

The Bell



Bergstrasse Evangelical Lutheran Church

March 2018



LENTEN SERVICES

The mid-week Lenten worships continue with a theme focusing on "Servant of the Lord". **The services will begin at 7:00 pm.** Refreshments and conversation will follow the worship. The offerings received each evening will support the North Lancaster Disaster Relief fund and seminary students' meal plans. If there is a question about the service because of the weather, please contact the host church after 10 am on the day of the service and information will be provided.

March 7th- At St. Paul's Lutheran, Adamstown with Pastor Joe Veres (Faith Denver) with preaching on Isaiah 50:4-11, 3rd Servant Song

March 14th- At Faith United, Denver, with Pastor Dennis Trout (Swamp, Reinholds) preaching on Isaiah 52:13-53:12, 4th Servant Song

March 21st- At Mellingers, Stevens (Schoeneck), with Vicar Mark Fisher (seminarian, St. John Center, East Earl) preaching on Isaiah 58:5-9, The Fast God Chooses.

March 28th- Holy Wednesday- At Bergstrasse, Ephrata, with Pastor Sandy Gideon (St. Paul's, Adamstown) preaching on Isaiah 61:1-4, The Spirit of the Lord God (5th Servant Song)

Looking ahead we will gather again on Ascension Day (May 10) for worship service with Holy Communion at Swamp Lutheran Church in Reinholds with Pastor Tim Craven, Mellingers, Schoeneck) preaching.





FROM THE PASTOR

The Pastor's Thoughts...

Pastor Steve Molin shares this story and reflection.

A little boy came home from Sunday School one Easter Sunday and his parents asked him what he learned that day. "I learned that Jesus died in a car accident, but space invaders brought him back from heaven and gave him bionic arms and legs and made him walk again." His mother was stupefied! "Billy, that's not really what you learned, is it?" And the little boy said, "No, but if I told you the story my teacher told me, you would never have believed it."

The little boy has a point. When we hear the actual details of Holy Week, it is difficult to understand how it all could have happened. On Palm Sunday, nearly every

person in Jerusalem turned out to welcome Jesus into the city. "Hail, King Jesus! Jesus, we worship you! Jesus, we love you!" He was their hero. He was their hope for the future. They bowed down, they waved palm branches, and they cried out "Jesus, we believe in you!"

But just five days later, these same people had hatred on their lips when they cried out "Crucify Jesus! He's not our king! He's an imposter! We want him out of our lives!" They whipped Jesus with a leather strap with pieces of glass embedded in it. They made a crown out of thorny bushes and pressed it into his scalp. Long before the rock band of the same name, they used "nine inch nails" to affix Jesus to a wooden cross and let him hang there until he died by suffocation. And then they placed him in a small cave, rolled a large stone in front of the opening, and called it a day. And two days later, Jesus miraculously rose from the dead, and appeared to his

friends. Amazing or preposterous? Suddenly, little Billy's story of space invaders doesn't sound so far-fetched after all.

Thank you, Steve. Each year the events of Holy Week remind us of God's amazing grace shown in the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. It is mind boggling to me also. It defies logic. It is amazing that God loves us so much. Yes, God does care! We are not alone. We are forgiven. We are eternal. Come, hear, and experience this profound message.

I wish for you a most blessed and happy Easter.

Pastor Bob



The Bell is published monthly (except a combined July-August edition) by Bergstrasse Lutheran Church
9 Hahnstown Road
Ephrata, PA 17522
(717) 733-7808
www.bergstrasselutheran.com
bergluth@dejazzd.com

Sunday Church School - 9:00 a.m.
Worship - 10:30 a.m.

The Rev. Robert Kramer, Interim Pastor
717-405-0044 (cell)

Jean Wilhelm, newsletter editor

Due date for the **April** newsletter is
March 18.

Got a Problem . . A Complaint . . A Suggestion?

At its recent meeting the Church Council discussed ways of communication within the congregation to ensure that everyone can be a part of the life of the church and feel free to express any concern they may have.

It was decided to ask that anyone with a concern or suggestion give it in writing to any member of Council (members are listed every week in the bulletin) or place it in the suggestion box in the narthex. Include your name so that Council can follow up with each request.

We are all members of this church family and should know our concerns and ideas will be addressed.



Worship With Us

March, 2018

Sunday, 4th – Third Sunday in Lent

Texts: Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The ten commandments are one of the chief parts of Luther's catechism, a core piece of baptismal instruction. They begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods.

Sunday, 11th – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Texts: Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith, for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

Sunday, 18th – Fifth Sunday in Lent - Pastor Walter Wagner Presiding

Texts: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

God promises Jeremiah that a "new covenant" will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God's heart through Christ and draws God's light and truth into our hearts. We see God's heart most clearly in the way Jesus shares human suffering, in an agony both the John and Hebrews readings describe.

