

the *Voice* parish newsletter



*The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage. --Psalm 16:6*

On Saturday, February 24, Elizabeth Rheinfrank will be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her ordination will be held in our sanctuary. A music prelude will begin at 9:40 AM followed by the service at 10 AM. All members are encouraged to attend.

Elizabeth, her husband, Todd, and their son, Hunter, became members of our church shortly after I began serving here. Elizabeth sensed a call to ministry in our church, received our affirmation, and began the process leading to this joyous occasion of ordination. She holds degrees from Oberlin College, Columbia University, United Lutheran Seminary, and has been called to be the pastor of Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Perrysville.

Someone once said of ordained ministry that "behind the ever-changing faces of the clergy there stands Christ." This insight has taken on great meaning for me with each passing year. During my ordination service over thirty years ago, a retiring pastor lifted a mantle from his shoulders, set it on my own, and beseeched God to bestow on me a share of his spirit. He prayed I would endure and serve without looking back or counting the cost. Elizabeth will receive a stole during her ordination service and similar prayers for endurance in ministry will be offered.

Please join us for this special occasion of Elizabeth's ordination. A light luncheon will follow the service in the Social Hall. If you wish to stay for the lunch, please RSVP the church office by February 17. It has been an honor for me to serve as Elizabeth's pastor. We now send her off with our blessing, giving thanks for her service in our church and her service for years to come in ordained ministry.

In Christ,

Pastor Doug Heagy

PS. If any reading this newsletter article are sensing for themselves a call to ordained ministry, or wish to know more about the Christian life, please contact me through the church office. I will be happy to meet with you. Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." (Matthew 9:37)



February, 2024

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



By the grace of God and the call of the Church

ELIZABETH SCALES RHEINFRANK

*will be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Saturday, February 24, 2024, at 10:00 AM

Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church
975 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Bishop Kurt Kusserow
of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, presiding.

Your prayers and presence are requested.

*Clergy are invited to vest and process.
The color of the day is red.*

FEBRUARY BIBLE STUDIES



“Passages on the Priesthood”

In Celebration of the Ordination of Elizabeth Scales Rheinfrank on February 24

MONDAY NIGHT

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

February 5

Genesis 14
Psalm 110
Hebrews 7:1-7

February 12

Joel 2:1-7

February 19

1 Samuel 2:12-36

February 26

1 Peter 2

THURSDAY MORNING

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

February 8

Exodus 28-29

February 15

Joel 2:18-27
Acts 2

February 22

1 Timothy 3

February 29

1 Peter 5
John 21

Led by Pastor Heagy, these studies will focus on the priesthood and ordination.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Valentine's Day/Ash Wednesday Mashup

Because Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday fall on the same day this year, February 14 gives us a real clash of messages!

As stewards of both our personal lives and our greater world, what can we make of a day that, on the one hand says sweetly, "I love you," and on the other hand says sternly, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return"? How should we observe a day with such disjointed messages?

Putting them together, we can come up with some interesting responses.

Ash Wednesday tells us that our lives are finite and fleeting, a truth woven throughout the Bible. Psalm 103:15 says our lives are like the grass that flourishes and then is gone. Ash Wednesday also reminds us that we are in the hands of the creator God who decreed that our earthly lives begin and end in dust.

And although our culture revels in romantic love, the Bible gives us a wider vision of love that we can aspire to: love through care and concern for the world, for creation and those around us.

Putting the two messages together, we know there is no delaying our call to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31) and to provide for the least among us (Matthew 25:31-46).

With wars raging in Ukraine and Gaza, refugee crises across the globe and Covid on the rise (to name just a few problems), perhaps this can be the year you can send a "Valentine" to someone who needs not only love, but food, medicine, shelter and clothes. Many reputable church charities would gladly use your contribution to help the neediest. Who are the people in your church and community who need your love and your care? How can you, both individually and congregationally, love and assist them?

The diverse messages of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day give us a prime opportunity to grow in faith, love and discipleship –while there's time.

