

# PAUL'S PARISH NEWS



SAINT PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Breinigsville, PA

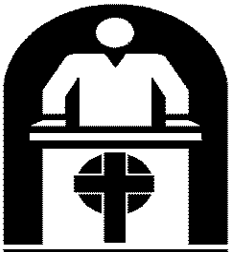
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**MARCH 2025**



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
8227 Hamilton Boulevard  
Breinigsville, PA 18031  
Telephone: 610-398-7000

*PAUL'S PARISH NEWS* is published by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church



Dear Members and Friends,

A tourist came too close to the edge of the Grand Canyon, lost his footing and plunged over the side, clawing and scratching to save himself. Somehow, he was able to grab hold of a small, shrubby bush. Filled with terror, he called out, “Is there anyone up there? Can anyone help me?” He heard a reassuring voice say, “I’m here: the Lord your God.”

The man said, “I am so glad you came along. I can’t hold on much longer.” The Lord said, “Before I help you, I want to know if you believe in me.” The man answered, “Lord, I certainly believe in you. I go to church every Sunday, sometimes even on Wednesdays. I read my Bible, pray every day, and even put a few dollars in the collection plate.”

The Lord replied, “But do you really believe in me?” The man was getting more desperate. “Lord, you can’t believe how much I believe in you. I believe!”

The Lord said, “Good. Now Let go of the branch.”

The man stammered, “But, Lord . . . “

And the voice of the Lord came back, “If you believe in me, let go of the branch.”

The man was silent for a minute and then yelled, “Is there anyone else up there?”

Faith sometimes means “letting go.” In this society of rampant individualism, we want to control everything around us and not look beyond ourselves. Sometimes we have this idea that faith is what we get from studying the bible, believing the right doctrines, and doing good works. The man “believed” because he went to church, sometimes twice a week, and even put a few dollars in the “collection plate.” But maybe faith is letting go and trusting that God is in control, that *we* are not in control. That is something worth pondering as we live out our daily life.

Blessings,

Pastor Miller

## **SNOW/CANCELLATION INFORMATION**



Winter advisory...Please be sure to check St. Paul's website, [www.stpaulsbbville.org](http://www.stpaulsbbville.org) or WFMZ storm center to see if any church service or event is cancelled due to snow or ice.

## **ASH WEDNESDAY**

The Season of Lent begins with ashes and ends with alleluias. It is a season of spiritual growth, beginning on February 14<sup>th</sup> and concluding six weeks later with the brilliant white colors of Easter. The first day of Lent is Ash Wednesday named for the practice of imposing ashes, a practice that many Lutheran congregations have found quite meaningful. Ashes symbolize several aspects of our human experience. First, ashes remind us of God's condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, "Dust you are and to dust you shall return." Second, ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. Ashes were used anciently in the absence of soap, and on Ash Wednesday ashes are a penitential substitute for water as a reminder of our Baptism. Third, ashes remind us of the shortness of human life, for one day the words "We commit his/her body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust" will be said over our bodies. Fourth, ashes are a symbol of repentance, as expressed in Luke 10:13 and the hymn "Savior, When in Dust to Thee." Please join us for this important service to begin the season of Lent on the morning and evening of March 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am and 7:00pm

## **EASTER FLOWER ORDERS**

At this time we would be ordering our Easter Flowers. However, we have received word from our supplier they are no longer supply Easter and Christmas flowers to churches. We are in the process of checking around for a new place. As soon as we have a price list from a new Greenhouse, we will notify you. Sorry about the hold up.

## **SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR 2025 BULLETIN & ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORSHIPS**

We are in need of bulletin sponsorships for 2025. The price is \$20.00. Call the church office to pick a date to sponsor or check the bulletin board for available dates. Fill out the white slip with your name, date you are sponsoring and the wording and place it in the folder under the signup sheet.

