

ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF MECHANICSBURG
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 23, 2025



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

8:30 am - Sanctuary & Zoom Blended Worship Service

9:45 am - Sunday Church School and Children's Choir

11:00 am - Quiet Service

Rev. Marleen Griffith-Stull, Pastor

Pastor's Cell Phone: 878-295-2173

Pastor's Email: revmarleen@stmarkmburg.com

Karen Fisher, Office Manager

Karen's Cell Phone: 717-580-7507

Church Office: 717-766-4482

Office Email: kfisher@stmarkmburg.com

Office Hours: 10:00 AM-1:00 PM - Monday through Thursday

Denise Hirn, Director of Children's Choir

Denise's Cell Phone: 717-802-1064

Email: denisehirn@hotmail.com

Brad Hull, Director of Music

Brad's Cell Phone: 202-738-2795

Emil: bradleyjhull@gmail.com

www.stmarkmburg.com

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St Mark Lutheran Church Mechanicsburg

ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF MECHANICSBURG
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 23, 2025



GUESTS/VISITORS:

“Getting to Know You—Getting to Know All About You.” Please complete a “Welcome to St. Mark Church” card found in the pew and place it in the offering plate at the time of the offering. Thank you!

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY

The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God’s invitation to attentiveness: “Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.” The landowner’s ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener’s readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

**Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, died 1980
Monday, March 24, 2025**

Romero was deeply concerned with injustices evident toward the poor and powerless in El Salvador, and worked forthrightly against political repression. He was assassinated while presiding at the eucharist in a chapel near the cathedral in San Salvador.

**Annunciation of Our Lord
Tuesday, March 25, 2025**

Nine months before Christmas we celebrate the annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Son of God. The ancient church believed that this was also the date of the world's creation and of Jesus' death on the cross.

*The asterisk in the margins of the bulletin indicates please stand as able.

GATHERING: Psalm 51:10

P Create in me a clean heart, O God,
C and renew a right spirit within me.

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination. Please kneel or be seated.

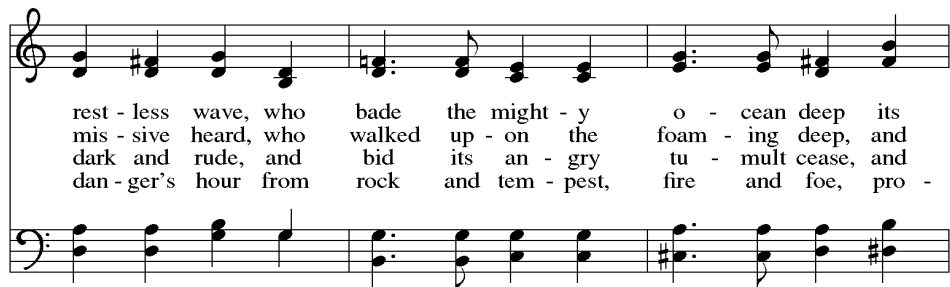
P Gracious God,
C have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.
C Amen.

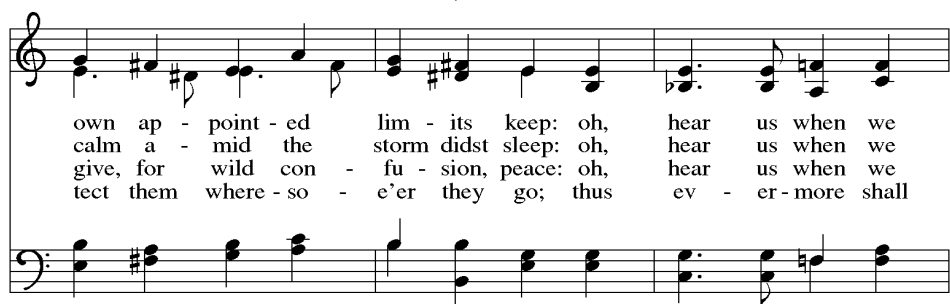
*GATHERING SONG Eternal Father, Strong to Save



