

the *Voice* parish newsletter

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



But Noah found favor in the sight of the Lord. –Genesis 6:8

...and the dove came back to Noah in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; –Genesis 8:11

Spring has sprung! Two study groups form this month—one on Monday evenings; the other on Thursday mornings. All members and friends are invited to join for the fellowship and spiritual growth.

The Monday evening group is a five-week video series entitled *Liturgy and the Natural World*. For details, scroll down to page 3. The instructor for this video series is The Rev. Dr. Benjamin M. Stewart, a noted Lutheran pastor and scholar with an environmental ministry focus. We will meet in the church library from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

The Thursday morning study group will meet for seven weeks to discuss the story of Noah, reading through a book about the Williamstown, Kentucky Noah's Ark amusement park. Participants will read one chapter in advance of each session. Scroll down to page 4 for details. Pre-registration is requested. To register, contact the church office or return a Sunday bulletin registration form to the offering plate. Books will be provided. Competing views of Noah's Ark will be a focus as well as the amusement park.

Please consider joining one or both of these groups. May the joy of our resurrection hope inspire us to live more fully for God and our neighbors!

Christ is risen!

Pastor Doug Heagy



April, 2024

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Thank God for our food

God said [to Adam and Eve], 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. -Genesis 1:29

There's a joke about the first-grade teacher who asks, "Where do apples come from?" Little Sydney speaks up: "From the supermarket!"

We laugh, but the truth is, many of us forget that our food comes only from life, through the plants and animals that God alone created.

As stewards and disciples, we can develop a deep appreciation for all that God provides us, particularly our food. With every mouthful, we can thank God for our daily bread, and for the soil, air and water that sustains life.

Easter and springtime are perfect occasions to celebrate God's miracle of life that gives us fruit, vegetables, grains, meat, fish and dairy foods. Here are some ideas:

- At mealtime grace, thank God not only for food, but also for the cycles of seedtime, growth and harvest. Thank God for life-nourishing soil, water and air.
- While eating, think about how and from where the plants are grown or animals raised? How do they get to your kitchen?
- As a church or family, celebrate Earth Day (April 22) by learning about food production and our food supply, and how environmental problems affect it.
- Celebrate Earth Day by planting a garden.
- Learn about nutrition -- what foods are the best and worst for us. Promote healthy eating.
- Learn about food waste and take steps to reduce it in your home.
- At church, celebrate creation or seedtime.

We live in a culture where food is all around us all the time. As steward-disciples, we want to be sure not to take even a mouthful for granted.

--Rob Blezard

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MONDAY NIGHT STUDY GROUP

LITURGY AND THE NATURAL WORLD

A 5-part Springtime Video Series on Nature and Liturgy

Instructor: The Rev. Dr. Benjamin M. Stewart

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

- APRIL 8** **Session 1: Series introduction & Orientation**
- APRIL 15** **Session 2: Trees Clap their Hands, Stars Sing for Joy**
How can humans find our appropriate place in the cosmic choir?
- APRIL 22** **Session 3: Each Day is a Gift: Ancient and Contemporary Rituals for Sunrise, Sunset, and Night**
Did you know that the oldest Christian prayer outside the Bible is still sung as day turns to night in the Holden Evening Prayer?
- APRIL 29** **Session 4: A Sacramental World: Holy Baptism and Holy Communion**
How can baptism and communion lead us deeper into love for the earth?
- MAY 6** **Session 5: Earth to Earth: Theology and Spirituality of Green Funeral Practices**
What is the green burial movement, and how is it deepening Christian faith and practice related to death — and the life of the world to come?

Rev. Dr. Benjamin M. Stewart serves as Distinguished Affiliate Faculty at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and as Pastor to Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Two Harbors, Minnesota. Ben is a member of the North American Academy of Liturgy and contributes to its Ecology and Liturgy Seminar. His book, **A Watered Garden: Christian Worship and Earth's Ecology**, was published in 2011.

