



On March 5th, we celebrate Ash Wednesday - the day we begin our season of Lent. We will have service at 7:00 PM and will also offer Ashes-To-Go on the front parking lot from 2:00-3:00 PM. I hope you will join us as we begin our journey into Lent. Throughout the season, we will have the Lenten *Holden Evening Prayer Service* each Wednesday beginning at 7:00 PM. I hope you will join us.

So, what is Lent? Lent is the season of preparation leading up to Easter. It commemorates the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan. We use these forty days to contemplate our relationship with Christ and the call that He has for each of us. People celebrate Lent with different practices: fasting, prayer, self-denial, and almsgiving. Fasting could include giving up certain foods or luxuries for the season - maybe giving up meat, sweets, or alcohol. Increase your prayer life - start your day or end your day with prayer. Our country, our community, and our church can certainly use your prayers. Pray for yourself or pray for your neighbors.

Self-denial could include giving up certain activities or luxuries, or maybe favorite hobbies for the season, And Almsgiving is all about living a generous life. But, be especially generous during Lent - maybe give to the church's LENTEN SELF-DENIAL CAMPAIGN or increase your offerings during the season. You will find special Lenten Self-Denial Envelopes in the Narthex and Vestibule entrances. Please use these envelopes to add a special and additional offering to your normal weekly or monthly offerings. This year, the Lenten Self-Denial Offering will go to support the Veteran's Stand Down in Pottstown. The Stand Down supports homeless veterans and veterans in need in the Pottstown area. Veterans receive hot food at the stand down and can participate in a special clothing closet and food pantry just for Vets. They also can talk to providers for services and benefits and spend some fellowship time with fellow vets.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jim

Call Update

Pastor Jim Farnsworth

Pastor Jim has now served as our designated Pastor for just over a year. He has been very supportive in all areas. We are thankful for his dedication to us.

The Synod has made it very clear that there just are not any candidates available for us to interview and has stated that with so many vacancies, Pastors can pick and choose where they would like to go. Berks County is not a preferred location and there are far more openings than there are Pastors to fill them.

The Synod is asking us to “think outside the box” and to explore different options for our vacancy. We have been working towards this goal.

At our January Church Council meeting, an idea was presented that was unanimously approved. The details are as follows:

Pastor Jim remains in his position as our Designated Pastor, adding our weekly services to his current list of responsibilities, i.e. council meetings; annual meetings; hospital visits/ home visits, as needed; confirmation classes; and other youth opportunities.

Pastor Jim would begin his new responsibilities after Easter on April 27th. This would begin a “trial period” that will continue through 2025. During this time, we will be working on ways that this arrangement could continue on a permanent basis, beginning 2026. A committee consisting of members of Schwarzwald and members of St. Mark’s will begin discussions on how best to work together to strengthen both congregations.

Pastor Jim will receive our regular Supply Pastor remuneration for Sunday worship and will continue to receive hourly payment for all other services. Should our arrangement become permanent in 2026, a salary will be determined. Our budget is not impacted by this new arrangement. (we are currently paying a Supply Pastor and a Designated Pastor).

He will be instituting weekly Holy Communion and will supply home baked bread for most services.

We will need to start our services 15 minutes later (10:45a) to give him time to complete his service at St. Mark’s and travel to Schwarzwald. It will be necessary to maintain this start time throughout the summer.

Our call will remain open throughout this trial period. If a Pastoral candidate comes forward, we will interview and evaluate that individual.

Our Call listing will be adapted to include a search for a part-time Pastor that can cover the worship services that Pastor Jim cannot; that can do some visitation and possibly do some additional work with our youth and families. This would be needed for 2026.

We are excited and filled with positiveness as we begin this faith journey. We ask for your patience and support in the months ahead. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

BEGINS AT 2:00 AM ON SUNDAY, MARCH 9.