Sunday, 25th – Palm/Passion Sunday

Texts: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1 - 15:47

This day's liturgy begins with a palm procession, commemorating Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Quickly the tone of the service changes as we meditate upon Jesus' passion and death. Though Jesus is obedient even unto death on the cross, he is exalted by God. We gather to remember his offering for the life of the world, and to be fed by his life-giving mercy. This holy week will culminate in the celebration of the Three Days of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection.

Wednesday, 28th – Cluster Mid-Week Lenten Worship, Pastor Sandy Gideon preaching

Text: Isaiah 61:1-4

Maundy Thursday, 29th – Table Communion 7:00 PM

Exodus 12:21-2; Psalm 116:10-17

A Candlelight Holy Communion will be offered this evening that is influenced strongly by the traditional Jewish Seder Meal as we gather around tables in the Fellowship Hall. It is hoped that this modern-day experience may capture what it may have been like to be in that room with Jesus as He celebrated the Last Supper.

Good Friday, 30th – Tenebrae Service 7:00 PM

Tenebrae means darkness or shadows. This service includes the extinguishing of candles as the service progresses. No other worship service during the entire year is more biblical as much of what is said is taken verbatim from the scriptures.

Holy Week Worship Opportunities

There are many opportunities for you to worship during Holy Week here at Bergstrasse.



On Sunday, March 25 at 10:30 AM the worship will begin with the Procession of the Palms and then the mood will quickly change with an interactive reading of Mark's Passion narrative followed by Holy Communion.

On Wednesday, March 28 at 7:00 PM Bergstrasse will be hosting the Cluster Lenten Service beginning at 7:00 PM. Refreshments and conversation will follow the worship.

On Thursday, March 29 at 7:00 PM a Candlelight Holy Communion worship will be offered that is influenced strongly by the traditional Jewish Seder Meal as we gather around tables. The entire worship will take place in Neidamyer Hall. Please plan to attend and have a modern-day experience of what it may have been like to be in that room with Jesus as He celebrated the Lord's Supper. A light meal of soup and bread will precede the worship beginning at 6:00 PM. Following the worship we will go the Sanctuary for a stripping of the altar.



Tenebrae Service

On Good Friday, March 30 at 7:00 PM a Tenebrae worship service will be offered.

On Easter Day, April 1 at 6:45 AM, an Easter Dawn Service will be offered. Following worship a breakfast will be held in Neidamyer Hall.

At 10:30 AM we will celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord with Holy Communion.



EASTER

No two of these worships are the same as each lifts up a distinct way of experiencing what God has done in revealing His abundant love for us.

Worship participants for March

March	4	11	18	25
Greeter	Glenn and Almanara Buffenmyer	Cathy Feather	Sandy Lausch	Betty Evans
Lector	Bonnie Grater	Curt Hare	Deb Burkholder	Cleone Rudisill
Acolyte	Deb Burkholder	Jaidyn Feather	Bishop Villarreal	Deb Burkholder
Counters	Earl and Sandy Eshleman	Earl and Sandy Eshleman	Dave and Jean Wilhelm	Dave and Jean Wilhelm
Flower Sponsors			Peggy Rushton-Witmyer	
Bulletin Sponsors				

	Ushers	Communion Ushers March 4, 25	Altar Guild
March	John Gehr Mary Keisling Cathy Feather	Cathy Feather Lisa Conway	Jane Pittman

Spring cleaning March 16 and 17

Spring cleaning of the closets and classrooms Friday, March 16 and Saturday, March 17. Friday at 6 PM until ?? and Saturday starting at 8 AM until ?? Breakfast and lunch will be provided Saturday for all helpers!

Time to clean up, organize and move things out that haven't been used which will be put into the fundraising yard sale May 5th, unless it belongs to you and you would like it back. I will be getting storage bins for items to keep and stored in the one classroom.

Contact Kathy Landis with any questions.

Thank You!

We want to thank you for remembering us December 9th. We both love all the Christmas songs and we love the Bergstrasse Congregation. Thanks also for the blankets, They are so soft and warm. Hope you all are singing again when Christmas rolls around in 2018. Thanks all.

Pearl Kilhefner and Jodean Yarbrough

Thank you for thinking of me and your kindness.

Al Muttik

Blue Ridge Communications wishes to thank you for your participation in its fifth annual "Touch a Heart" Valentine's campaign. We wanted to bless our U.S. soldiers serving abroad, veterans and residents of local nursing homes with handmade Valentine's Day cards.

On behalf of the EASS board of directors I want to thank you for your generous contribution to EASS 2017 Fund Raising Campaign. Your generous donations of \$466 to this effort will help us reach our goal. Also, thank you for your donation of food.