Series Summary: *According to the Bible, the universe is like a cosmic choir where stars sing for joy, trees clap their hands, and waters roar hymns of praise. Humans – among the youngest of earth's species – are sometimes like latecomers to choir practice, learning from other creatures how to "join their unending hymn." In this crucial ecological moment, we take a journey to four destinations to help us re-imagine our communal liturgies and our daily rituals for the life of the world: the whole cosmos; the cycle of night and day; the sacraments; and our bodies themselves as sacred ground.*

Location: *We will meet in the church library. Pastor Heagy will distribute material at Session 1 and introduce the series. Session 1 will be a brief meeting for questions and answers.*

THURSDAY MORNING STUDY

A 7-Session Book Discussion Group

Ark Encounter: The Making of a Creationist Theme Park
by James S. Bielo, (New York: New York University Press, 2018)

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

APRIL 11	Genesis 6-9 & Introduction
APRIL 18	Chapter 1: <i>The Power of Entertainment</i>
APRIL 25	Chapter 2: <i>Materializing the Bible</i>
MAY 2	Chapter 3: <i>Cultural Producers</i>
MAY 9	Chapter 4: <i>Conversion as Play</i>
MAY 16	Chapter 5: <i>The Past is Not History</i>
MAY 23	Chapter 6: <i>A Walking Poetics of Faith</i>

Led by Pastor Heagy, group participants will discuss competing views of the Noah's Ark story in the Bible while reading through a stimulating anthropological study by James S. Bielo. His focus is the Noah's Ark amusement park in Williamstown, Kentucky. Advance registration is requested. Books will be provided.

Contact the church to register: 412-563-0300 / mtleboluth@aol.com.

Book summary: Opened to the public in July 2016, Ark Encounter is a creationist theme park in Kentucky. The park features a re-creation of Noah's ark, built full scale to specifications drawn from the text of Genesis. The book, *Ark Encounter*, offers insights about the relationship between religion, entertainment, and fundamentalist Christian claims to the public sphere. James S. Bielo examines these themes, drawing on his behind-the-scenes access to the Ark Encounter team during the initial design of the park. James S. Bielo is anthropologist of religion and an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Northwestern University.



WELCOME to the Lord's Family...On March 31, 2024, we received Dylan Ryan Solomon & Elliott Beatrice Solomon through the waters of Baptism. We rejoice with parents Ryan and Ashleigh Solomon and their family. Dylan was born on February 10, 2010. Elliot was born on March 30, 2015. Mary Beth Trivilino served as their baptism sponsor.

**Sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked
with the Cross of Christ forever,
may Dylan & Elliot know God's love as she grows into a disciple of our Lord Jesus.**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS...



We were pleased to welcome Michael Flaherty and The Solomon Family—Ryan, Ashleigh, Rylie, Dylan, and Elliott to our congregational family on March 31, 2024. Please be sure to introduce yourself and greet them.



SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE:

April, 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 mtlebo-luth@aol.com

	8:30	10:00
April 7- Crucifer	Annaleigh Dwulit	Luke Frankovitch
April 14- Crucifer	Easton Darcy	Xavier Graybill
April 21- Crucifer	Isla Gentzel	Milo Bucher
April 28- Crucifer	Ewan Keplar	Nico Provins



The worship links to Facebook & You Tube can be found on our website:
www.mtlebanonlutheran.org

WORSHIP

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

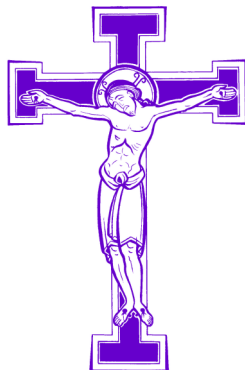
April 7 Second Sunday of Easter
 Acts 4:32-35
 Psalm 133
 1 John 1:1—2:2
 John 20:19-31

April 14 Third Sunday of Easter
 Acts 3:12-19
 Psalm 4
 1 John 3:1-7
 Luke 24:36b-48

April 21 Fourth Sunday of Easter
 Acts 4:5-12
 Psalm 23
 1 John 3:16-24
 John 10:11-18

April 28 Fifth Sunday of Easter
 Acts 8:26-40
 Psalm 22:25-31
 1 John 4:7-21
 John 15:1-8

Sunday School 10:00 AM



First Holy Communion....For those second graders [and older children who have not yet been instructed], First Communion instruction dates are listed below. The children who receive instruction will celebrate their First Holy Communion at the **10:00 liturgy on Sunday, May 12.**

Full participation in the Eucharistic life of the Church is a milestone in a young person's life for "at the table of our Lord Jesus Christ, God nourishes faith, forgives sin, and calls us to be witnesses to the Gospel."