BE SURE TO MOVE YOUR CLOCKS **AHEAD** ONE HOUR

BEFORE GOING TO BED ON SATURDAY NIGHT, **MARCH 8!**

Choice Dollars—Thank you to those who have Thrivent products and have designated Schwarzwald Lutheran Church as a recipient of funds. Continue to check on your accounts! You can access your account on the computer at Thrivent.com/choicedollars or call a representative at 800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” at the prompt. March 31 is the deadline to designate 2024 Choice Dollars.



CANCELLATION INFORMATION:

During inclement weather, closures/cancellations will be announced through:
your e-mail (be sure the church office has your current email address)
our website (www.schwarzwaldlutheran.org),
Facebook page (Schwarzwald Lutheran Church),
Channel 69 — WFMZ-TV Stormcenter,
and our answering machine (610-779-3480).



The Prayer Group meets every other Tuesday at 11:00a in the Parlor Coffee Bar. The March dates are the 4th and 18th. Please contact Joanne Rutherford for additional information at 484-334-5350 or jmr14290@gmail.com.

In Memoriam

Alice Specht

August 23, 1934—February 18, 2025



Alice L. (Christian) Specht, 90, of Oley, PA, passed away on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at Complete Care at Berkshire. She was the widow of the late Edward H. Specht. Born in Reading, PA, she was the daughter of the late John F. and Edith E. (Ziegler) Christian. Alice graduated from Mt. Penn High School, class of 1952. She started as a bookkeeper at Mt. Penn Trust and later worked as a teller for Mt. Penn Trust, Berks Co. Trust, American Bank & Trust and Meridian Bank, retiring in 1995. Alice was a volunteer for Home Care at the Lutheran Home at Topton. She was actively involved in the WELCA, where she served as chairwomen of the former WELCA Mission Action Committee at church. She also served as president of Schwarzwald Lutheran Church Women. Alice was a member of Schwarzwald Lutheran and sang in the choir for over 30 years.

Alice was survived by her two sons; Edward M. Specht, North, NJ, and Joseph A. Specht, husband of Cheryl (Warden) Specht, Exeter Township, and one daughter Nancy N., wife of Robert Hasseler, Prunedale, CA. She is also survived by six grandchildren; William T., Gregory P., Zachary T., Matthew S. Specht, Rachel E. Wisniewski and John C. Hasseler, as well as her great-grandchildren; Katelyn, Brianna, Madelyn, Ethan, and Finley.

THANK YOU!!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! . . .

. . **from** Pat Weiser — Thank you for the altar flowers from Barry and thank you to the Frey's for delivering them and spending some time with me.

. . **to** Sue McDevitt, Corrine Mohr, Ruth Correll, Dori Russo and Devon Zackon for preparing ziti for the New Journey soup kitchen and to Denton Quick for delivering it



The New Journey Soup Kitchen ministry has been part of our outreach for years.

The need is greater than ever. So in an effort to increase the amount of soup we donate, we are modifying our on-call team and extending an invitation to everyone in the congregation.

A list of everyone who is willing to make soup at least one month during the year will be compiled. Every month the recipe for that month's soup will be sent to the on-call team and to all the people on the new list, and they can choose whether or not to participate that month. (The existing teams will still prepare their recipes as always. If you want to participate more than that one month, have your name added to the new list.) If you participate, you will need to let Carol Gunzelmann or the soup team captain know your intention and have your labelled soup in the kitchen upright freezer by the middle of the month. 3-4 quart containers are available in the kitchen or can be purchased at the dollar store.

Complete the form below to have your name added to the list.

Contact Carol Gunzelmann 610-401-5731 or carolgunzelmann@gmail.com with questions.

***** CUT *****

I am willing to prepare soup for the New Journey soup kitchen at least one month of my choice.

