazlett@verizon.net)

### Cokesbury VBS Workshop (Virtual)

March 4

VBS Training Workshop (Virtual)  
Saturday, March 4 – 11:00 AM

This workshop provides an in-depth look at Cokesbury VBS and samples all 5 sessions as well as crafts, science, Bible stories, and more. It’s a chance to network with other Churches using the same program, as well as learn ideas for VBS decorating, crafts, snacks, etc. If you would like to participate in the March 4<sup>th</sup> morning workshop, please register ASAP at <https://www.cokesburyvbs.com/workshops>



We adore You, O Christ,  
and we praise You. +  
Because by Your holy  
Cross You have redeemed the world

## Lenten Devotions for All Ages

We have Lenten Devotional booklets for all age groups.

**Adults:** *“Amazing Grace: Devotions for Lent”* by Michael Hoy. In honor of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the writing of the beloved hymn, these devotions tie the words of the song (and the history surrounding it) to our lives today and to those in the Bible who experienced God’s amazing grace. Available in the Narthex and Foyer.

**Children:** *“Trust in the Lord: A Lenten Path for Families”* by Danielle Bean. These devotions encourage families to increase their trust in the Lord through warm and approachable conversations and lessons. They include Bible verses, activities, prayers, and reflections, as well as a coordinating activity placemat. They will be distributed to parents during Sunday School.

**Teens/College:** *“Tick, Tock...It’s Lent! A Timely Journey Through God’s Grace for Teens and Young Adults”* by David Mead. These daily encouragements prompt us to take just a minute each day to read, reflect, rewind, repent, and repost about the Lenten opportunities we have to serve, share and spend time in Scripture. To be distributed in Catechetics and mailed to college students who provide their mailing address to the Church office.

## FLOWER CHART AND WORSHIP BULLETINS STILL AVAILABLE FOR THE 2023 YEAR.

Please see the signup sheets in the Narthex. Or call the church office for available dates.



## 2023 TACKLE HUNGER - Souper Bowl of Caring



Thanks to all for your many donations in support of the Souper Bowl of Caring! The monetary and food donations will be given to St. Michaels Food Pantry. They are very appreciative of the positive impact of our ministry on the families and individuals they serve in their community.

Approximately \$600. and 140 cans of soup were received as donations for St. Michaels Food Pantry. THANKS to all our Congregation members for your “Souper” contributions!

**SPECIAL THANKS** to the awesome youth who helped to collect donations on Sunday, February 12:

9:20-9:35 -- Annabelle Kegel, Grant Kegel, Ewan Keplar

10:50-11:05 -- Edith Koval, Calvin Koval, Leo Bucher, Milo Bucher

Many thanks to Dave Hazlett, Julia Nelson, and MB Trivilino.



**Blanket-Tying Event:** Thank you to all who participated in the blanket-tying party. 25 church members joined 35 of our Bhuteneese neighbors and in 2 hours of socialization and hard work, we created 31 blankets!! These blankets were delivered to Pastor Bob Maravelli at Daily Bread Ministries, and they were overjoyed!!! Thank you to all!!!

*“And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Hebrews 13:16*





## Registration for SUMMER CAMP 2023 is OPEN!

Visit the Lutherlyn website for more information on the details below and to register!

Past campers and friends of Lutherlyn are the best way for NEW CAMPERS to learn about Lutherlyn. Please invite friends and share the FIRST-TIME camper discount code with them. Use coupon code **FIRST** when registering to receive \$100 off the registration fee for FIRST-TIME Summer Campers. This applies to Lutherlyn's residential week-long programs. Young Folks Half Week gets \$50 off for FIRST-TIME campers with the same code. *Does not apply to Family Camp, Confirmation Camp, Day Camps, or Small Fry Days. Must be a FIRST TIME summer camper. No additional discounts may be combined with this offer.*

We also need your help in recruiting summer staff. Please encourage potential Summer Staff to visit [www.lutherlyn.com/summeremployment](http://www.lutherlyn.com/summeremployment) for details and an application. It is the BEST SUMMER JOB EVER!