Parish practices vary widely on the age and circumstances for full participation in the Lord's Supper. However, it was over 30 years ago that the Lutheran Church in America separated "confirmation" and the reception of Holy Communion. Since that time, congregations have continued to lower the age at which children are instructed and invited to commune.

First Communion instruction in Eastertide 2024 will be offered on Saturday mornings, promptly at 10:00 AM, on April 20, 27, and May 4. Classes will be one hour in length. Attendance is required! Parents of students are encouraged to attend.

Questions with regard to communion practices and/or First Communion instruction are welcome and should be directed to the Pastor.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for the May issue of the *Voice* are to be submitted by **Sunday, April 14.** Articles may be left in the church office or email: mtleboluth@aol.com.

Looking Ahead
 Upcoming Feast Days

Ascension of Our Lord
 Thursday, May 9th

Day of Pentecost
 Confirmation Sunday
 May 19

The Holy Trinity
 May 26

COLUMBARIUM - South Chancel Wall

Interment is still 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.



*The South Chancel Wall Columbarium
was completed July 2022*

Even though online worship has remained ongoing and convenient, it is important to remember why church attendance matters...

We can't serve fully from our sofas.

We can't have a full community of faith on our sofas.

We can't experience a sanctuary of believers worshipping together on our sofas.

Christians are servants, not consumers.

We are contributors.

We engage.

We give.

We sacrifice.

We encourage.

We pray by laying hands on the hurting.

We do life together.

The Church needs everyone. We all need the Church.

—Michael Carl



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.

As we pray for those who struggle in sickness and in sorrow, illumine with your light and with the warmth of your healing presence which will remind them that they are not alone. Especially we pray for:

Craig Elias; Andy Kelemen; Linda Larkin;
Jennifer Meyer,

Newsletter Articles for the May Voice
Newsletter are due to the church office by
April 14 th.

Second Quarter Editions of *Portals of Prayer*, our congregational family's daily devotional, are available in the Narthex. You are invited to take a copy for personal use and encouraged to use it daily in your meditative life.

Our Children's Choir sang in Worship on Palm Sunday. Many thanks to the kids for enhancing worship with their beautiful voices. Thanks to Carol Vogely and Barb Heagy for leading the kids in music. We practice every other week at the end of the Sunday School hour. All kids are welcome to join!



FLOWER CHART
AND WORSHIP BULLETINS
STILL AVAILABLE FOR THE 2024 YEAR.

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

Daily Bread Ministries Meal May 19

Donations are now being accepted in the white giving box in the Narthex; or you can mail checks to church office. Mark the check memo line, '*Daily Bread Ministries*'. Thank you for supporting this vital ministry!



What is the new Art and Faith Initiative?

The inspiration for this initiative comes from a quarterly article which appears in the *Thrivent Magazine*, called "Connecting art and faith". A select piece of artwork from the **Thrivent Collection of Religious Art** (Minneapolis, MN) is featured in each article with a description and interpretation. At the end of each article, there is a "Reflecting" box for the reader to contemplate the artwork in a deeper, more meaningful way. Our "Reflection Garden experiences" are a way of bringing this initiative to a larger audience for spiritual inspiration.

We hope you have enjoyed the first of many "connecting" experiences.

See: www.thriventcollection.com

Talk with Julia Nelson and/or
Melodie Frankovitch for more details.

Calling all campers!! Mark your calendars! Get ready for VBS - **Camp Firelight**



When? July 15-19, 2024, 9 am to 12 noon
Where? Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! JOIN IN THE FUN!

We have already started planning but we need your help! We have positions for teens and adults as assistants and leaders. Help is needed in Crafts, Bible Storytelling, Music, Science, Games, Snacks, and Decorating. Some tasks are before VBS, during evenings, weekends, etc. Others are during VBS hours: 9 am – noon.