NAME

E-MAIL

PHONE

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Douglas Oswald
- 2 Robert Darlington, Matthew Schlegel
- 3 Cheryl Gillaspy, Ellen Weaver
- 4 Anthony Hoover
- 5 Joan Wegman, Helenann Billinger, Andrew Correll, Dylan Thren
- 6 Steven Werner
- 7 Andrew Bauer, Matthew Kowalski
- 8 Jennie Gallagher, Larry Ney, Brandy Himmelreich, Olivia Haines
- 9 Felix J. Carr, Scott Vlasak, Charlie Brumbaugh
- 10 Tara Gardecki, Heather Houp
- 12 Erin Carson, Zena Burkert, Carolyn Woodford
- 13 Theresa Readinger
- 14 Rachel Wisniewski
- 15 Priscilla Houp, William Rissmiller, Jolyn Rissmiller
- 16 Pamela Parke, Zachary Strain
- 18 Leon Kerner, Ryan Thomas
- 19 Patrick Dalton
- 21 Camryn Cataldi
- 22 Alexa Cupitt
- 23 Sean Slade, Jr.
- 24 Bradford Savidge, Alyssa Himmelreich, Haley Himmelreich, Joan Smith
- 25 Kathy Felder
- 26 Brett Boone
- 27 Patrick McLean
- 28 Dori Russo, Jonathan Bingaman
- 29 Kenton Shaak, Tenley Shaak
- 30 Jonathan Pawlewicz, Kelsie Carr
- 31 Jason Boone, Derek Evans

If your birthday is in March
and is not listed here, please call the
church office,
610-779-3480, with your full birth date
M/D/Y. Thank you.



BLESSINGS
ON YOUR
BIRTHDAY



Lenten Soup Supper

6 P.M.

March 12 & April 9

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR A SIMPLE SOUP SUPPER BEFORE
OUR LENTEN SERVICE.**

FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED.

A FREE WILL OFFERING WILL BE TAKEN.

**PLEASE HELP US PLAN BY TEXTING 610-780-9825 WITH
YOUR NAME AND THE NUMBER ATTENDING....OR
CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE**

AT 610-779-3480

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<h1>MARCH 202</h1>			
2 9:15am Sunday School (SS / FH) 10:30am Worship Service w/HC (S) 5:30pm Orchestra rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	3 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop #1909 meeting (SS) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	4 10:00am Tuesday morning group / Bible Study (FH) 11:00am Prayer Group (FH)	5 2:00pm "Drive-Thru" 7:00pm Ash Wednesday (S) 7:00pm NA Meeting
9 9:15am Sunday School (SS / FH) 10:30am Worship Service (S) 5:30pm Orchestra rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	10 6:00pm Girl Scout Troops 1867 & 11135 (FH) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	11 10:00am Tuesday morning group / Bible Study (FH)	12 9:00am Breakfast 6:00pm Lenten Service 7:00pm Lenten Service 7:00pm NA Meeting 7:30pm Church Meeting
16 9:15am Sunday School (SS / FH) 10:30am Worship Service (S) 5:30pm Orchestra rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	17 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	18 10:00am Tuesday morning group / Bible Study (FH) 11:00am Prayer Group (FH)	19 12:00pm Exeter Schools Admin. Bldg. (FH) 6:30pm Lions Club Meeting 7:00pm Lenten Service 7:00pm NA Meeting
23 9:15am Sunday School (SS / FH) 10:30am Worship Service w/HC (S) 5:30pm Orchestra rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	24 6:00pm Girl Scout Troops 1867 & 11135 (FH) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	25 10:00am Tuesday morning group / Bible Study (FH)	26 7:00pm Lenten Service 7:00pm NA Meeting
30 9:15am Sunday School (SS / FH) 10:30am Worship Service (S) 12:00pm Confirmation Class (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	31 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)		

Key: HC—Holy Communion FH—Fellowship Hall SR—Scout Room CR—Choir Room CB—Coffee Room
 EAB—Exeter Schools Admin. Bldg. SS—Sunday School room(s) PL—Parking Lot LGI - Large Group