Altar Flower Sponsorships are: one vase is \$24.00 or both vases are \$48.00. If you are sponsoring both vases, **PLEASE** sign your name to **BOTH LINES**. Fill out the blue slip with your name, date you are sponsoring and the wording and place it in the folder under the signup sheet. Call the church office to pick a date to sponsor or check the bulletin board for available dates.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE**

**March 7** – Meal & Movie

**March 16** – Pot Luck Lunch – St. Patrick’s Theme

**March 30** – Concert by Russ Rentler

### **CONCERT SERIES – UPCOMING CONCERT**

Our concert series will continue on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. Russ Rentler is an award winning singer songwriter and multi-instrumentalist performing original music on multiple stringed instruments steeped in the Appalachian tradition.

He has recorded six albums and one of his songs was featured on NPR’S Cartalk

Russ practiced internal medicine and geriatrics in the LV from 1989 to 2016 retiring to play music full-time.

SingOut magazine called him a “gifted songwriter and fine musician.”

A free will offering will be taken and you may contribute a non-perishable food item for the Allentown Food Bank.

# PENNY PARTY FUNDRAISER!!



The Spring Penny Party and Basket Raffle fundraiser is scheduled for **April 5, 2025** with doors opening at 11:30AM, and the event beginning at 1:00PM. Seating at this event is limited, so guests are encouraged to come early.

The Penny Party will include approximately 10 baskets, 10-15 gift cards, and 100-200 small items for bidding. We will sell food and beverages and there will also be a bake sale.

## What is a Penny Party?

A Penny Party is a fundraising and social event that combines elements of raffles and silent auctions. Guests buy a set (or several sets) of numbered tickets that they use to bid on small items priced under \$1. Each ticket equals one bid. Guests are seated at tables that are inter-connected, and view items on a tray as it is slid from one table to the next. A change bucket and a ticket bucket accompany each item on the tray. To bid on an item, the bidder puts their money (in change) in the change bucket, and also places a numbered ticket in the ticket bucket. For example – to bid on an item marked 10 cents, the minimum bid must comprise a dime placed in the change bucket, and one ticket placed in the ticket bucket. If the guest wants to bid more than the price – whatever multiple of the price is decided, that is the number of tickets that are required. For example, if a bidder wants to double a bid, they would pay 20 cents and use two tickets; to triple a bid – they would pay 30 cents and use three tickets, and so forth. Drawings for Penny Party items are done continually during the event, as soon as each item on a tray has made its way across all tables. If the winning number is not claimed immediately, a second drawing is done for that item. Guests must be present to win. So, start saving your loose change (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters), if you plan to attend this event.

## Donations:

We are grateful for all of the small items from the 6 different categories (Non-Perishable Food/Beverage Items, Household Items, Paper or Office Items, Pet Supplies, Kids' Items, and Personal Care Items) that have been donated so far. We are still looking for more. These items should be new or nearly new, and small enough to fit on a 9 x 13 tray. Some examples are cans of soup, pasta packages, a box of tissues, pkg of paper plates, small

décor items, dog/cat toys, hand cream, etc. Check out our shelves in the Narthex where donations can be placed. All donations are appreciated!

### **Volunteers Needed:**

We will need volunteers to help on the day of the event with such tasks as selling food, making baked goods, selling tickets, set up prior to the event, and break down after the event. Look for sign up sheets in the near future in the narthex. Any time that you can give is welcome.

We are always looking for more people to join this committee. Please speak to any one of our members. Our committee is made up of the following wonderful people: Pastor Miller, Amanda Mesko, Anita Eisenhard, Steph Wagaman, Mel Dimovitz, Carol Derr-Breinig, Becky Theodore, Peggy Saylor, and Rosalie Gallagher.

## **PRAYER SHAWL GROUP NEWS**



Our next charity crafting project is **Crocheted/Knitted Octopuses for Premies** for St. Luke's Hospital NICU, where they have been using Premie octopuses for years. Check out the display on the Narthex table– where you can find patterns and a sample crocheted octopus. Many thanks to Cathy Waltemyer for getting us copies of the crocheted octopus pattern that St. Luke's uses. If you need help with the pattern, see Steph or bring it along to Plarn.

*Plarn Project/Monthly Working Sessions* – Our March Plarn session will be **March 18 at 1:30PM**. Hope to see you there - it is a fun and productive working session. We've submitted 8 sleeping mats so far, so at 700 bags each – we've process over 5,600 bags!