Yard sale May 5

It's that time of year for spring house cleaning! Looking for items you would be willing to donate for a fundraising yard sale. Bring them to the church any time and we will store them, then it will be out of your way.

Fundraising yard sale and fundraising baskets will take place Friday, May 4 to set up and Saturday, May 5 is the day of the fundraiser.

The proceeds go to 4 Our Kids, Power Pak Program and classmate Randy Walker who has ALS. It's always a lot of fun and donations, help, etc. are all accepted with a smile and a hug.

Thanks so much!

The Landis Family



Salem Lutheran Church, Ephrata, is hosting a bus trip to Philadelphia on Thursday, June 7, 2018. The trip includes a tour of the Eastern State Penitentiary, lunch at the Historic City Tavern and a tour of the Museum of the American Revolution. Registration is due April 25, 2018. To register or for more information, call Stephanie Frymyer at 717-733-6057.

Salem Lutheran Church, Ephrata is having a Lenten Retreat Saturday, March 10, 9 AM—1 PM. "Christ our Champion" Two lectures given by the Rev. Adam Koontz, pastor of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Lititz. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more information. Call Salem's church office, 717-733-6646, or email office@salemephrata.org. A suggested \$10 donation.

To: The congregations and the rostered ministers of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA

From: Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary

Re: Call of the 2018 Synod Assembly

This is the official notice that the 2018 Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA, will be held Thursday, May 31, 2018, beginning at 8:30 a.m., until Saturday, June 2, 2018. Sessions Thursday and Friday will be held in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts on the Messiah College Campus, Grantham, Pennsylvania. Saturday's sessions will include a food packing event at Messiah College plus missional encounters at various hunger-ministry sites throughout our synod. The theme of this assembly is "Eradicating Hunger One Relationship at a Time."

The three major priorities of the assembly, worship, edification, and legislative business of this synod with the greatest possible involvement of those entitled to participate, have been proposed in such a way that the business of our synod will be conducted Thursday morning, afternoon, and evening; edification that will enable us to grow deeper in our understanding of local and global feeding ministries on Friday morning and afternoon; and a major worship opportunity, a Service of Word and Sacrament with Rites of Ordination and Consecration on Friday evening. Persons who are not voting members of the assembly and who are interested in learning more about hunger ministries may register to attend just Friday's Day of Edification. All are invited to attend Friday's worship service without needing to register for the assembly.

Saturday will be a Day of Feeding. By action of last year's assembly, we will be holding a food packing event on the campus of Messiah College in cooperation with Messiah College, Kids Against Hunger, and Orphan Grain Train. The food that will be packaged will go to the Caribbean where hurricanes have caused great destruction. We are looking to our congregations and individual donors to contribute toward the \$75,000 cost of this food packing event. To prepare, we are asking that all donations or pledges be received by April 1. For everyone interested in experiencing relational hunger ministries on the territory of our synod, various other service opportunities are being arranged. Both the food packing event and the missional encounters are open to all without cost; however, advance registration is needed. For congregations or individuals desiring to collect much-needed canned fruits and vegetables for the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, donations will be accepted at the assembly site.

All ministers rostered in the Lower Susquehanna Synod and a lay male and a lay female elected by each congregation of the Lower Susquehanna Synod constitute the voting members of this assembly. In addition, based on having more than 500 baptized members, some congregations may send a third voting member. In selecting voting members, all congregations are encouraged to consider electing youth, young adults, and persons of color or of primary language other than English. A single registration fee will register voting members for the entire assembly. To meet registration deadlines, congregations may preregister voting members (as voting member #1, etc.) without providing personal information.

Information about the 2018 Synod Assembly including registration materials will be posted on the **synod website** as plans are completed. Hard copies of assembly materials will be mailed only to those requesting to receive information in this manner.

IF YOU ARE WILLING TO SERVE as a voting member from Bergstrasse please contact Council President Cathy Feather or Pastor Bob. The Assembly expenses are paid by the congregation.

Consider a Lenten Facebook ‘fast’

Along with the old standbys of chocolate, alcohol, smoking and soda pop, Facebook and social media have joined the list of common things people give up for Lent as they prepare their hearts and minds for Easter.

It's definitely a 21st century twist to the ancient practice of “fasting” to improve our willpower, strengthen our spirits, clear our minds, distance ourselves from distractions and bring us closer to God. And in our day and age, it's entirely necessary, too.

What's the stewardship connection? God entrusts us to treasure and use wisely all that we have and all we are. Growing evidence concludes that excessive digital media not only wastes our time but also may cloud our thinking.

