

We are now in the season of Lent – a season of reflection, contemplation, and discernment. It is a time for us to evaluate our relationship with God and ask ourselves serious questions. How is my relationship with God? How am I living out my call to serve God and my neighbor? How am I living out my faith? What changes do I need to make in my life?

During this season, it is tradition to concentrate on three elements of our faith: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Prayer is our way to talk to God. How often do you pray? A couple times a week? Once a day? A couple times a day? At every meal? Only on Sunday mornings? Take time this Lent to increase your time spent in conversation with God. Maybe decide to pray at every meal, or when you wake up in the morning, or go to bed at night.

Traditionally, fasting involves giving up something for the season of Lent that is meaningful to you. It is meant to be a sacrifice – to remind you of the sacrifice Christ made for you. Give up meat or sugar or caffeine. But maybe you just give up meats on Fridays. Maybe you could give up your Starbucks coffee for the season and give that money to the church? Maybe, you give up something you do – how about giving up Facebook, or Instagram, or TV?

But rather than giving something up, would you consider adding something for the season? Daily bible reading? Attending a weekly Bible study? Listening to a Christian podcast? Volunteering at New Journey once a week? Cook meals for the hungry? Binge watch *The Chosen*? (I'm reading the Gnostic Gospels during Lent. – I have never read them before.)

The third traditional aspect of Lent is almsgiving or generosity. We should emphasize our generosity during this season. This doesn't mean just reallocate our donations but add to our normal donations and offerings. Maybe donate to specific ministries of the church, or sponsor one of our youth for the mission trip. Or maybe support another charity close to your heart. Maybe you could help one of our seniors with some of their bills. Maybe your generosity could be in the form of your time and talents. Could you donate some time to help clean up a part of the church, or volunteer at one of the shelters in Reading, maybe walk the dogs at the animal shelter, or provide rides to someone who can't drive? There are countless opportunities and needs out there to support.

Use this season of Lent to refocus your time, efforts, and resources to focus on your faith and your relationship with God and your neighbor. May God bless you in your Lenten journey.



WELCOME TO THE LORD'S TABLE!

GOD BLESS

Sean Livingood

&

Zayn Schaeffer

FIRST COMMUNION

----- cut -----

Easter Breakfast



SUNDAY, APRIL 5

This year the fellowship committee will be providing baked breakfast casseroles, but we welcome donations of the following:

fruit _____

bread _____

baked good _____

PLEASE INDICATE THE TYPE AND THE AMOUNT THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO DONATE.

NAME _____ PHONE # _____

Please place completed form in the offering plate.

In Memoriam

Curtis Prince, Sr.

November 15, 1961—January 26, 2026



Curtis M. Prince, Sr., 64, of Reading, PA, passed away on January 26, 2026 at the Penn State Health St. Joseph's Hospital. Born in Pottstown, PA, he was the son of the late Donald "Ducky" D. Prince Sr. and the late Carolyn M. (Bagenstose) Rumpf.

Curtis graduated from Daniel Boone High School in 1979. He last worked as a Supervisor at the St. Lawrence Carbonizing Plant. He was a member of the former Birdsboro Sportsmen's Club. He helped coach Amity Youth Football and was a big Minnesota Vikings and Reading Royals fan. He enjoyed building all types of models and cherished times spent with his grandchildren and his family.

Curtis is survived by his daughters: April M. Robinson, wife of Steven, Elizabeth M. Clive, wife of Timothy, Jr.; son: Curtis M. Prince, Jr. husband of Rebecka; 3 brothers: Donald Prince, Jr., Robert Prince, and Steven Prince; sister: Susan Prince; and 8 grandchildren: Carrera, Garrett, Ellise, Nathaniel, Avery, Cohen, Fynnicks, and Anakyn.

Thank you!

What a great turnout for our
Annual Congregational Meeting on
February 1st!

It was wonderful to spend time together and to
discuss the future of SLC!

THANK YOU!

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

. . **from** the Kerber family— We would like to thank our SLC family for your thoughts, prayers, and cards over the past two months. I would also like to thank those who stepped in to help with the weekly church cleaning since my father's passing.

. . **from** EAFP—Thank you for your generous donation. Your generosity will help to make a difference in the lives of people in need in our community.

. . **from** ECEF—Thank you for your generous donation and your commitment to our community. We are grateful for your support.



PARLOR COFFEE CAFÉ / GREETERS

Scan the QR code or use the Sign-Up Genius link to sign-up to bring a baked good for the coffee café or to be a Greeter on a Sunday morning:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050C4FA9AD2FA7FD0-60582416-schwarzwald>

PRAYER GROUP

The March meeting dates for the Prayer Group are the 3rd, 17th and 31st at 11:00 AM.

Please contact Joanne Rutherford for additional information at 610-406-9355 or jmr14290@gmail.com.



Lenten Calendars are available for pick-up in the Narthex and Vestibule entrances of the church. Help yourself to these free Lenten guides.