Camp Blast is a great opportunity for friends who have never been to Lutherlyn before to experience camp. Join us on May 13th for this FREE day of FUN at Lutherlyn.

Thank you so much! We can't wait to see you at camp sometime soon!



# Lenten Service Project

## Lenten Service Project 2023

Ash Wednesday, Feb.22- Easter Sunday, April 9

### *Donations for Local Refugees "Hello Neighbor" Resettlement Program*

#### **More refugees are resettling in Allegheny County than ever before, agencies say...**

Refugee resettlement in the Pittsburgh area reached historic highs over the last year. Between October 2021 and October 2022, agency leaders in the region helped relocate more than 1,000 people fleeing conflict, persecution and disaster. Nearly three-quarters of those who resettled in the region fled from Afghanistan. Approximately 76,000 Afghans were evacuated from the country after U.S. troops withdrew from the region in August 2021. Together, the region's four refugee resettlement agencies with federal contracts—Jewish Family and Community Services of Pittsburgh, AJAPO, Bethany Christian Services (LIRS-Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) and Hello Neighbor—aided 701 Afghans as they relocated to the region from U.S. military bases last winter. That figure, however, doesn't include refugees coming to the U.S. through other means, like humanitarian parole. Ivonne Smith-Tapia, JFCS Director of Refugee and Immigrant Services, said the actual number of Afghan refugees resettled in Pittsburgh is likely closer to 800. "We have never seen that many refugees coming to Allegheny County," she said. With this large influx of refugees, the need is GREAT!

#### ***Matthew 25:35-40***

***For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' <sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup>And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup>And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' <sup>40</sup>And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, <sup>[a]</sup> you did it to me.'***

Continued...

Our Congregation will be collecting donations for most-requested items that are difficult to fund by the resettlement agencies

We will be collecting money that will go towards purchasing larger items- specifically:

**Sewing Machines**

**Rugs**

**Large Stockpots**

We will also be collecting smaller items that can be purchased and brought to church-specifically: (ALL NEW)

Slippers (men and women's)



Sewing Kits



Tool kits



Irons



Coffee makers



There will be boxes in the narthex labeled for all items.

Thanks to our generous congregation for all the help for those in need in our community. Any questions, contact Sara Dougherty [tjdsjd@verizon.net](mailto:tjdsjd@verizon.net)

*John 15:12*

*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”*

## A CALL TO A VIGIL OF PRAYER AROUND-THE-CLOCK DAILY THROUGHOUT HOLY WEEK



*Because prayer is grounded in God; because prayer is answered;  
because prayer has no substitute; because prayer is power;  
and*

*Paul asked for prayer without ceasing,  
and*

*Peter asked for a watch of prayer,  
and never forgetting that  
Jesus commanded*

*“Watch therefore, and pray always”*

The 156 hours from the close of worship of Passion [Palm] Sunday until the faithful gather for the Vigil of Easter is one of the most important weeks in our congregation's life.

Pastor Doug is participating and invites you to join with your congregational family members in the Holy Week Vigil of Prayer. Around-the-clock, prayers of confession, adoration, thanksgiving, intercession and petition will be brought before our Heavenly Father's throne of grace.

Each prayer participant will select one or more hours in the Holy Week schedule during which they will maintain the Vigil. A sign-up posterboard is located in the Narthex for those attending sanctuary worship. Those who worship virtually and all others who wish to join in the vigil must call the church office to reserve vigil times (412-563-0300).

A guidebook listing congregational members, missionaries, church leaders, governmental officials, the afflicted and homebound, as well as many others in need of prayer, will be provided to all participants. In the guidebook you will find suggestions for opening and closing your hour of prayer. Common prayers in the booklet, hymnal, and other prayerbooks may assist you. *You may find the hour to pass very quickly! God will bless your service.*

All participants will pray at home or in the sanctuary during office hours. Participation of homebound and out-of-town members is encouraged.