–*Rob Blezard*

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Blanket Tying Event Thank-You

The 7th annual blanket tying event was a huge success! In a little over an hour, our amazing crew managed to create a record-breaking 41 blankets. A big thank you goes out to Debbie Lutz who helped with set-up, provided treats as well as tied blankets and also to our faithful church members-Cindy Brown, Monica and Austin Aravich, Larry and Pam Bucher, Vedette, Eric, Henry and Ewan Keplar, Victoria Rentrop, Andrea and Lilana Croom, Tom and Sara Dougherty, Pastor, Barbara and Jonathan Heagy, Joe and Alexandra Cowell and Becky and Tom Hough who joined over 30 people from the Bhutanese community. Our generous congregation and our Bhutanese friends also donated hundreds of toiletries items greatly needed at Daily Bread. Pastor Bob Maravelli was overjoyed with our delivery of goods and extends great thanks, love and prayers to all of us.



SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE:

February, 2024

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

	8:30	10:00
February 4-Crucifer	Ewan Keplar	Xavier Graybill
February 11-Crucifer	Easton Darcy	Jack O'Brien
February 18-Crucifer	TBD	Luke Frankovitch
February 25-Crucifer	Henry Keplar	Milo Bucher



The worship links to Facebook & You Tube can be found on our website:
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

February 4 The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
 Isaiah 40:21-31
 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
 Mark 1:29-39

February 11 Transfiguration of Our Lord
 2 Kings 2:1-12
 Psalm 50:1-6
 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
 Mark 9:2-9

February 14 Ash Wednesday
 Services at 11:00 am & 7:30 pm

February 18 First Sunday of Lent
 Genesis 9:8-17
 Psalm 25:1-10
 1 Peter 3:18-22
 Mark 1:9-15

February 25 Second Sunday of Lent
 Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
 Psalm 22:23-31
 Romans 4:13-25
 Mark 8:31-38

Sunday School 10:00 AM

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

**The Transfiguration
 of Our Lord**
Sunday, February 11, 2024
[The Last Sunday after the Epiphany]

If you have ever struggled with a novel that takes you through countless plot twists and turns, and you have skipped ahead to read the final chapter in order to see more clearly where you are going, then you have a sense of how the Transfiguration works in the Gospel, and how Transfiguration Sunday works in the church's year of grace.

The Transfiguration of our Lord is not only the last of the manifestations [epiphanies] of Christ which we encounter on the Sundays after the Epiphany, it also offers a glimpse of the resurrected Christ in His glory. Peter and the disciples objected to His suffering and dying, to this turn in the plot of Jesus' life [as they perceived it], but now, at the Transfiguration, they see what is to become of Him.

In addition, this glimpse of the final chapter of Jesus' life will be our guide through the twists and turns of the wilderness of Lent, where we will end our journey, with the disciples, at the tree of life.

The Transfiguration is not only the story of Christ's life, it is also the story of our life as well, for "if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" [Saint Paul].

Transfiguration Sunday is also the day we return the Palm branches from last year so that they may be imposed on Ash Wednesday.

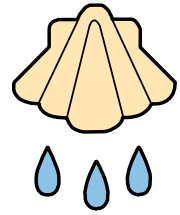


**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL
 OUR CONGREGATION**

If you have not already picked up your 2024 Church Offering Envelopes we ask that you please stop by the Church office either before or after Worship, or call the office to make arrangements for pick up Monday-Friday 9:00 am—1:00 pm. This will help defray the cost of having to mail the remaining boxes. If you have decided to use our new **E-Offering Link**, please call the church office to let us know so we can set your box aside. Thank you for your stewardship.

Welcome to the Lord's Family!

We rejoice with the family of
Evan Eric Dubrosky.
Evan is the son of Dalton & Alison Dubrosky,
and was born May 25, 2023.



Sealed by the Holy spirit and marked
with the Cross of Christ forever,
may Sylvia know God's love,
sense the Father's purpose for her
and mature into a disciple of our Lord Jesus.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

We are pleased to welcome:

Alexandra Carroll
Joseph Carroll
Alison Dubrosky
Eric Pfeil

to our congregational family.
Please be sure to introduce yourself and greet
them at the worship services.



COLUMBARIUM - South Chancel Wall

Interment continues in the South Chancel Wall side of the columbarium, and is open to church members and their extended families. The specific policy covering the use of and payments for the columbarium niches is available upon request from the church office.

The size of each niche is suitable for the cremations of one or two individuals. 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.