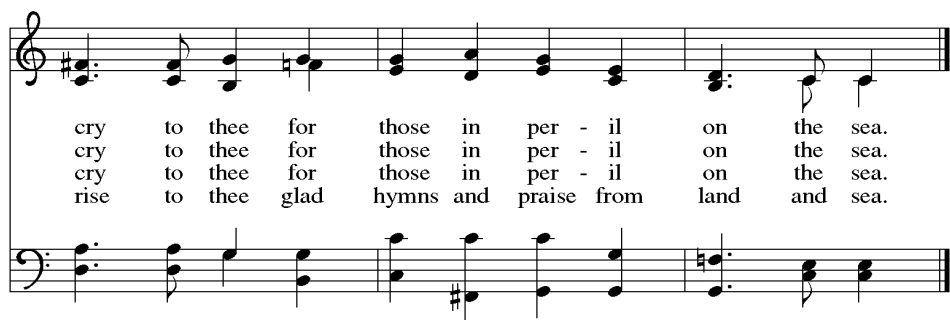
1 E - ter - nal Fa - ther, strong to save, whose arm has bound the
2 O Sav - ior, whose al - might - y word the winds and waves sub -
3 O Ho - ly Spir - it, who didst brood up - on the cha - os
4 O Trin - i - ty of love and pow'r, all trav - 'lers guard in



rest - less wave, who bade the might - y o - cean deep its
mis - sive heard, who walked up - on the foam - ing deep, and
dark and rude, and bid its an - gry tu - mult cease, and
dan - ger's hour from rock and tem - pest, fire and foe, pro -



own ap - point - ed lim - its keep: oh, hear us when we
calm a - mid the storm didst sleep: oh, hear us when we
give, for wild con - fu - sion, peace: oh, hear us when we
tect them where - so - e'er they go; thus ev - er - more shall



cry to thee for those in per - il on the sea.
cry to thee for those in per - il on the sea.
cry to thee for those in per - il on the sea.
rise to thee glad hymns and praise from land and sea.

Text: William Whiting, 1825–1878, alt.
Music: MELITA, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

*KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of God,



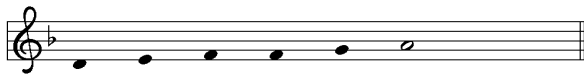
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Assisting minister

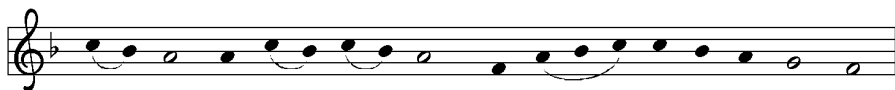


Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav'n-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa - ther, we wor -



ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



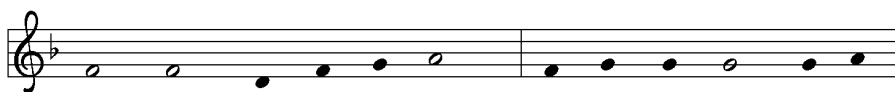
Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, O Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have



mer-cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right hand of the



Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer. For you a - lone are the



Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone



are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you,
C and also with you.

P Let us pray.
Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

ANTHEM

In Love Christ Came Among Us

Words by B. Leach/
Music by J. Martin

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 55:1-9

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to God will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

R A Reading from Isaiah.

¹Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

³Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;

⁷ let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

R The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 63:1-8

*(Please read the Psalm responsively. Choir the regular print;
Congregation, the bold print.)*

¹ O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my
flesh faints for you, as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.

² **Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, that I might
behold your power and your glory.**

³ For your lovingkindness is better than life itself; my lips shall give you
praise.

⁴ **So will I bless you as long as I live and lift up my hands in your
name.**

⁵ My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praises
you with joyful lips,

⁶ **when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the
night watches.**

⁷ For you have been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I
will rejoice.

⁸ **My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.**

SECOND LESSON: 1st Corinthians 10:1-13

Paul uses images from Hebrew Scriptures and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

R A reading from 1st Corinthians.

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

R The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.



Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ.

*GOSPEL: Luke 13:1-9

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 13th chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?”³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did.⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none.⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it.⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

NOISY SUNDAY OFFERING

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer



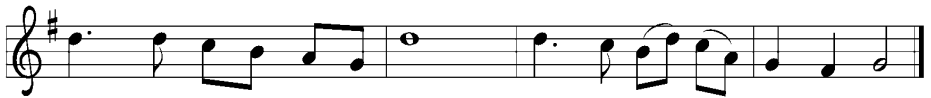
1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me
wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me
fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,
safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es



feed me now and ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.
shield me with your might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.
I will raise for - ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

*APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A God in your mercy,
C receive our prayer.

P Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

C Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Dona Nobis Pacem
St. Mark Bell Choir

Old German Canon

*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Please sing **Verse 4** only.

Just As I Am, without One Plea

1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy blood was
2 Just as I am, and wait - ing not to rid my soul of
3 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - y_a con - flict,
4 Just as I am, poor, wretch - ed, blind; sight, rich - es, heal - ing

shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
one dark blot, to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
man - y_a doubt, fight - ings and fears with - in, with - out,
of the mind, yea, all I need in thee to find,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

5 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

6 Just as I am; thy love unknown
has broken ev'ry barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

*THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

P Holy God,
our living Water, our faithful Companion, our true Guide, by your
Word you created a world with rivers and seas, wells and springs,
and in mercy you provided water for your people in the
wilderness.

C For your Word with the water of baptism, we thank you, O God.
We thank you, O God.

P We praise you for Christ, who joined us in our desert, calling us
to righteousness, granting forgiveness, and walking with us into
newness of life.

C For Jesus, your gracious Word, we glorify you, O God.
We glorify you, O God.

P Through these days of Lent we plead for your Spirit, that
strengthened by your Word, we may care for others and for the
world you made, and work for justice and peace for all.

C For your Word in our hearts and minds, we praise you, O God.
We praise you, O God.

P Receive our thanksgiving, and grant us your blessing,
Holy God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

C Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

*BLESSING

P God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the
reconciling Spirit, ✚ bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

*CLOSING HYMN

Jesus, Still Lead On

1 Je - sus, still lead on, till our rest be won; and, al-though the
2 If the way be drear, if the foe be near, let no faith - less
3 When we seek re - lief from a long-felt grief, when temp-ta - tions
4 Je - sus, still lead on, till our rest be won; heav'n-ly lead - er,

way be cheer - less, we will fol - low, calm and fear - less;
fears o'er - take us, let not faith and hope for - sake us;
come al - lur - ing make us pa - tient and en - dur - ing;
still di - rect us, still sup - port, con - sole, pro - tect us,

guide us by your hand to the prom - ised land.
safe - ly past the foe to our home we go.
show us that bright shore where we weep no more.
till we safe - ly stand in the prom - ised land.

Text: Nicolaus L. von Zinzendorf, 1700–1760; tr. Jane L. Borthwick, 1813–1897, alt.
Music: SEELENBRÄUTIGAM, Adam Drese, 1620–1701

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.
C Thanks be to God.

*POSTLUDE

Blessed Redeemer

Words by A. Christiansen/Music by H. Loes



In loving memory of Victor Miller by Sara Jane Miller.

In memory of Ida and Gene Shaner, Sr. by Terry and Gene Shaner.

TODAY'S ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Phyllis Mihalich, Karen Heath
Assisting Minister: Denise Hirn
Lay Reader: Scott Kreiger
Acolyte: Brett Hirn
Altar Guild: Phyllis Mihalich, Jo Ann Novinger
Council Money Duty: Amy Gimbel, Terry Shaner

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

We are in need of ushers for the noon service on Maundy Thursday, April 17. Please contact Shannon Weaver at 717-691-1618 if you are able to volunteer. Thank you.

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK

Sunday, March 23

8:30 am
9:45 am
9:45 am
11:00 am

3rd SUNDAY IN LENT
NOISY SUNDAY
Blended Worship Svc.
Sunday Church School
Children's Choir
Worship Svc.

Monday, March 24

2:45 pm
7:00 pm

Violin Lessons
German Group

Tuesday, March 25

1:00 pm

Social Ministry

Wednesday, March 26

11:00 am
4:30 pm
5:30 pm
6:45 pm
Before Lent Worship
After Lent Worship

Bible Study
Deliver meals to homebound
Bread and Broth
Lenten Worship Svc.
Bell Choir
Adult Choir

Thursday, March 27

6:30 pm

Ladies Night Out - Wolf Brewing
Company
Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros

7:00 pm

Friday, March 28

3:45 pm

Violin Lessons

Saturday, March 29

Sunday, March 30

8:30 am
9:45 am
9:45 am
11:00 am

4th SUNDAY IN LENT
Blended Worship Svc.
Sunday Church School
Children's Choir
Worship Svc.