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>25</p> <p>Thru: Ashes (PL)</p> <p>Wednesday Service</p> <p>Meeting (SR)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Wine & Cheese Bunch</p> <p>Soup Supper</p> <p>Service (S)</p> <p>Meeting (SR)</p> <p>Council (FH)</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>Senior Citizens</p> <p>Club meeting (FH)</p> <p>Service (S)</p> <p>Meeting (SR)</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>2:00pm Exeter Area Food Pantry (EAB)</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>Service (S)</p> <p>Meeting (SR)</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>

Free Bar **PV**—Pavilion **S**—Sanctuary **P**—Parlor **N**—Narthex **K**—Kitchen **Z**—Zoom
 Instruction Room **SCA**—Schwarzwald Cemetery Assoc. **YR**—Youth Room **CO**—Church Office

MUSIC MINISTRY OF SLC

The beginning of March and the Easter season is upon us! Mother Nature was certainly not our friend during January and February, and I thank ALL of you for me so understanding and so flexible as I tried to navigate the necessary changes to the weekly schedules. I'm really hoping we are through the worst of that for the year!



Below I have listed the tentative working schedule for March. As always, please know that EVERYONE is welcome to join any musical group within our church at any time. We welcome you with open arms!

Sunday, March 2nd – 8:45 Youth Chimes rehearsal – Youth Chimes will play *Jesus Loves Me* at the beginning of service.

9:15 SS Push-in

Youth Chorus will sing *Deep and Wide* at beginning of service.

Offertory: *His Grace* – Norred

Wednesday, March 5th Ash Wednesday – Peg Gumpert will cover for Kathy. Choir will sing *Ash Wednesday Hymn*

NO THURSDAY REHEARSALS DURING MARCH

Sunday, March 9th – 8:45 Youth Chimes Rehearsal

9:15 SS Push-in *The Wise Man*

Offertory: *Captives of Eternal Love* – Knapp

Wednesday, March 12th – Lenten Service

Offertory: *Just As I Am* – Berry

Bell Choir Rehearsal following service

Sunday, March 16th – 8:45 Youth Chimes

9:15 SS Push-in

Youth Chorus sings *The Wise Man* during the service.

Offertory: *Cornerstone* – Larson

Wednesday, March 19th – Lenten Service –

Offertory: *My Faith Looks Up To Thee* – Berry

Bell Choir rehearsal following service

Sunday, March 23rd – 8:45 – Youth Chimes Rehearsal

9:50 – Combined Bell/Chimes rehearsal.

Offertory: *Morning Canticle* – Tucker

Wednesday, March 26th – Lenten Service

Offertory: *You Are My King/Amazing Love* - Labenske

News and Notes from the Social Ministry Committee

March, 2025

The Social Ministry Committee is always impressed and appreciative of the generosity and support it receives from our Schwarzwald Family. You put your trust in us to choose organizations that work toward the betterment of others and that have a real impact on peoples' lives.

This year, we will be using the monthly issues of the "Pulpit and Pew" to better acquaint you with these organizations and charities. We plan to share the various groups' mission statements and purposes so that you can feel comfortable that we are supporting worthwhile causes. With that being said, let us focus on the New Journey Soup Kitchen.

The New Journey Soup Kitchen is part of New Journey Outreach, Inc., which was established in 2014. The latter's mission states, "With our committed volunteers and generous donors, we at NJCO restore hope, comfort, and dignity by feeding, clothing, and supporting those in need in the Reading, PA community".

Schwarzwald supports this mission with our Soup Team Ministry. Each month has an assigned soup, pasta or barbeque meal. The Soup Team members who volunteer to cook for a specific month or months, are given their month's recipe so they can prepare their assigned meal at home. The meal containers are placed in the large freezer in Schwarzwald's kitchen and transported by volunteers to New Journey.

If you would like to become a Soup Team volunteer, please speak to a Social Ministry Committee member. It's a great way to share with our community!