*The South Chancel Wall Columbarium
was completed July 2022*

Installation of 2024 Council Members





ONLINE GIVING

Is now available in association with



myEoffering

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





**WE REMEMBER
in our prayers:**

O God, fill us with your light, that we might delight in your goodness and glory and serve you with joy. Illumine with your light, we pray, those who struggle in sickness and in sorrow with the warmth of your healing presence which will remind them that they are not alone. Especially we pray for:

Craig Elias; Andy Kelemen; Dagmar Gerst; Linda Larkin; Jennifer Meyer, Anne Bidlack, Amy Stabenow, Donna Laughlin

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for the March issue of the *Voice* are to be submitted by Sunday, February 18th. Articles may be left in the church office or email: mtleboluth@aol.com.



2024 COUNCIL MEETINGS

- February 25 , 2024
- March 24 , 2024
- April 28, 2024
- May 26, 2024
- June 23, 2024
- July 28, 2024
- August 25, 2024
- September 22, 2024
- October 27, 2024
- November 24, 2024
- December 22, 2024



FINAL 2023 Financial Giving Statements have been mailed. If you have questions about your statement, please call Allan Copenheaver at 412 563-6865, or email allancope@yahoo.com. The church office does not assist with questions, which remain confidential with our financial secretary.

**2024 Congregational Council
Officers Installation**



Church Council members elected by and serving our congregational family, along with others elected or appointed by the Council to serve, were installed on Sunday, January 18th.

Please remember these leaders in your prayers throughout the year as they seek to be faithful to their callings and vow.

Council President:	Jody Lutz
Council Vice President:	David Hale
Council Secretary:	Amy Stabenow
Church Treasurer:	David Lendt

James Brentzel
[Evangelism]

Cindy Brown
[Worship and Music]

Sara Dougherty
[Social Ministries]

Melodie Frankovitch
[Educational Ministries]

Jeff McGraw
[Congregational Life]

Jim Needles
[Stewardship]

Julia Neslon
[Youth Ministries]

Patrick Snyder
[Property]

Rick Spickard
[Finance]

Tom Ultsch
[Property]

The Congregational Council is constituted in order to provide a partnership with the pastor in the ministry of the Gospel. Council members who do not serve as officers will serve as liaisons for the Standing Committees of council.

PROJECT PRAY FOR PEACE

-Starting December 17th

Pray for peace in Ukraine and in the Middle East.



Sign your name on A DOVE- Post your dove ON THE BULLETIN BOARD. Sample PEACE PRAYER CARDS available. Display located in the Foyer Café

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:7-8



You're Invited...To the Sunday Morning Fellowship

Each Sunday worshippers have the opportunity to greet one another and welcome visitors at our: **Sunday Morning Fellowship** in the Foyer. Join us in between the early and late Liturgies to share greetings and conversations with friends and visitors. Refreshments are available for all.

The Sunday Morning Fellowship also provides opportunities to volunteer:

*Sponsor the Coffee Project of Lutheran World Relief, helping small growers, their families and communities through the fair trade of coffee.

*Volunteer to set up and clean the Fellowship refreshments table. It's easy to do and a member of the Hospitality Committee will show you how. Also, written instructions are available.

*Provide sweet (or healthy) treats for all to enjoy. (Gluten free and nut free treats are also welcomed)

If you'd like to help you can sign up on the bulletin board in the main hallway, or contact the church office.

Lenten Devotions for All Ages

We have Lenten Devotional booklets for all age groups:

Adults: *"Lifted up in Love: Devotions for Lent and Easter"* Excerpts from Henri J.M. Nouwen. Inspiring insights are paired with original reflections and prayers in these daily devotions which help us experience more fully the everlasting compassion of God. These will be available in the Narthex.

Large Print: *"A Season of Hope: Lenten Devotions for Seniors."* These reflections help us ponder Christ's journey to the cross for our salvation, and they encourage us to share with younger generations the hope we have through Jesus. These will be sent to our home-bound parishioners and will also be available in the Narthex for those who would like large print devotions.

Pocket Size: *"In Jesus Name: Prayer with the Names of Jesus."* By Pat Gohn & Mark Zimmermann. This pocket-size booklet of prayers focus on many different names for Jesus. It's the perfect size for those on the go and will be available in the Narthex.