LESSONS:

FIRST READING
PSALM
SECOND READING
GOSPEL

MARCH 30, 2025
Joshua 5:9-12
Psalm 32
2nd Corinthians 5:16-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

EASTER LILIES

If you would like to sponsor a lily to be placed in the Chancel for Easter or donate money to Mechanicsburg Area Meals on Wheels, please complete one of the forms located in bulletins, the March newsletter, or at entrances to St. Mark. **The cost is \$12.00 for each lily.** Place the form with your payment in the offering plate. **The deadline for ordering is TODAY.** Make checks payable to “St. Mark” and note “Altar Guild” on the memo line.

LENTEN BREAD AND BROTH SUPPERS

Come share a soup meal with your friends at St. Mark in our **Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm every Wednesday evening in Lent through April 9).** Please join us in the sanctuary for an **interactive service at 6:45 pm** as we explore the Bible’s “metanarrative.” There will be separate special activities for kids during each service.

SOUP SCHEDULE FOR BREAD AND BROTH MEALS:

March 26	Church Council
April 2	*Open Donations
April 9	Worship & Music (including choirs)

When your group is providing soup, keep in mind that we will need 6 to 7 pots of soup. Everyone will have a chance to sign up to bring in soup on *Open Donation nights. Sign-up sheets will be posted at entrances to the church for soup donations and/or to assist with cleanup after the dinner. As a reminder, if you are coming for the meal and are not providing soup that week, please bring a salad, bread, or a dessert to share. To further assist us with cleanup, we ask that you pack up any of your leftovers at the end of the dinner. Or if you desire, take out containers will be available to share your leftovers with others. If you have any questions about the dinner, please contact Phyllis Mihalich, Fellowship Chair.

MONTHLY SUNDAYS TO BENEFIT NEW HOPE MINISTRIES

Here are the items for April, May, and June:

April 27	Canned Fruit or Fruit Cups
May 27	Feminine Hygiene Products
June 8	Ketchup and Mustard

LADIES NIGHT OUT

Join your gals and pals at **6:15 pm, Thursday, March 27**, at Wolf Brewing Company for dinner and Trivia. Please RSVP to Karen NO LATER THAN TODAY.

SUMMER CAMP

Brochures for Summer Camp at either Camp Nawakwa or Camp Kirchenwald are available at the church office, or you can contact our camp person, Connie Kuntz, at 717-503-5244. You can also register or find additional information online at www.lutherancamping.org. Our congregation will provide half the basic camp fee and scholarship money is available if needed. Both camps will again hold Open House on **March 16 and April 6 from 2:00-4:30 PM**. Remember to get the camp person discount and if you register with your full payment **before April 5**, you are eligible for the full payment discount. The congregation will be billed later for half the basic fee. Remember there are camps available for all ages with Family Camps and Elder Camp. The Bible study theme this year is God's Word Comes Near. The theme verse is:

The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart.
Romans 10:8

GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNITY PRAYER WALK

The community will gather on **April 18** in various locations at **11:00 am** to begin walking and cover our community in prayer. Pastor Marleen will be leading a prayer group from St. Mark that day. All the groups will end at Mechanicsburg First Church of God near the center of town at **NOON** and conclude with a brief time of worship together.

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

On Sunday, **April 27**, during worship, we will have our regular elements of worship with fun and creative moments and experiences mixed in. We will use God's gifts of laughter and joy to enjoy the new life that Christ gave us through the Easter miracle as we gather in worship, celebration, and praise! Let's laugh at the devil through our humor! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

NEW DATE AND TIME - EASTER EGG HUNT

All kids and their families are welcome to join us on **Saturday, April 26, at 10:00 am** for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Children through 5th grade are invited to hunt, and older youth help hide the eggs. Refreshments will be provided.

YARD SALE IS BACK!

Sell your stuff or come to shop! Join us on Saturday, **May 24** from 9:00 am--? for a yard sale on our back lawn. Anyone is welcome to set up starting at 7:00 am. Mechanicsburg Borough does not permit sales before 9:00 am.

BOOK CLUB -NEW!

Join us on Thursday, **May 15, at 1:00 pm** in the parlor to discuss *The Story of Arthur Truelove* by Elizabeth Berg.