Thank you for your continued support of the **Little Free Pantry**. Due to your generosity, the pantry box has been filled throughout our cold winter days. The collection box for food may be found in the Narthex. Suitable cold-weather items include:

Boxes of cereal (very welcomed) Ramen Noodles, Pasta,

Dried Beans, Rice, Crackers, Dried Fruit, Nuts,

Ready-to-make meals, Mac and Cheese, Packets of Oatmeal

The ideal temperature for storing canned food is between 50°F and 70°F. Currently, we are not placing canned goods in the pantry, however, if donated, these items will be saved for future use.

Have a healthy March as we enjoy longer days and warming temperatures!

God's Work, Our Hands!

Peg Gumpert, Carol Gunzelmann, Marlene Harlow, Doris and Bill Jaeger, Judi Merkel, Jan Krommes, Mary Phillips, Barb and Denton Quick & Pat Ruffner

Christian Education Update



Our children are precious! They know about the endless love of Jesus. They do community service. They can sing the books of the Bible, and they know their Bible stories. A huge shout out goes to our teachers for doing such a wonderful job each and every week, and another enormous thank you goes to our parents for making sure the children get to Schwarzwald Lutheran every Sunday to experience all of these wonderful things. We pull it off together, and our children are so fortunate to be growing up in this beautifully supportive church community.

Congratulations to all of our Sunday School children and adults for bringing in 846 cans of soup during our February Souper Bowl for Caring drive. The Jr. & Sr. High class was the big winner with 281 cans. We will all celebrate with a special treat during our Mardi Gras/Lent celebration on March 2.

Our big events this month are the Mardi Gras/Lent event which is the week before Lent. Our children will decorate the Sunday School area on March 2nd and talk about the important mindset shift that occurs during the Lent season which starts the following week. Our other big event is Service Sunday. This is when all of our Sunday School classes complete a service project during the Sunday School hour. We have been collecting specific items throughout the year to help us carry-out this event. It is very fitting that this event takes place during the reflective Lent season. Check out all of the events happening during the remainder of our church year!

Upcoming Events: Mardi Gras/Lent Intro - March 2

This is a day of celebration! We will decorate our Sunday School area and do some festive crafts while talking about the upcoming weeks of Lent. Our children will learn what Lent is all about and how our mindset needs to shift in order to prepare us for the Holy Week, culminating with Easter Sunday. Our Sunday School members will celebrate our successful Souper Bowl for Caring drive with a special treat!

Service Sunday - March 23

Our families have been donating items every month that our children will use during Service Sunday. They will be creating care packages for pediatric hospital patients, young families in need, our church shut-ins, and a few other organizations. This is always a rewarding day for everyone.

Bear Creek Summer Camp Informational Visit - April 6

Want to give your kids a one-of-a-kind summer camp experience? Several of our church youth have been going to Bear Creek Summer Camp for years and cannot get enough. The children (all ages!) genuinely want to go back year after year without hesitation. Collin Grooms, the camp director, will be joining us at SLC on April 6th. He will meet with the parents and children during Sunday School, and he will be helping with the worship service as well.

Looking Way Ahead...Palm Sunday Activities - April 13;
Mother's Day Fun - May 11; **End of Year Celebration** - May 18

CALENDER FOR LENT / HOLY WEEK / EASTER

ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5

2:00 — 3:00 p.m. “Drive-thru” Imposition of Ashes

Front driveway near the office — Pastor Jim Farnsworth

7:00 p.m. Worship Service in our Sanctuary with Holy Communion
and the Imposition of Ashes — Pastor Donald Simmons

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Wednesdays — March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9 — 7:00 p.m.