Children: *"Cross my Heart: Children's Devotions for Lent and Easter"* by David Mead. These devotions highlight God's great love that's been shown to us through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. It is a love we are called to share through our words and actions in Lent and throughout our lives. They will be distributed during Sunday School.

Teens/College: *"Sow Now It's Lent: Devotions for Teens & Young Adults."* These daily devotions and activities spring from the growth and garden imagery in the Bible, from Eden to the garden tomb. They will be distributed in Catechetics and Youth Group and mailed to college students who provide their mailing address to the Church office.

Please remember while shopping, the ministry of the Food Bank at St. Michael and All Angels' Lutheran in Spring Garden on Pittsburgh's North-side with your contributions of non-perishable food, cleaning and laundry products and monetary donations. When making monetary donations, please make your check payable to *Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church* and designate your donation for St. Michael's Food Pantry [Your donation will be recorded and then forwarded.] or to the ELCA World Hunger ministries using a *designated gift envelope* in your pew. Items may be brought any Sunday.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, February 11, 2024



The 2024 Souper Bowl of Caring event will be held on Sunday, February 11. Please help to transform Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving!

The Congregation is invited to bring cash or checks to place in soup pots in the Narthex. Our youth will be collecting your monetary donations in soup pots in the Narthex after worship service has concluded. Checks should be made payable to "Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church" and include a note in the byline "Souper Bowl".

We will also be collecting canned soup. There will be a collection area in the Narthex through February 18th.

More than 30 years ago, the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group:

*"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game,
help us to be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat."*

This year's collection is for St. Michael's Food Pantry. Your help is greatly appreciated!

VALENTINES PROJECT

Valentines Due February 4

Please help us create Valentine cards for those on our prayer list, homebound members, and friends at Daily Bread Ministries. Kits are available in the Foyer, or you are welcome to create with your own supplies. **Thank you to the Sunday School students who made Valentines during Sunday School on January 28** They can also take home additional kits which they will return by February 4.



Questions? Please contact Deb Hazlett drhazlett@verizon.net

Education Ministries Update

Sunday School: Classes start each week at 10:00 with a Children's Message from Pastor at the beginning of Worship, followed by lessons in the classrooms at 10:10. Every other week, we conclude with music practice in the Social Hall at 10:55. Sunday School substitutes are needed – please contact MBTrivilino@verizon.net for more information.

Service Projects: Our Sunday School students made Valentine crafts for our homebound members. They are also participating in the annual Souper Bowl of Caring to support local hunger relief efforts.

Seeking VBS Leaders:

Volunteers are needed for key leadership roles in Vacation Bible School, to be held mid-July. Some tasks are done in advance (Spring and early Summer), and some are on-site during the week of VBS. Please contact Melodie at frankovitch@comcast.net for more information.



Lenten Project 2024

Ash Wednesday, February 14-March 27

As Social Ministry Chair, I am charged with creating social ministry projects that can positively impact those in need. *My biggest challenge is that there is so much need everywhere.* We as a congregation do a wonderful job ministering to those in our congregational family who are in need, we also provide support to Daily Bread Ministries in the Northside of Pittsburgh through cooking meals, making blankets, donating toiletry items and toilet paper, making healthy snack bags, we volunteer our time at Global links packing medical supplies to countries in need, we provide Thanksgiving baskets to those in need at St. Michaels and provide beautiful Angel Tree gifts to Glade Run.

As I was planning our annual Lenten Service Project, I opened my mail I received from LIRS-Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services reaching out for those in need. I was taken aback by the incredible need that just keeps getting bigger with so much unrest in our world but at the same time I felt such incredible pride at the very large role that our Lutheran Church as a whole plays to provide love, compassion and help to those in the greatest need.

Pittsburgh continues to welcome large numbers of refugees from a variety of countries. At this time, most refugees are arriving from The Congo, Syria and Afghanistan. We at Mt. Lebanon Lutheran Church can follow in our Lutheran mission to help local refugees in our own community.

During Lent, we will once again be collecting items from the most-needed list at one of Pittsburgh's Refugee Resettlement agencies. They will then distribute these items directly to the families.