God has appointed prayer for conferring blessings we all need, whether spiritual or temporal, and has ordained prayer as a joyous occasion of divine-human fellowship.

Please join fellow members in these great hours of prayer. Scripture exhorts us to “pray without ceasing.” The Holy Week vigil is a way we participate in the unceasing prayers of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.





**REMINDER TO CHURCH MEMBERS WITH  
THRIVENT ACCOUNTS:**

The March 31 deadline is approaching to direct your  
“Choice Dollars” to our Church. Thank you.

**Thrivent Choice®**

# Strengthening communities. Changing lives.

By directing Choice Dollars® through the Thrivent Choice program, eligible Thrivent clients with membership can influence where Thrivent distributes some of its outreach funding each year.

**Making a measurable difference**

Since its inception in 2010, Thrivent has provided more than \$458 million in charitable outreach funds through Thrivent Choice, to help support the initiatives of churches, educational institutions and other nonprofit organizations, including:

**Mount Lebanon United Lutheran Church**

Please consider directing Choice Dollars to us. We will use Thrivent Choice funding to:

- Support the General Fund*
- Support the Stir into Flame Fund*
- Support our Christian Education & Youth Ministries*
- Support our Social Ministries Daily Bread Outreach*

**Help make a difference**

For more information about the Thrivent Choice program and Choice Dollars:

- Visit [thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://thrivent.com/thriventchoice).
- Call 800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” when prompted.
- Contact your Thrivent financial professional.

The Thrivent Choice® charitable grant program engages Thrivent clients with membership and Thrivent Member Networks in providing grants that support charitable activities, furthering Thrivent’s mission and its purposes under state law. All grant decisions, including grant recipients and amounts, are made at the sole discretion of Thrivent. Directing Choice Dollars® is subject to the program’s Terms and Conditions available at [thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://thrivent.com/thriventchoice).

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**About Thrivent**

Thrivent is membership-owned fraternal organization, as well as a holistic financial services organization, providing financial advice, investments, insurance, banking and generosity programs to help people make the most of all they’ve been given.

Thrivent Choice is one of many membership programs available to help clients make a meaningful impact in their communities. To learn more, visit [thrivent.com](http://thrivent.com) today.





I would like you to consider participating in our online giving designed to simplify weekly giving in our congregation.

Electronic giving will enable every household or individual to make their church offering using electronic funds transfer or credit card. You may already be using online bill pay for your mortgage, car payment, or insurance premium through an automatic withdrawal from your checking or savings account. Many of you also have used your credit cards to purchase goods online through Amazon, eBay, or a number of other sites.

We have teamed up with myEoffering to enable you to use the same process to give your offering electronically from your bank account, credit or debit cards.

There is no cost to you for this new giving option. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue uninterrupted.

You can participate in the electronic giving program immediately. Just visit our church website and look for the "Donate Now" button.

Thank you for considering this new giving opportunity.





# MARCH 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lenten Midweek Devotions	2 10:00 Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	3	4
5 <b>Second Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	6 7:00 Bible Study	7 4:00 Catechetics 2	8 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lenten Midweek Devotions	9 10:00 Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	10	11
12 <b>Third Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School 2:00 Daily Bread Meal	13 7:00 Bible Study	14 4:00 Catechetics 2	15 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lenten Midweek Devotions	16 10:00 Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	17	18
19 <b>Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30 & 10:00 Live Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	20 7:00 Bible Study	21 4:00 Catechetics 2	22 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lenten Midweek Devotions	23 10:00 Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	24	25
26 <b>Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School 11:15 Council Meeting	27 7:00 Bible Study	28 4:00 Catechetics 2	29 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lenten Midweek Devotions	30 10:00 Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	31	



**1** *Woman's History Month* Remember, celebrate and give thanks for the contributions, achievements, leadership, wisdom and gifts of women and girls throughout history in the church, our communities and the world.