## **USHERS/WORSHIP ASSISTANTS ARE NEEDED**

We are in need of people to help with the 10:30 a.m. worship service. For the service, worship is the same as before Covid 19 – i.e. hymns are sung, offering is collected in the pew, and communion is taken at the altar. You will be handing out the bulletin, helping to collect offering, and directing the congregation to the altar and handing them a communion cup.

We are always looking for additional worship assistants at the 10:30 a.m. service – especially ushers. Please consider volunteering as an usher, greeter, reader, communion bread supplier, communion assistant, or on altar guild. Even if you can only volunteer at certain times of the year, the scheduler can work around and accommodate busy and varying schedules.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration on assisting in worship. If you would be willing and interested in helping, please contact Steph Wagaman at 610-395-0355 or [stepbillwagaman@rcn.com](mailto:stepbillwagaman@rcn.com) or call the church office at 610-398-7000.

## **WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH [WELCA]**

Our February meeting was postponed from the second Wednesday to the third Wednesday due to inclement weather.

The mailing of *The Flame* was completed on January 31<sup>st</sup> and has information and registration forms for the following NEPA WELCA Events:

- Spring Justice Event, *Protecting Our Children*, March 29, 2025, at Christ United Lutheran Church in Ashland, PA.
- 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, *Renew Yourself with Gods Word*, June 14, 2025, St. John's Nazareth.

**ALL WOMEN ARE INVITED TO THESE EVENTS**

Join us on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. for our next meeting.

## CARD MINISTRY



Here at St. Paul's we send cards to members of the congregation who are ill or in need of a cheerful word. These cards are on the table in the narthex. When you are here on a Sunday, or during the week, check the table to see if there is a card. Please sign your name and help bring a smile to a fellow member.

## HOSPITALIZED?

Parish Code for hospitalized parishioners is 321. Please give this code when you are admitted to the hospital so the pastor can be made aware that you are a patient and can administer the pastoral care you require while you are hospitalized.

Please take note, that if you are admitted on a Thursday night, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, the pastor will not be aware that you are hospitalized until Monday mid-morning, since the church does not have office hours on Friday, and the hospital pastoral care office is not available on Saturday or Sunday.

This means, if you would like the Pastor to know you are hospitalized on the weekend, please call the church office or the Pastor



9 Julie Sanchez	12 Susan Ferguson
9 Dawn Wertz	17 Henrietta Younger
8 Zack Dimovitz	20 Pamela Zahour
10 Bruce Wagaman	25 Matthew Morgenstern
11 Rita Miller	27 Liam Nemeh
12 Ruth Berghold	28 Ellie Pisauro
12 Avie Cope	31 Bill Wilburn



31 Westley & Laurin  
Mironov



## AMID LIFE'S STORMS

The hurricanes that battered the East Coast in fall 2024 also battered my soul. I was over the rain and humidity. I was tired of lugging my two preschoolers through the downpours and driving through flash floods at night. Yet I had no reason to complain. Our house was still standing, with no damage.

The news around us was worrying and heartbreaking. “What if that was us?” I wondered. “Would I be strong enough?”

Then the kids asked to play outside. Even though I knew they’d get wet and muddy, I gave in. When a rainbow appeared, I’d never been more humbled as I remembered: I don’t need to be anxious. I don’t need to be strong enough. God watches over us all. He knows the hurt and sorrow. And he promises to be “our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1, ESV).

Lord, forgive my unbelief. “Hear my cry, O God ... when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:1-2, ESV).

—Kristen Greene

## FASTING AND FEASTING

During Lent, consider this practical — and biblical — advice from Arthur Lichtenberger, a former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church:

- Fast from criticism, and feast on praise.
- Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy.
- Fast from ill-temper, and feast on peace.
- Fast from resentment, and feast on contentment.
- Fast from jealousy, and feast on love.
- Fast from pride, and feast on humility.
- Fast from selfishness, and feast on service.
- Fast from fear, and feast on faith.

## TWO-WAY BENEFITS

“When you do nothing, you feel overwhelmed and powerless,” observed Connecticut politician Pauline Keezer. “But when you get involved, you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better.” Indeed, it’s impossible to shine light in someone else’s life without lighting up your own.