Thank you for supporting this important mission. Any questions, please contact the church office or Sara Dougherty (412-523-1499)

**Refugees are adults and children who have been forced to flee the only home they have ever known in search of safety.
Jesus was a Refugee.**

Hello Neighbor's Accepted In-Kind Donations List

Hello Neighbor looking for household goods to furnish the homes of our newly arriving refugee families. Before bringing a donation or sending an inquiry, please review this document in full.

If an item is not on the list, we likely cannot accept it.

For furniture donations, please send photos and a full description of items to the [in-kind coordinator](#).

Accepted Donations - last updated 9/28/23:

Bedding - MUST BE NEW

- Pillows
- Sheet sets - full and twin
- Comforters (full, twin, or queen)

Misc. household goods - new or gently used

- Plush throw blankets
- Curtains (64" or 84", in sets of 2)
- Shower curtain (with rod or rings)
- Tension rods (for curtains)
- Bath mats
- Bath towels

- Laundry baskets
- Light bulbs
- Rugs, especially area rugs
- Trash cans (Large and small)
- Umbrellas
- Toilet paper
- Small trash bin

Kitchen items - new or gently used

- Large frying pans
- Large soup pots
- Saucepans
- Tea kettles (electric and stove top)
- Stovetop pressure cookers (like [this](#))
- Colanders/strainers
- Rice cookers
- Tupperware
- Aluminum foil
- Brita water filter pitchers
- Dish sets (only sets of 4+; no random or single dishes please)
- Tea sets
- Tea kettles
- Oven mits
- Can openers
- Cutting board
- Kitchen utensil sets

Cleaning supplies

- Dish soap
- Laundry detergent
- Shower curtains + rings
- Plunger
- Toilet brush
- Hand soap
- Mop
- Broom

Personal care items - new

- Men's and women's shaving supplies
- Feminine hygiene PADS (not tampons)
- Hairbrushes and combs
- Shaving cream
- Razors
- Deodorant
- Toilet paper
-

Bonus items (not required for housing setups but useful to have!)

- Soccer balls w/ pumps
- Sewing machines
- Needles and thread
- Tools/toolkits
- Stuffed animals (new only)
- TVs
- Roku devices/firesticks (for streaming)
- Space heaters
- Fans
- Phone case and screen protector for Google Pixel phones

Emergency gift cards (distributed when families experience a medical, housing, or other emergency and need additional support). Amounts of \$25, \$50, or \$100 are ideal.

- Target (for Ship't deliveries)
- Giant Eagle
- Walmart
- Aldi



Images of Lent

The ashes of Ash Wednesday remind us that we, as a people baptized into the death of Christ, are repenting in order to follow Jesus. So, what does God want from us?

An answer comes early in our Lenten readings. God wants a great deal more from us than just our presence in worship, and the prophet Isaiah calls us to account when we have failed to do it. Lent is an invitation to a fast, but the kind of fast God wants us to observe is not merely an abstention from gluttony, but a deliberate, dedicated striving aimed at achieving justice for all of God's children. It was the challenge Isaiah offered to his listeners, and it is the challenge that remains for us today.

Isaiah told the people then [and those now who wear the ashes] that they missed the point of the ashes by concentrating on their dramatic portrayal of repentant suffering. The focus should be on what is really important: those who are poor, oppressed, hungry, and homeless. Sacrificing for others was and is a profoundly counter-cultural indictment of things the way they were, and of the way people allow themselves to become.

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 real discipline of 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 and praise.

Those who bear the cross of ashes know this truth. It is the truth we must not forget even though so much of the world and even so many members of our families, get swept along by a glib psychology of life.

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 February 21
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).

Wednesday, February 7
1:00-3:00 pm

The first Global Links volunteer session of 2024 will take place Wednesday, February 7 from 1:00-3:00 pm at 700 Trumbell Drive, Greentree 15205. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex or feel free to call the church office or Sara Dougherty (412-523-1499) for more information. Please join us as we pack medical supplies for countries in need across the globe.

Daily Bread Meal....

The next Meal with the Poor will be on March 17. The menu is Shepherds Pie, Irish soda bread, salad and dessert. At this time, monetary donations are being welcomed. Please remember this much needed ministry on the North Side.

Thank you.