Are you interested in helping at **Camp Firelight**?

Email Melodie Frankovitch at frankovitch@comcast.net

VBS Volunteer Meeting



Calling all VBS
Camp Firelight Volunteers...

Teens and Adults!

Please join us for one of the two
orientation meetings for VBS Week:

Sunday, June 2 from 11:15-12:15

Light refreshments will be provided

OR

Monday, June 3, from 7-8 pm

Both meetings will be held
in the Social Hall.

*"Whenever I'm afraid,
I put my trust in you."*

Psalm 56:3

VBS THEME FOR 2024

It is all about camping!

Looking for specific items needed
to borrow and to donate
in the **MAY VOICE**.

VBS Registration details
will be forthcoming!
Start planning now!

July 15-19, 9 am - 12 noon.



Remember the Sabbath day, and
keep it holy. —Exodus 20:8

CampBlast at Lutherlyn

CampBlast at Lutherlyn

May 11, 2024, 11:00 am - 4:30 pm

Join us for a **FREE** day of FUN that highlights all that Camp Lutherlyn has to offer. Rain or Shine! Many awesome indoor and outdoor activities to enjoy at CampBlast!

Go to <https://www.lutherlyn.com/events-retreats/campblast.html> for directions and schedule.

Camp Lutherlyn brochures are on the bulletin board in the hallway by the Narthex, and given by the Sunday School Teachers.

Lutherlyn's 2024 Summer Camp Schedule

Week 1 June 16-21	-Staff-In-Training (SH) -Life in the Wild (JH) -Adventurers (JH & SH)	-Classic (Jr) (SH) -Horse Camp (JH & SH) -Confirmation Camp
Week 2 June 23-28	-Classic (Jr) (JH) -Horse Camp (Jr) -Small Fry Days (Th & Fri) -Confirmation Camp	-Adventurers (JH & SH) -Young Folks (Sun-Wed) -Grown Up & Me (Th & Fri)
Week 3 June 30 - July 5	-Family Camp -On-Site Day Camp (1st-5th grade)	
Week 4 July 7-12	-Arts & Musical (Jr & JH) -Classic (Jr) (JH) (SH) -Life in the Wild (Jr)	-Horse Camp (Jr) -Adventurers (JH & SH)
Week 5 July 14-19	-Classic (Jr) (JH) (SH) -Adventurers PLUS (SH) -Small Fry Days (Th & Fri)	-Horse Camp (JH & SH) -Young Folks (Sun-Wed) -Grown Up & Me (Th & Fri)
Week 6 July 21-26	-Classic (Jr) (JH) -Horse Camp (Jr) -Junior Adventurers (Jr)	-Venture (SH) -Rocketry (JH & SH)
Week 7 July 28- August 2	-Classic (Jr) (JH) -Rocketry (Jr) -Horse Camp (JH & SH)	-Night Owls (JH & SH) -Adventurers (JH & SH)

"Young Folks" - campers enter grades 2-3, "Jr" - campers enter grades 4-6, "JH" - campers enter grades 7-9, "SH" - campers enter grades 10-12 or 2024 graduate



You Are Invited to CampBlast!

Saturday, May 11th 2024, 11am-4:30pm

Join us for a day of FUN that highlights all that Lutherlyn has to offer. Pony rides, campfire, crafts, gaga ball, archery, zipline, bouldering room, hiking, nature activities, hay rides, games, sports, LEGO room, tours, great food, and MORE!

The best part.... **EVERYTHING IS FREE!**

www.lutherlyn.com/campblast

\$100 off for FIRST-TIME campers!

This coupon entitles FIRST-TIME Lutherlyn campers to \$100 off of the registration fee for Summer 2024. This applies to Lutherlyn's residential week-long programs. Young Folks half-week programs get \$50 off for FIRST-TIME campers. Does not apply to Family Camp, Confirmation Camp, Day Camps, or Small Fry Days.