**2** In January there were 52 mass shootings in our nation. Pray that God will hear our yearning for the peace, safety and transformation of our society for the sake of protecting life. Ask the Spirit to awaken us from the fear, numbness and feelings of powerlessness that can discourage us from taking risks and making sacrifices that will lead to consequential change in our nation.

**3** Pray for people and communities impacted by flooding and storms in California and by tornadoes, flooding and severe weather across the southern United States. Remember those who grieve the loss of loved ones and homes, those suffering trauma and those in the long process of recovery, especially those without shelter and most vulnerable.

**4** Pray that the invasion of Ukraine will end and that Russia will halt the violence that stands in the way of peace, reconciliation, recovery and healing. Pray especially for those who suffer most from the unrelenting misery, violence and destruction.

**5** Ask God for the curiosity, boldness and humility of Nicodemus, a Pharisee who sought to understand Jesus, the ways of God and the work of the Spirit.

**6** Remember in prayer people and communities recovering from the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. Ask God to sustain their hope, ease their grief and give them the resources they need for relief and rebuilding, especially in remote areas.

**7** Give thanks for siblings in Christ, throughout history and in the present, who proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and incite our faith in God's promise of love and forgiveness.

**8** *International Women's Day* On this day we join our neighbors and siblings in Christ around the world in praying for the total inclusion, equity and advancement — social, economic and political — of women and girls everywhere. Give thanks for the work we do together through the ELCA International Women Leaders program, the Justice for Women program and ELCA World Hunger.

**9** Pray that when we see or use the symbol of the cross, we will remember the sacrifice made by the Son of God — Jesus Christ — for the sake of the world, to free us from the constraints of human weakness, fear and death.

**10** "I lift up my eyes to the hills — from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2). Give thanks that God is mindful of our struggles and uncertainties and provides care, support and counsel through the people around us, including strangers. In turn, ask God to work through us so that we will be alert, empathetic and responsive to the needs of our neighbors.

**11** Pray for college and university students during spring break, that they will be renewed, build friendships and serve their neighbors in need through service-learning experiences.

**12** "I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'Behold, I freely give the living water, thirsty one; stoop down and drink and live'" (ELW 611). Give thanks that God attends to our spiritual thirst through the life-giving gift of Jesus Christ, who restores and sustains us to face life's challenges, share the gospel and do God's work in the world.

**13** [Pray for ELCA missionaries serving with our global companions in Asia and the Pacific](#): the Rev. Jeffrey Truscott and the Rev. Charles Peterson (Indonesia), the Rev. Jessica Derise (Thailand) and Julie Gerrish (Malaysia).

**14** Pray that our prayer and song will express our joy, thanksgiving and praise to God — our creator, our defender and our source of salvation.

**15** Give thanks for mid-week Lenten meals that draw us together, that we might reflect on our humanness, find hope and comfort in God's love and mercy, and strengthen our unity as children of God and siblings in Christ.

**16** Pray that, when we experience quarreling, division and hardship as a community of faith, we will trust one another as siblings in Christ and turn to God for reassurance, knowing that the Spirit leads us to reconciliation and unity.

**17** Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the Moravian Church in America, a full communion partner since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

**18** Give thanks to God for those who harvest the abundance of lakes, rivers and oceans to feed themselves and others. Pray that they will be safe, that their fishing will be successful and that they will wisely and generously steward our food resources and environment for the sake of all generations.

**19** Pray that, as our neighbors suffer misfortune, poverty, hunger, homelessness or physical or mental illness, we will not judge them, blame them or decide where they do and don't belong but will instead respond as Jesus did, with boundless mercy, respect, care and hospitality.

**20** Remember in prayer leaders meeting in Minneapolis for the Assistants and Associates to Bishops Gathering. Pray that their faith, lives and ministries will be enriched and supported by their time together.