**The 2024 Altar Flower and
Worship Bulletin Donation Charts**



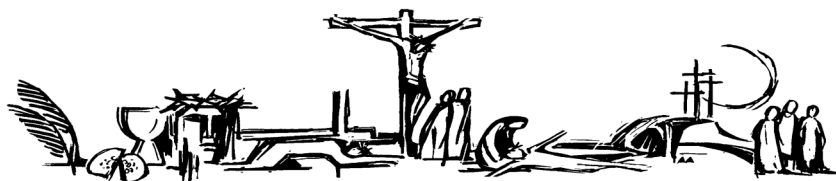
We still have open Sundays for those who wish to sign up for altar flowers or worship bulletins for the 2024 season. [Please, if the date wanted is taken, select another date!] Some dates have evening liturgies and some dates are for midweek liturgies. The cost of donation is \$30.00 per vase for flowers and \$25.00 per Sunday or Holy Day for bulletins. Please submit to the Church Office one week before any acknowledgement you would like printed. No reminders are sent for payment; we count on everybody to be good stewards.

February Youth Group Meeting

Our February Youth Group Meeting will be on February 25 from 6-8:00 pm. We plan to do more games and eat more food. Come help us finish our He Is Risen Banner! Contact Julia Nelson if you're interested in attending at jmnelson26@comcast.net

Looking ahead...

Ash Wednesday - February 14
Easter - March 31



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 17.**

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

- _____ Easter Lily [6 1/2" pot] at \$11.00
- _____ 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; Roof Fund.

Donor: _____

Fund Name: _____ Amount _____

Please print the bulletin acknowledgement you desire:



Tax Reform Act May Make QCD's More Appealing

Several years ago, Qualified Charitable Distributions became an option for IRA holders, who are at least 70 ½, to donate directly to qualified charities. This has several possible good tax outcomes for the IRA holder. In cases where the taxpayer is taking the standard deduction, direct contribution will keep the IRA distribution out of taxable income, lowering taxes if you do not itemize. This also reduces Adjusted Gross Income that may reduce taxes on Social Security benefits and reduce the taxpayer's Medicare premiums.

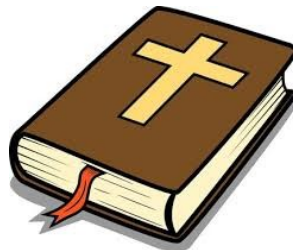
While nothing changed in 2023 as far as these rules, the near doubling of the standard deduction makes it more likely that taxpayer's will be taking the standard deduction. Taking an IRA distribution that goes into taxable income may not be offset by an itemized deduction for charitable contributions, increasing taxes. In short, contributions to MLULC (or other charities) may be more tax effective if donated directly from an IRA to the charity rather than being distributed to the taxpayer and then contributed to the charity. "Qualified charitable distributions count towards your required minimum distribution, if you have one this year."

If this is of possible interest to you, please contact me. I can explain further and give you account information for our brokerage account that can accept QCD's.

During LENT



READ about
God's LOVE for you
STOP BY THE
LIBRARY



REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER CAMP AND FAMILY CAMP STARTS AT 6AM ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1.

The schedule, details, prices, and online registration link can be found at www.lutherlyn.com/summercamp.

Please spread the word and share this with the potential campers and/or summer staff in your life.

Remember Lutherlyn's promise that no child is turned away from summer camp for financial reasons. For a campership request form, please e-mail registrar@lutherlyn.com.



February 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	2	3
4 Epiphany 5 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	5 12:30-2:30 ESL 7:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 ESL	6 4:30 Catechetics 1	7 12:30-2:30 ESL 1:00-3:00 Global Links 7:00 Choir	8 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	9	10
11 Transfiguration of Our Lord 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School <i>Souper Bowl of Caring</i>	12 12:30-2:30 ESL 7:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 ESL	13 4:30 Catechetics 1	14 Ash Wednesday 11:00 Worship 7:30 Worship	15 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	16	17
18 Lent 1 8:30 & 10:00 Live Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	19 12:30-2:30 ESL 7:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 ESL	20 4:30 Catechetics 1	21 12:30-2:30 ESL 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lent Devotions	22 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	23	24 Ordination Service Elizabeth Rheinfrank 10:00 am Prelude at 9:40 am
25 Lent 2 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School 11:15 Council Meeting 6:00 Youth Group Meeting	26 12:30-2:30 ESL 7:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 ESL	27 4:30 Catechetics 1	28 12:30-2:30 ESL 7:00 Choir 7:30 Virtual Lent Devotions	29 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2		