Research shows people can become addicted – yes, addicted – to digital media. Scientists discovered that when folks get an affirmation on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or other social media, it triggers a response in the reward and pleasure centers of our brains. We want more and more and have a hard time disengaging. (It's a real issue. Just Google “smartphone addiction” to learn more.)

Moreover, there is growing concern about the effects that excessive digital exposure has on the developing brains of children.

For those of us who use our phones for keeping up with news, texting, sending email, reading or watching video streaming, excessive smartphone use can lower our attention spans and train us to crave a constant stream of new information.

And of course, all this digital media takes up time that we might be using for more healthful activities, such as praying, meditating, processing the important things of our lives, talking to friends, taking a walk, reading a book, exercising or playing a board game with family members.

So maybe giving up Facebook and other digital media is a perfect idea for Lent in the 21st century. Like those old standbys of chocolate, alcohol, smoking and soda pop, giving up social media and other digital applications for Lent may not be easy, but it will help strengthen our spirits, test our willpower, clear our minds, distance ourselves from distractions and bring us closer to God.

--Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2018, Rev. Robert Blezard. Reprinted by permission. Pastor Blezard serves as an assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and also works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org.

Mabel Bolar
 Earl and Sandy Eshleman
 Betty Evans
 Polly Gunzenhauser
 Donna Hebert
 Carolyn Hibshman
 Bill Irvine
 Howard Jorgensen
 Darlene Kreider
 Larry Lausch
 Shirley Martin
 Lawrence and Mitzi Rice
 Randy Rice
 Polly Schmuck
 Erma Snader
 Noah and Joan Stahl
 Nancy Sweigart
 Ruth Troutman
 Kaye Biermann
 Halley Bittle
 Evanna Estes (friend of Mary Duing)
 David Evans
 Kevin Ferguson (friend of Ben and Polly Gunzenhauser)
 Rick Gerhart
 Elmer and Sheila Gockley
 Harold and Norma Good
 Earl Goshert (Jane Pittman's step-father)
 Naomi Goshert (Jane Pittman's mother)
 Nancy Heiser (Jane Pittman's cousin)
 Donna Hollinger (friend of Nancy Sweigart)
 Chris Horbey
 Robert L. Hornberger (Polly Schmuck's brother)
 Carolyn Houck (friend of Betty Evans)
 Caitlyn Mertz (family of Jane Pittman)
 Mark Mertz (Jane Pittman's cousin)
 Sheila Patrick (friend of Nancy Sweigart)
 Michael Rudisill (Cleone Rudisill's grandson)
 Weston Rudisill (Cleone Rudisill's grandson)
 Jennifer Sikie (family of Jane Pittman)
 Jared Snyder (Gail Smith's grandson)
 Tom Stuber (Jane Pittman's brother-in-law)
 Joe Suprik (friend of Jane Pittman)
 Cosette Sweigart (Polly Gunzenhauser's niece)
 Vernon Sweigart (Kathryn Sweigart's son)
 Randy Walker (friend of Chad and Kathy Landis)
 Harry Werner (friend of Sylvia Smith-Garman)
 Miriam Wolf



*Remember in
your thoughts
and prayers...*



Congratulations to those with
March birthdays:

- 18 Erma Snader
- 19 Kathryn Sweigart
- 21 Jaidyn Feather
- 22 Cleone Rudisill
- 23 Courtney Ressler
- 26 Bryan Redcay
David Heisey

*"Reach up as far as you can,
and God will reach down
all the rest of the way."
—John Vincent*



Balance as of 1/31/18

General Fund	\$ 6,959.08
Improvement Fund	\$ 2,271.75
Mission Plus	\$74,193.07
Mission Plus 2	\$ 2,721.13
Parsonage Security Deposit/ Memorial Fund	\$ 5,509.89



Food bank

Please bring the following food items during March:

- 4 toilet paper, dish soap, laundry soap, bath soap
- 11 cake mixes, cookie mixes, pancake syrup
- pancake mixes (preferably made with water)
- 18 canned fruits and vegetables, fruit juices
- 25 pasta and sauce, macaroni and cheese

Seed Money Received for Projects

	Seed Money Collected	20% Congregation	Funds Still Needed	Project Cost
Doors	\$ 899	\$5,532	\$4,633	\$27,660
Paving Parking Lot (Church)	\$10,237	\$14,545	\$4,308	\$72,727

Funds still needed for projects \$8,941

Lutheran World Relief

Thank you for your generous gift of quilts and kits for LWR's distribution overseas. These gifts of your hearts and hands are beautiful expressions of God's grace and love to people all around the world.

Some items may not have been processed yet, but we received notice of 45 quilts and 40 school kits. Also a gift of \$15 given through the Lower Susquehanna Synod and \$50 for the Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund.

Melanie W. Gibbons
Quilt and Kit Ministry Manager