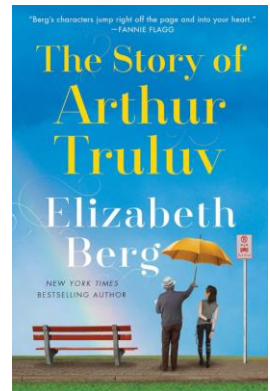
Suggested book is a novel by Elizabeth Berg, *The Story of Arthur Truelove*.

This is a heartwarming novel about two unlikely people who find a connection. Arthur is a kind caring man who visits the cemetery daily to have an imaginary conversation with his late wife. There he meets Maddy, a troubled teen hiding from school. Together they find their way back from loss and loneliness to a different kind of life.

We look forward to conversation and fellowship with you. We encourage you to share and invite a friend.

The book is available through the library or Thrift books.

Thank you,
Jo Ann Novinger, Chair
Evangelism Committee





March 26	Bread and Broth Continues
March 27	Ladies Night Out-Wolf Brewing Co.
April 13	Palm Sunday
April 17	Maundy Thursday, Noon, St. Mark
April 17	Maundy Thursday AGAPE Feast at St. Stephen, 30 W. Main St., New Kingston, 17072 - 6:00 PM
April 18	Good Friday Community Prayer Walk
April 18	Good Friday Service
April 20	Easter Sunrise Service - 6:30 AM
April 20	Potluck Easter Breakfast - 7:15 AM
April 20	Resurrection of our Lord - Easter Day
April 26	Easter Egg Hunt and Refreshments
April 27	Holy Humor Sunday
May 15	Book Club read of <i>Arthur Truluv</i>
May 24	Community Yard Sale
August 4-7	St. Mark Day Camp
September 8	God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday.
October 14	Soup on the Sidewalk at Mechanicsburg Halloween Parade
October 19	CROP Walk at Memorial Park
November 27	Thanksgiving Dinner



If you would like to sponsor a lily to be placed in the Chancel for Easter or donate money to Mechanicsburg Meals on Wheels, please complete the form below. **The cost is \$12.00 for each lily.** Place the form with your payment in the offering plate.

**The deadline for ordering is March 23!
Please be prompt with your orders.**

**Make checks payable to “St. Mark” and note
“Altar Guild” on the memo line.**

PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX

LILIES **MEALS ON WHEELS**

- In honor of _____
- In memory of _____
- To the Glory of God

~~~~~  
Presented by \_\_\_\_\_

- Deliver to Shut-in
- Pick up after the 8:30 am or after 11:00 am Easter Worship service

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of lilies ordered

Amount of Check: \$\_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU!**

## THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

### WE HAVE CHOICES

We have choices, right? Obviously. There's little question about that; it's a fact. Many of these choices are piled and piling up in the lockboxes of our upbringing and experiences, of our moral certainties, religious convictions, political opinions, or economic maneuvering. We make choices about our educational endeavors, vocational callings, use of our days and years, relationship commitments, dietary habits, travel destinations, color coordination, hairstyles, sexual behaviors, EV or gas, whole or skim, movie or book. All these choices—be they monumental or minuscule, automatic or sleep-depriving, public or private, frivolous or practical, courageous or cowardly—we shuffle, sort, and seal in one envelope or another: one labeled right and one marked wrong, the good envelope and the bad envelope.

Our choices mostly happen like that until for some reason, hard telling what reason, our certainties are disturbed and our absolutes begin to rattle like loose bolts under the frame of an old truck on a potholed road. It's what happens when, by mistake or under force, good or bad luck, we discover that broccoli isn't disgusting, snakes aren't slimy, the earth isn't flat, men may love men, more might not be better, aliens need not be strangers, and God's justice surely demands mercy.

Jesus started tugging at a snag of choices with a parable about a tree, a vineyard, a gardener, a saw, and manure. The tree was a no-hoper (there could be lots of reasons). With not a fig on a limb, if it had been another variety of fruit tree you'd call it a "bad apple." The choice: saw or donkey dung. Jesus rejects the blade, chooses the excrement.

Martin Luther (liking Latin) said, "*Simul justus et peccator*," meaning we are at the same time both saint and sinner. Or as Jesus put it, love those bum branches down to their roots, put your hands in the dirt, and see what fruit they bear.