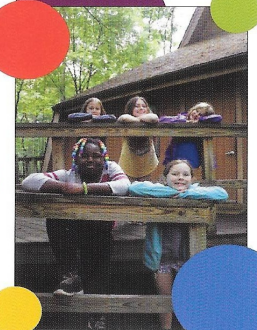
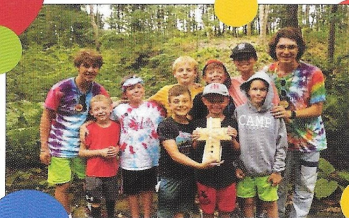
Must be a FIRST-TIME summer camper.

No additional discounts may be combined with this offer.

Enter coupon code: **FIRST**

Register at **WWW.LUTHERLYN.COM**.

Please share this code with friends!



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.

THE WALK TO EMMAUS

SUNDAY, MAY 5

12:30 PM

On Sunday, May 5, church members are invited to join Pastor Heagy and others for a walk on the Montour Trail in remembrance of the Emmaus walk that took place on the first Easter Day.

We will meet at a designated point and conclude the afternoon with refreshments at Al's Café. Please join the fun and invite friends! We will walk, not run, in our time together. Doubters and stragglers are welcome!

MORE DETAILS ARE FORTHCOMING IN THE SUNDAY BULLETINS



Springtime Coffee Hour



Celebrate National Library Week 2024

Sunday, April 14, 2024

In the Foyer

Yummy Spring treats!

Libraries provide food for thought!



Walk through the Resurrection Garden

Located in the Foyer



Take a visual journey.

He is not here. He is Risen!

**Share what this *Art and Faith*
experience has meant to you.**



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.



APRIL 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 4:30 Catechetics 1	3 7:00 Choir	4 4:30 Catechetics 2	5	6
7 Easter 2 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	8 12:30-2:30 ESL Liturgy & Nature 7 PM 7:00 ESL	9 4:30 Catechetics 1	10 7:00 Choir	11 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	12	13
14 Easter 3 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	15 12:30-2:30 ESL Liturgy & Nature 7 PM 7:00 ESL	16 4:30 Catechetics 1	17 7:00 Choir	18 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	19	20 First Holy Communion 10 AM
21 Easter 4 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School	22 12:30-2:30 ESL Liturgy & Nature 7 PM 7:00 ESL	23 4:30 Catechetics 1	24 7:00 Choir	25 10:00 Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	26	27 First Holy Communion 10:00 AM
28 Easter 5 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School 11:15 Council Meeting 6:00 Youth Group Meeting	29 12:30-2:30 ESL Liturgy & Nature 7 PM 7:00 ESL	30 4:30 Catechetics 1				





1 “We need to hear the gospel every day, because we forget it every day” (attributed to Martin Luther, 1483-1546). Pray that we might never grow weary of hearing the story of Easter or experiencing God's love and mercy for the world in the gift of Jesus Christ.

2 Remember in prayer the diverse gifts, cultures, heritages, ethnic values and stories of all people.

3 Ask God to help us see the presence and influence of Jesus in our daily lives, our relationships and our conversations with neighbors, co-workers and siblings in Christ.

4 Pray for the people of Haiti, who have suffered multiple natural disasters in recent years and are now experiencing civil and political unrest and violence.

5 Lift up praise and thanksgiving to God, celebrating God's promise of love, forgiveness and eternal life. “This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (Isaiah 25:9).

6 Pray for the ministry of Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) and give thanks for its 80 years of work supporting and empowering immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees as they rebuild their lives in the United States.

7 Thomas wasn't sure what to believe when the risen Jesus mysteriously appeared to him and the other disciples, but Jesus met his skepticism with love and understanding. Give thanks for God's patience with us when we grapple with the mysteries of our faith, and for the Spirit having revealed truth to us through Scripture, prayer, reflection and our siblings in Christ.

8 Pray that the leaders of Russia and Ukraine and of Israel and Palestine will commit to their respective cease-fires and meet face-to-face to resolve their conflicts and create peaceful ways forward, ending the widespread human suffering and destruction that have impacted generations of their people.

9 *Dietrich Bonhoeffer, theologian (1906-1945)* Remember and give thanks to God for people throughout history, such as Bonhoeffer, who are driven by their faith and convictions to stand against injustice, evil and violence toward others, even in the face of personal threats and death. Ask God for the courage and boldness to act when our neighbors are threatened or treated unjustly.