**21** Give thanks that God has brought us out of darkness and into the light of Christ, which reveals what is good, just and pleasing to God.

**22** *World Water Day* Praise God for the gift of water in all its forms. Pray that we will not take water for granted or squander it. Ask the Spirit to guide and sustain our efforts to guarantee all people and communities access to clean, safe and abundant water, a life-nourishing resource and gift from God.

**23** Pray for the leaders across our church who serve on the ELCA Church Council. Ask the Spirit to guide and inspire their deliberations and work, which support, shape and further the growth and mission of our church in the world.

**24** *Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador (1917-1980)* Give thanks for the life of Bishop Romero and those who demonstrate courage and persistence in their faith, public witness, compassion and advocacy. Pray for those who still suffer poverty, violence, oppression and injustice in Central America.

**25** With joy and thanksgiving, praise God for drawing us close and restoring our relationships, and celebrate that nothing can separate us from God's love, demonstrated to us through the life, sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**26** Amid solemn Lenten reflections, take heart and give thanks for the promise and proclamation Jesus made to Martha, the sister of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live" (John 11:25).

**27** Lift up prayerful sighs of relief and gratitude that God is our help and refuge, trustworthy and ever present. "My Jesus is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in the time of storm" (ELW 333).

**28** How is the Spirit at work in you? Pray that we will be mindful of how the Spirit dwells within us and of the diverse and surprising results of its work.

**29** Pray for ELCA missionaries serving with our global companions in Slovakia: Megan Freudenberg, Naomi and Nicholas Sveholm, the Rev. Kyle and Anna Svennungsen, the Rev. Bradn Buerkle, Elizabeth Kuster, Michelle Lauder milk, Mitchell McDonald, John Rogers and Christina Sunstone.

**30** Give thanks for the Lilly Endowment grant that will enable the ELCA and ELCA Youth Ministry Network to collaborate on new models for youth ministry, equip 3,000 leaders for ministry with younger generations and provide ELCA congregations with accessible and affordable resources to engage youth in faith formation.

**31** Pray that our congregations will prove resilient to the severe weather that often comes with spring, serving as centers for relief, shelter and hope when disasters occur in their communities.

## Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church

975 Washington Road  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15228  
Church Telephone: [412] 563-0300  
email: mtleboluth@aol.com  
www.mtlebanonlutheran.org  
www.facebook.com/MtLebanonlutheran



### The Reverend Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

### The Reverend Kurt Kusserow

Bishop  
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

### The Reverend Douglas M. Heagy

Senior Pastor

### Dr. Christopher Keenan, DMA

Director of Music and Organist

### Mr. Larry Allen

Director of Music and Organist Emeritus

### Mrs. Kris Malia

Parish Secretary

### Mr. Azmuddin Baraki

Sexton

## The Great and Holy Week

### Holy Thursday— Festive Sanctuary Worship & Live stream on Facebook April 6 at 7:30 pm

Holy Thursday marks the institution of the Lord's Supper and a call to heed Jesus' two commandments: "*Love one another as I have loved you;*" and "*Do this in remembrance of me.*" The Altar will be stripped to signify Jesus' betrayal, as he was stripped of glory and placed into the hands of his captors.

### Good Friday-Festive Sanctuary Worship & Live stream on Facebook April 7 at 7:30 pm

Our Tenebrae Liturgy is an adaptation of the ancient office of light dimming used to impress upon the hearts and minds of believers the awful consequences of sin and magnitude of our Savior's sacrifice. The liturgy includes hymns [sung without accompaniment]; readings which trace the experience of our Lord from His trial before Pilate to his crucifixion, death and burial; and prayers. Worshipers sense the grueling ordeal of Jesus' passion.



## Easter Sunday Sunday, April 9



**Festive Sanctuary Worship 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM**  
**Virtual Worship Live Stream on Facebook: 8:30 AM**