We might think being generous toward another with our time or possessions leaves us with less. But as Jesus said, “Whoever loses their life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 10:39, NIV). How common it is that when we minister to others in Christ’s name, we find we have also — or perhaps even more so — received ministry. This is the miracle of God’s love at work.

## ON THE PATH TO VICTORY

After moving to a college town, Pastor Kendra Thompson learned about the athletic phenomenon known as March Madness. And after a nondenominational upbringing, as a young adult she learned about Lenten traditions.

Lent and the NCAA college basketball tournament, which usually coincide, both point to the divine, Thompson argues. “In Lent, with each day we are drawn closer to the crushing reality that we’ve crucified our God. And yet we are also faced with an impossible victory: that death did not win, that our God is raised in Jesus Christ,” she writes. “Likewise, watching college basketball invites us into a season of hoping in unlikely possibilities, marveling at upsets, and giving thanks to God for the connection we find as his people.”

Like fans swept up in high-stakes games, Jesus’ disciples abandon everything to follow him. Lent might be “holy madness,” Thompson muses. It’s “an opportunity to ‘feel’ our religion, not just in our heads but with our skin, our voices, even in the anxieties of our prayers.”

## LENTEN OFFERING ENVELOPES

Enclosed in the newsletter is a Lenten envelope. There are also more envelopes available on the table in the Narthex.



# Puzzle!



Fill in the blanks with the tiny creatures mentioned in each verse (all NIV). Then search for those words in the puzzle below.

Proverbs 6:6

\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 78:45

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 23:24

\_\_\_\_\_

Judges 14:8b

\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 12:23

\_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22

\_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22

\_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 7:20

\_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 16:20

\_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 24:14

\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 50:9

\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 59:5

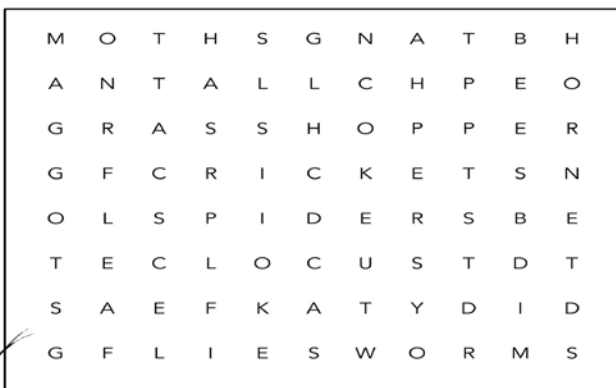
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Leviticus 11:22

\_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22

\_\_\_\_\_



Answers: ant, flies, gnat, bees, worms, locust, grasshopper, hornet, maggots, flea, moths, spider, katydid, cricket

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT  
NEWSLETTER IS  
MARCH 16, 2025**

**PLEASE HAVE YOUR  
ARTICLES SUBMITTED TO  
THE CHURCH OFFICE  
BY THIS DATE.**



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**CHURCH OFFICE: 610-398-7000**  
**HOSPITAL CODE: #321**  
**HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**  
**EMAIL: [office@stpaulsbbv.org](mailto:office@stpaulsbbv.org)**  
**Website: [www.stpaulsbbv.org](http://www.stpaulsbbv.org)**

**STAFF**

Pastor..... The Rev. Carey L. Miller  
Organist/Choir Director ..... Ms. Judy Noll  
Handbell Director..... Mr. Richard Steltz  
Parish Secretary ..... Mrs. Cindy Krasnansky

# March 2025

# St. Paul's Lutheran Church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																										
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<b>2 TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD</b> 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship	<b>3</b> 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>  10:30 a.m. – Worship 7:00 p.m. -Worship	<b>6</b> 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	<b>7</b> 6:00 p.m. – Meal 7:00 p.m. - Movie	<b>8</b>																																										
<b>9 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT</b> 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 	<b>10</b> 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study 1:00 p.m.-Worship & Music	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:30 a.m.-W-ELCA 7:00 p.m.-Council	<b>13</b> 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>																																										
<b>16 SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT</b> 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 11:30 a.m.-Potluck St. Patrick's Theme <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b>	<b>17</b> 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study 	<b>18</b> 1:30 p.m. Plarn	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 6:30 p.m.-Haafsville Board Meeting 7:30 p.m.-Choir 	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>																																										
<b>23 THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT</b> 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 2:00 p.m.-Haafsville Volunteer Meeting	<b>24</b> 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 9:30 a.m.-TOPS 6:15 p.m.-Joyful Ringers 7:30 p.m.-Choir	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>																																										
<b>30 FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT</b> 9:00 a.m.-Worship 9:15 a.m.-Sunday School 10:30 a.m.-Worship 2:00 p.m.-Concert-Russ Rentler	<b>31</b> 9:30 a.m.-Bible Study					<b>April 2025</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
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## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