We will be using the *Holden Evening Prayer* Service

Dinner will be held at 6:00 p.m. on **March 12 and April 9.**

PALM SUNDAY

April 13

10:30 AM Worship with Holy Communion

Reading of the Passion

MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 17

7:30 PM Holy Communion Service

Stripping of the Altar

GOOD FRIDAY

April 18

7:30 PM Worship Service

EASTER

April 20

8:00 AM Early Service with Holy Communion

9:00 AM Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

10:30 AM Festival Worship with Holy Communion

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (January)

Treasurer's Report -- Scot Griesemer

November and December disbursements were approved.

Reviewed the year-end financials.

Reviewed the financials for the Annual Congregational Report. We budget for a Pastor with 10 years of experience for the Pastor's salary and housing allowance. The additional approval that will be in the annual report is the difference between a 10-year and a 20-year pastor. The Proposed Budget will be presented to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Old Business

Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on January 26, 2025. Mark Bauer will be nominated for council to replace Kelly Kline-Carr. The kids will prepare a spaghetti lunch to serve before the annual meeting.

Council Reorganization - Following the Annual Meeting, there will be a Church Council Reorganizational Meeting held in the Scout Room to elect council officers.

New Business

The Church Council meetings for 3/12 and 4/9 will be held immediately following the 7:00 PM Wednesday Evening Lenten Service.

There is an opening on the Fellowship Committee for a committee Chair. There will be a meeting on 2/9 at 9:15 AM in the Coffee Bar to discuss. (This meeting was subsequently changed to February 16 because of the ice storm.)

Discussion on Youth funds available for "Box City" in March and a youth trip in June to Nashville - \$550 /person. There is approximately \$2700 under "Prepaid Mission Trip" and approximately \$2300 in "Youth Fund Raisers." It is suggested a third be paid by the church, a third through fund-raising and a third by the families.

Pastor Jim's Contract - In June, Pastor Bardo will no longer continue with us. He would like to supply through June 8, but cannot commit beyond that. In talking with Pr. Jim, he presented us with an outline. In addition to Pr. Jim's current Designated Pastor duties here at SLC, he would do our weekly worship service. After he was done at the worship service at St. Mark's, he would drive to SLC for our worship service. He would continue to teach Confirmation, attend council meetings, weddings, funerals, and do hospital visitations (but would appreciate home visitations by lay persons). We would need another part-time person for some services, such as Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter and Christmas. Pastor Simmons will do Ash Wednesday this year, and Pr. Bardo will see us through Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. Pr. Jim would also like full ability for the worship service liturgy, and we must have weekly communion. Additionally, we would need to make a minor adjustment to our start time to 10:45 AM. Pr. Jim is requesting stoles be purchased to keep here at SLC and become the property of SLC.

When we go to 10:45 AM, it would be for 52 weeks a year. We would not change the time for the summer. We would be getting another year of consistency. He would receive \$250 for each service plus mileage. Confirmation will still be held here with the St. Mark's kids, and it needs to be extended to 2 hours now and 3 hours in the fall. We will have meetings with St. Mark's council president and our council president along with Pr. Neidig from the Synod office. The goal is to do some service projects together. The two churches will remain independent. This would be on a trial basis through the end of year. As we get to the end of 2025, we will revisit this temporary solution that could become a long-term solution. Our Call Process through the Synod would remain open for all of 2025. We will present this to the congregation at the annual meeting.

Council Officers: Doris Jaeger, President
Chris Thompson, Vice President
Chuck Heydt, Corporate Secretary
Scot Griesemer, Treasurer (ex-officio)

Council Members: Mark Bauer
Lynne Cover
Sarah Gibson
Barry Hoover
Elizabeth Kennedy
Joanne Rutherford
Janice Stanislaw
Carolyn Woodford
Larry Yoder



Budget Information

Monthly totals (January)

Budgeted Income	\$16,154 (Current envelopes)
Actual Income	\$14,576 (Current envelopes)
Budgeted Expenses	\$36,220 (Amount includes a full-time pastor salary)
Actual Expenses	\$24,590

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Serving and Loving Christ Since 1737

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Join our family, share God's love.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*Pulpit
and
Pew*

MARCH 2025