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Valparaiso University consistently receives national recognition
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STUDENT
ORGANIZATIONS

21

DIVISION I
ATHLETICS PROGRAMS

100+

ARTS PERFORMANCES
ANNUALLY

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STUDY ABROAD
PROGRAMS

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Valparaiso University is an independent **Lutheran** institution in Valparaiso, Indiana, an hour's drive southeast of Chicago. Founded in 1859, Valparaiso offers a thorough grounding in the liberal arts as well as professional training and graduate study. Contact Pastor Heagy for more information.



PREPARING FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

THERE ARE MANY THINGS WE CAN DO AS WE PREPARE FOR THE LENTEN SEASON WHICH BEGINS FEBRUARY 14 WITH ASH WEDNESDAY. HERE ARE A FEW NON-TRADITIONAL IDEAS:

1) CREATE A RESURRECTION GARDEN— [HTTPS://WWW.FARMWIFECRAFTS.COM/RESURRECTION-GARDEN/](https://www.farmwifecrafts.com/resurrection-garden/)



2) MAKE A LENTEN PRETZEL — *THE WORD PRETZEL IS DERIVED FROM A GERMAN WORD THAT MEANS "LITTLE ARMS." THE TWISTED SHAPE OF PRETZELS IS MEANT TO RESEMBLE TWO ARMS CROSSED IN PRAYER. MAKING LENT PRETZELS IS A WAY TO REMEMBER THAT LENT IS A SEASON OF PRAYER.*



[HTTPS://WWW.FOODNETWORK.COM/RECIPES/ALTON-BROWN/HOMEMADE-SOFT-PRETZELS-RECIPE-1948242](https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/homemade-soft-pretzels-recipe-1948242)

3) CREATE A THORN WREATH— OUT OF CHOCOLATE COVERED PRETZEL STICKS



4) 40 DAYS OF DONATIONS-GO THROUGH CLOSET AND EVERY DAY FOR THE 40 DAYS OF LENT PUT ONE ITEM YOU NO LONGER WEAR IN A BASKET. DONATE BASKET TO SHELTER.

5) MAKE A RUSTIC CROSS FROM TWIGS, BRANCHES AND TWINE

ASH WEDNESDAY
HOLY WEDNESDAY
MAUNDAY THURSDAY
GOOD FRIDAY

FEBRUARY 14
MARCH 27
MARCH 28
MARCH 29

EASTER SUNDAY-RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD - MARCH 31



GOD LOVES YOU

FOR GOD...



SO LOVED THE
WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS
ONLY
BEGOTTEN
SON, SO
THAT EVERYONE
WHO BELIEVES IN HIM
MAY NOT PERISH
BUT MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.
John 3:16

Coloring Sheets with this Bible verse available in the Library during Lent. Pick one up. Keep one or share.



1 Pray for synod hunger team chairs and other key ELCA World Hunger leaders participating in the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering in Houston. Ask the Spirit to guide their work of energizing congregations and synods to end hunger and poverty in the world, bringing relief and hope to our neighbors.

2 Remember in prayer those who suffer from heart disease, heart failure and congenital heart defects. Pray for the doctors, nurses, surgeons, care providers, researchers and chaplains who provide treatment, care and encouragement to patients of all ages and their families.

3 Pray for your synod's leaders, congregations and special ministries. Ask the Spirit to sustain them and stir their creative wisdom in carrying out the mission of the church in a changing and challenging world.

4 Give thanks for Jesus, our Savior, who changed the world not by force or coercion but by demonstrating God's lifesaving love, mercy, care for those who suffer and welcome for those who are excluded. Pray that the example of Jesus and the word of God will guide us in living for one another and sharing the gospel.

5 Pray for peace, healing and justice in places of conflict and violence, especially Ukraine, the Holy Land, Myanmar, Haiti, Venezuela and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

6 "The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary" (Isaiah 40:28). Who better to have at our side during every twist and turn in life than God, who is mighty, merciful and concerned for our well-being? Give praise and thanks to God!