March 2025

If you cannot fulfill an assigned duty, please call the church office at 610-398-7000 or the Council Persons of the Month – Bruce & Sandi Wagaman 610-203-8085

### Sunday, March 2, 2025

10:30AM

**Ushers:** Anita Eisenhard, Cal Fetherolf  
**Altar Guild:** Esther Seibert  
**Communion Asst:** Rosemary Lehman  
**Communion Bread:** Bruce & Sandi Wagaman  
**Greeter:** Carol Derr-Breinig  
**Lay Asst:** Daisy Pearson  
**Reader:** Cal Fetherolf

### Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025

10:30AM

**Ushers:** Melanie Dimovitz, Madeline MacMechan  
**Altar Guild:** *(none)*  
**Communion Asst:** *(none)*  
**Communion Bread:** *(none)*  
**Greeter:** Madeline MacMechan  
**Lay Asst:** Sharon Bortz  
**Reader:** Jennifer Bentsen

### Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025

7:00PM

**Ushers:** Frank Bennighoff, Judy Walker  
**Altar Guild:** Steph Wagaman  
**Communion Asst:** *(none)*  
**Communion Bread:** *(none)*  
**Greeter:** Bruce Wagaman  
**Lay Asst:** Sandi Wagaman  
**Reader:** June Kellogg

### Sunday, March 9, 2025

10:30AM

**Ushers:** Ken Ritter, Carl Seibert  
**Altar Guild:** Janine Ritter  
**Communion Asst:** Dick Steltz  
**Communion Bread:** Helen Post  
**Greeter:** Peggy Saylor  
**Lay Asst:** Lacey Edwards  
**Reader:** Dick Steltz

### Sunday, March 16, 2025

10:30AM

**Ushers:** Rosie Gallagher, Judy Walker  
**Altar Guild:** Rosemary Lehman  
**Communion Asst:** Sandi Wagaman  
**Communion Bread:** Bob Bruchak  
**Greeter:** Rosie Gallagher  
**Lay Asst:** Bob Bruchak  
**Reader:** Rosemary Lehman

### Sunday, March 23, 2025

10:30AM

**Ushers:** Zack Dimovitz, Carl Seibert  
**Altar Guild:** Jennifer Bentsen  
**Communion Asst:** Anita Eisenhard  
**Communion Bread:** Carol Derr-Breinig  
**Greeter:** Zack Dimovitz  
**Lay Asst:** Dick Steltz  
**Reader:** Sharon Bortz

### Sunday, March 30, 2025

10:30AM

**Ushers:** Andrew Bruchak, Bob Bruchak  
**Altar Guild:** Amy Williams  
**Communion Asst:** Tom Kellogg  
**Communion Bread:** Tom & June Kellogg  
**Greeter:** Frank & Sandy Bennighoff  
**Lay Asst:** Rosemary Lehman  
**Reader:** Tom Kellogg



# NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Building Connections, Strengthening Mission: The Impact of Staff Development

Since 2021, when I joined the synod staff, I have felt a deep passion and dedication for the work God is calling me to do. Over the past three years, the relationships I have built, both with synod staff and throughout the synod regions and beyond, have been some of the strongest of my career. I have been a Lutheran all my life, raised in a church and family of faith. So, when the job opened at the synod office, applying felt like a natural choice.



My time on synod staff has shaped my spiritual journey, revealing how God's presence is truly in everyone, including me, in both joyful and challenging times. I often find myself asking, "What is God calling us to do?" "What is God calling *me* to do?" It's funny how sometimes God's answers are loud and clear, while other times, there seems to be silence, much like a parent stepping back to let a child solve a puzzle or get dressed all on their own.