10 “Everything they owned was held in common ... and it was distributed to each as any had need” (Acts 4:32-35). Ask the Spirit to stir our generosity and nurture our unwavering concern for the well-being of our neighbor so that we might share our assets with those in need and foster concerned communities.

11 Ask the Spirit to guide and inspire the leaders of our church gathered for the ELCA Church Council in Chicago, that they will work together to guide, strengthen and grow the church; respond to new challenges; affirm God's call for us to serve our neighbors; and encourage people of all ages to bear the gospel into the world.

12 Pray for ELCA Global Mission personnel, including volunteers, longtime staff, Young Adults in Global Mission, and seminary students serving as Horizon International interns. Give thanks for their faithful service and the gifts and talents they bring to their work alongside our global companions.

13 We live in a world that pits different groups of people against each other, causing inequity and anguish. Ask the Spirit to transform our fear and prejudice into compassion, kindness, empathy and respect. Turn off cable news shows today. “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).

14 Thank God for the Scripture, sacraments, hymns and liturgical art that reveal our redemption and freedom through Jesus Christ.

15 “Let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth” (1 John 3:18). Praise God for ELCA World Hunger's 50 years of action to end hunger, bring relief to those who suffer, develop sustainable solutions to hunger and raise awareness of the needs of our neighbors — here and around the world. Pray that we might exercise generosity, wisdom and perseverance to meet the challenges of ending hunger.

16 Ask God for the openness to reflect on our nation's history of liberty and freedom, giving thanks for the Bill of Rights.

17 Give thanks that we can live in the joy of being God's children and that, though we may not understand completely what that means, it will be fully revealed to us someday.

18 Praise God for the lengthening daylight of spring, which stirs new life and reminds us of the light God brings into the world through the gift of Jesus Christ.

19 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana and Western Iowa synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

20 Remember in prayer our ministry in Africa through ELCA Global Mission, which works alongside Lutheran churches and agencies in 24 African countries and supports the work of the Lutheran World Federation's Department for World Service.

21 Jesus, our good and loving shepherd, laid down his life for us, his sheep. Give thanks and praise to God!

22 Remember in prayer our neighbors and siblings in Christ whose vocations pull them away from their family, friends, congregation and community. Pray that the Holy Spirit will sustain their faith and spirit and that we will express our connection with them as they come and go.

23 To whom do we turn when we are tired or unsure of our path in life? Praise God, who stays by our side through every twist and turn.

24 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Rocky Mountain Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

25 Give thanks for the numerous volunteers from across the country who are training to help youth and their adult leaders at the ELCA Youth Gathering this summer in New Orleans.

26 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Alaska Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

27 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Northeastern Minnesota and Virginia synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

28 “Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate a brother or sister are liars, for those who do not love a brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen” (1 John 4:20). Give thanks that God loved us first, so that we might know unconditional love and mercy and pass them along to all our neighbors.

29 “To the servant of God ... every place is the right place, and every time is the right time” (Catherine of Siena, theologian, 1347-1380). Pray for the wisdom to see every moment of every day as an opportunity to honor God through loving, serving and honoring our neighbors in need.

30 Thank God for the gift of baptism, which affirms our faith, washes us clean with God's love and forgiveness, welcomes us to the vast community of siblings in Christ and grants us a new life of service and sharing the gospel wherever we go.

Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

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

Pastor

Dr. Christopher Keenan, DMA

Director of Music and Organist

Mr. Larry Allen

Director of Music and Organist Emeritus

Mrs. Kris Malia

Parish Secretary

First Holy Communion

It is our parish practice at Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran to provide First Communion instruction for children during the Easter Season in preparation for those having been instructed to receive their First Communion on Sunday, May 12

Second graders [and older children who have not yet been instructed] are invited to First Communion instruction to be received into the communing family of the congregation.

First Communion instruction in Eastertide 2024 will be offered on Saturday mornings at 10:00 AM, on April 20., 27, and May 4. Classes will be one hour in length.



Questions with regard to communion practices and/or First Communion instruction are welcome and should be directed to the Pastor.