7 Remember in prayer our neighbors and siblings in Christ who experience domestic abuse — physical, sexual or emotional. Pray that they will find refuge, community support and care for their injury and trauma. Give thanks for the work of ELCA Justice for Women, Women of the ELCA and community organizations that serve victims and survivors of domestic violence.

8 Praise God for the 50th anniversary of ELCA World Hunger and the ways God continues to use our collective assets to impact the world and serve our neighbors in need.

9 Promise to follow in the footsteps of Paul, who was mindful of the responsibility God had entrusted him with to share the gospel with people of various cultures, beliefs and life circumstances.

10 Pray that the Spirit will strengthen and sustain Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, stir her wisdom and renew her vision for our church and its mission.

11 Like Jesus' disciples, we are often confused, fearful and full of questions, longing to understand what God is doing through Jesus and what we must do as followers. Pray for God's patience as our faith matures and we learn how to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

12 Give thanks for our global companions whose daily realities, faith traditions, culture and language may differ from ours yet complement and enrich our lives and faith.

13 Pray that everything we do and say as people of faith will light the world, direct attention to our Creator and reflect God's love for humanity and all creation.

14 *Ash Wednesday* "Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them" (Matthew 6:1). Reflect on who we are to God — fragile, imperfect beings and loved children who stand before God with humility and gratitude.

15 Joy and sorrow are both intrinsic to being human. Pray that we might feel each of them as deeply, in the world and in our lives.

16 Pray that, during Lent, we will lean into God's grace and mercy with humility, trusting the promise that the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ win us a place in the kingdom of God.

17 Pray that, as bold disciples of Christ, we will be unashamed of our faith, confident in God's promises, comfortable telling our faith story and quick to respect and serve those in need.

18 "God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth'" (Genesis 9:12-13). Give thanks and praise to God for this promise of love and forgiveness.

19 *Martin Luther, renewer of the church (1483-1546)* Give thanks that we continue to learn from and be inspired by the sermons, hymns and writings of Martin Luther, who studied and wrestled with Scripture and the church to better understand God's saving grace and how it impacts every aspect of daily life.

20 Ask God to bless the work of the ELCA Organizing for Mission Network, a community of leaders and resource providers who use the principles of community organizing to develop, redevelop and renew gospel-centered communities that act for the sake of the world and the well-being of our neighbor.

21 The cross has become widespread in art, jewelry, clothing and popular culture around the world. Reflect on the symbol and the true meaning of the cross for those who find salvation and identity in Christ.

22 Remember in prayer those who helped you become the child of God you are today — siblings in Christ, parents and family, church leaders, teachers, friends, strangers, mentors and influential people who have gone before us.

23 Promise to learn God's ways and truth and to integrate them into your daily life, that we might operate from a firm foundation of love, wisdom and justice when struggling to discern right from wrong and to relate to one another.

24 Pray for the work of the ELCA Peace Not Walls campaign, which seeks a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and connects ELCA members with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, the Lutheran World Federation and ecumenical companions across the Middle East.

25 Do you know someone celebrating a momentous occasion — a birth, an anniversary, recovery from illness or injury? Let their joy be your joy, and lift up prayers of thanksgiving to God.

26 Pray that we will not grow weary of serving our neighbors in need, both nearby and around the world. Ask the Spirit to renew us when we feel overwhelmed by human needs.

27 Remember in prayer the bishops of our church gathering for the Conference of Bishops in Itasca, Ill. Give thanks for their faith, gifts, wisdom and diverse perspectives, which God uses to benefit the church and help us do God's work in the world.

28 "In my trials, Lord, walk with me; when my heart is almost breaking, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me" (ELW 325). Lent reminds us of our frailty, suffering and loneliness and of God's love and forgiveness, found in the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Breathe a sigh of relief and thank God.

29 Be mindful of those in your community who lack safe shelter and adequate food. Pray that their needs will be met, and that God will use you and your congregation to meet them.

Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church

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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

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

8:30 AM & 10:00 AM
Sunday, February 11, 2024
[Last Sunday after Epiphany]



A solemn day of the Church Year

Ash Wednesday

11:00 AM & 7:30 PM
February 14, 2024



Sealing of the alleluia, confession, imposition of ashes
and a restrained celebration of the Lord's Supper
to begin our Lenten journey of turning away from sin
to be faithful to the Gospel in Jesus Christ.

God said to Adam, remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return.