However, God is not silent in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. God is actively working through all of us to move mountains and embody the change Jesus modeled for us. The synod staff have been focusing more intentionally on communication and staff development. Over the past year, the full synod staff, including building staff and the Associates of the Bishop, have gathered for retreats to strengthen our communication. One of these retreats also included the Synod Council, the redesign team, and other key stakeholders around the synod, providing a space for collaboration. Pastor Doug Hill from Abiding Hope in Littleton, Colorado, has helped facilitate some of these retreats, incorporating insights from the Gaining Strength cohorts. Through this work, staff have explored their enneagram numbers, gaining a deeper understanding of how our personalities intertwine and complement one another.

Pastor Rachael Dietz, Associate to the Bishop, comments on the retreat by saying, "*Intentional investment*



*in staff help us grow into the disciples God would have us be. We're not static blobs; we're human beings with hearts, hands, feet, and brains. When we practice and learn, we become more aligned and attuned to the Spirit's work in us and the synod. Your mission support then gets turned inside out as we support the mission of congregations: to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, to all."*

This investment in staff development is not just about strengthening our internal team, it is about equipping us to better serve the entire synod. As we grow in communication, collaboration, and leadership, we become more responsive to the needs of the congregations, more effective in our ministries, and more connected as a community of faith. By modeling teamwork and intentional growth, we hope to inspire congregations and leaders to do the same in their own contexts. Ultimately, this work is about aligning ourselves more fully with God's call, ensuring that together, as one synod, we continue to move mountains and embody the change Christ has set before us.

*We would like to extend our gratitude to Trinity Lutheran Church in Lehighton and St. John's Lutheran Church in Allentown for hosting staff retreats. Your hospitality is deeply appreciated and truly a blessing.*

*Submitted by: Stacey Burke (she/her) Communications & Growing Young Coordinator*

**DID YOU KNOW** that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit [godslove.org/missionsupport](https://godslove.org/missionsupport).

Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church  
Stroudsburg, PA



2025  
**Connect  
the Dots**  
Northeastern PA Synod Assembly

[godslove.org/assembly2025](https://godslove.org/assembly2025)

*May*

30-31

Registration  
opens April 1





## OPERATION SUNSHINE

*Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers.*

1933 Hanover Ave,  
Allentown, PA 18109

Open: Monday 11-3 and  
Wednesday 11-3

Phone: 610-435-9155  
Email: [LMDopsunshine@aol.com](mailto:LMDopsunshine@aol.com)  
[www.LMDopsunshine.com](http://www.LMDopsunshine.com)

Paula & Dick Skelly,  
Co-Trip Coordinators



All day trips for 2025  
(except "Noah") are currently  
**SOLD OUT!!!**

If you are still interested,  
we encourage you to put your  
name on a wait list  
as we invariably have  
cancellations, especially  
this far out.

*See attached newsletter or  
website for details.*

Trinity Memorial Church invites you:  
(535 W. Emaus Ave, Allentown)

### CLOTHING CLOSET

1st & 3rd Saturday.  
Hours: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

### PANERA BREAD GIVE AWAY

Pick up on Mondays at 10:00 AM

Questions? Call the church office  
at 610-797-4774 or email  
[tmlcadmn@gmail.com](mailto:tmlcadmn@gmail.com)



*April 2025 LMD NL news  
will be due March 17, 2025.*

Please email any information to  
[lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com](mailto:lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com)

## A Stuffed Cloud of Witnesses

Ash

We are skidding off the map.  
We make a hole in the air  
as we fall.  
The air is stuffed with ash  
each time an F-16 drops  
its bombs on cemeteries.<sup>1</sup>

Dear Lehigh Mission District,

"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."<sup>2</sup> We hear these words at funeral services in the cemetery. Sand is poured on the casket by the presiding minister to symbolize ashes and shaped in the form of a cross.

As we approach Ash Wednesday, another Christian ritual is the imposition of ashes on our foreheads. We are reminded by these words in that ritual: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."<sup>3</sup>

Ashes are smeared on the foreheads of believers with the sign of the cross. We are reminded by the impositions of ashes that we are dust and as dust we shall return to the ground.

Now take the words from the poem above, "The air is stuffed with ash."<sup>4</sup> These ashes are not placed on a casket or smeared on someone's forehead.

These ashes are inhaled because they are in the air. These ashes irritate the eyes because they are flying in the air. These ashes cover the protagonist and their companion's entire bodies because they are stuffed in the air.

The pilot's F-16 bombs show an indifference to beliefs, faiths, and confessions. The bombs aim to desecrate the cemeteries of the dead. In the process, bombs target to maim the human spirit from the living.

Who is really "skidding off the map"?<sup>5</sup>

Regardless of our ecumenical or inter-religious traditions, cemeteries hold the faithful departed. Cemeteries are filled with the living hope of their testimonies from every faith.

*(continued on the next page ⇒)*



## Mid-Lent Guided Prayer Retreat

March 20, 2025  
9:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Christ Lutheran, Allentown  
(13th & Hamilton Streets)

Treat yourself to some guided quiet time with God and other spiritual seekers, apart from your normal daily routine.

Led by Pastor Tom Lichner and Louise Young.

\$15.00/person (payable upon arrival to Christ Lutheran Church, Allentown).

Phone Pastor Lichner to register by March 17:  
610-533-9362  
(Room for 20 participants)

Bring your own bag lunch - Coffee, tea, water provided.

See attached flyer.



## 2025 NEPA Synod Assembly

May 30-31, 2025

Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church  
(419 Bossardsville Rd  
Stroudsburg, PA 18360)

The Synod Assembly is the annual gathering of the synod's congregations, pastors, and leaders to worship, conduct business, and discern the church's mission together.

Registration runs April 1-30

(continued from previous page)

Amidst the bombs' desecration of cemeteries, we see a "great cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1) come to life - as if God breathed life into the ashes while dangling through the air. The ashes imposition to cover the living body of those seeking refuge. The ashes inhaled by the breath of life. Each particle of ash dancing as testimonies to life.

The ashes have settled back to the ground.

As the ritual of ashes are smeared on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday, let us join our voices marked with the great cloud of witnesses and to proclaim life for today and mañana.

Have a blessed Lenten journey,  
The Rev. Nelson Quiñones,  
Lehigh Mission District Dean



<sup>1</sup> Abu Toha, Mosab (2024). *Forest of Noise: Poems*. Knopf.

<sup>2</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care Occasional Services, Readings, and Prayers (2008). Augsburg Fortress.

<sup>3</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006). Augsburg Fortress.

<sup>4</sup> Abu Toha, Mosab.

<sup>5</sup> Abu Toha, Mosab.



### Thanks for Making a Difference for Neighbors in Need!

**THANKS AGAIN** to all the faithful walkers, community leaders, support crew, sponsors and other donors who participated in the Sunday, October 13, 2024 45th Annual Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk!

You have raised **OVER \$30,000** to help our food-insecure neighbors in the Allentown area and beyond!

As a result of your generosity, the **LEHIGH CHURCHES' CONFERENCE KITCHEN** and the **ALLENTOWN AREA ECUMENICAL FOOD BANK** will be receiving more than \$3700 each for their vital ministries with neighbors experiencing food insecurity in our area. And **CHURCH WORLD SERVICE** will be able to help many more of our neighbors who are struggling in the aftermath of floods, fires, droughts, and other disasters throughout the United States and the world.

**CONGREGATIONS/GROUPS:** So that we can celebrate more precise YTD totals, please send your CROP gifts ASAP to Linda Held, Allentown CROP Hunger Walk Treasurer, 3441 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA 18103.

If you or your congregation/group took any **CROP Hunger Walk PHOTOS or VIDEOS**, please **POST THEM** on social media and **SEND THEM** to karehad@gmail.com to include in our follow-up emails to congregations and supporters!

Alternatively, **CHECKS FOR "CWS/CROP"** may be given through your congregation/group or sent directly to Linda Held, Treasurer, 3441 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA 18103.

CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAY, or ANNIVERSARY GIFT IDEA: In honor of loved ones, give the gift of life! DONATE ANYTIME to the CROP Hunger Walk at [www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa)