EASTER DECORATING

WE COULD USE YOUR HELP ON SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 4, AT 9:00 A.M. TO HELP UNLOAD THE EASTER FLOWERS FROM THE DELIVERY TRUCK AND HELP WITH DECORATING THE SANCTUARY FOR EASTER! MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Douglas Oswald
- 2 Robert Darlington
- 3 Ellen Weaver
- 4 Anthony Hoover
- 5 Joan Wegman, Helenann Billinger, Andrew Correll, Dylan Thren
- 6 Steven Werner
- 7 Andrew Bauer, Matthew Kowalski
- 8 Larry Ney, Brandy Himmelreich
- 9 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 Ryan Thomas
- 19 Patrick Dalton
- 21 Camryn Cataldi
- 22 Alexa Cupitt
- 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



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.

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Wednesdays — March 4, *11, 18, 25 — 7:00 p.m.

We will be using the *Holden Evening Prayer Service*

*Dinner will be served in Fellowship Hall at 6:00 p.m.

before the service on March 11

PALM SUNDAY

March 29

10:30 AM Worship with Holy Communion

Reading of the Passion

MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 2

At St. Mark's 6:00 PM Seder Meal

At SLC 7:30 PM Holy Communion Service — Stripping of the Altar

GOOD FRIDAY

April 3

7:30 PM Worship Service

EASTER DECORATING (Help needed)

April 4, 9:00 a.m.

EGG HUNT

April 4, 10:00 a.m.

EASTER

April 5

8:00 AM Early Service with Holy Communion

9:00 AM Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

10:30 AM Festival Worship with Holy Communion

News and Notes from the Social Ministry Committee

March 2026 Edition

In February's "Pulpit and Pew", changes to our Soup Team Ministry were described. No longer will soups for New Journey Soup Kitchen be prepared in the homes of the Soup Team members. However, this ministry will be continued, with the soups being prepared in Scharzswald's kitchen.

Each month, Soup Team members will receive an email announcing the chosen cooking date. A list of food items to be donated as well as a request for volunteer cooks will be included in that email. Last month's cooking event began at 10:00 and was completed by 2:00. This included a lunch break to sample the soup and enjoy some fellowship. We understand that many people cannot volunteer during the week due to work obligations. Therefore, depending on continued interest, it is possible that a future cooking event could be scheduled for a Saturday.

The members of the Social Ministry Committee are grateful for the support and generosity of our Schwarzwald family. As seen in February, when within just a few hours after the request for food was sent out, all items had been selected for donation. Thank you for your quick response!

Each March, we participate in ELCA's World Hunger Appeal. This year, we will be having a \$350 Match Challenge to help raise funds for this important cause. You will find a World Hunger poster, donation envelopes, and a soup pot in the Narthex. Your contributions may be placed in the soup pot throughout the entire month of March. Checks should be made out to "Schwarzwald Lutheran Church".

Thank you for your support.

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

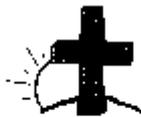
GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS!

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS AT 2:00 AM ON SUNDAY, MARCH 8. BE SURE TO MOVE YOUR CLOCKS **AHEAD** ONE HOUR BEFORE GOING TO BED ON SATURDAY NIGHT, **MARCH 7!**



Christian Education Update

Got the winter blues? There is no time for that in Sunday School! Spring is almost here! February proved to be a month full of energy and exciting events. It all began with our Sunday School breakfast. Our children and teachers did a phenomenal job serving everyone food and providing talent for the morning. We continued the month with a visit from Collin Grooms, executive director of Bear Creek Camp. Our Mardi Gras/Lent day and culmination of our Souper Bowl of Caring collection also brought smiles and laughter to our classes.



We are finally looking to calm things down in March as we experience the season of Lent. Our children are preparing their hearts and minds for Jesus' death and resurrection. We know that praying, giving & volunteering, and fasting (not necessarily in the traditional sense of the word) are part of Lent. Prayer is our focus for the season.

Would you like to find ways to give and volunteer during Lent? Reach out to Crystal to be included in some forms of our church's education program. Sign up to help with VBS. There are lots of ways to get involved! If you want to focus on giving during Lent, please consider supporting our youth going on the mission trip. We have 6 junior and senior high students going to Nashville in June, and they would appreciate any and all support with their fundraising efforts.

Upcoming Events & Info

Youth Chimes & Choir

Youth chime rehearsals take place in the sanctuary every Sunday at 9:00. All youth grades 4 and up OR who have learned to read music are welcome to join us!

Palm Sunday Activities - March 29

Our children will rotate through a series of stations, all of which talk about various parts of Holy Week. There will be stations with crafts, snacks, games, and learning. Please join us during the Sunday School hour, and invite friends to this Sunday School favorite!

Coffee Parlor

Please enjoy the coffee & hot chocolate cafe! It is located in our parlor and is open to our youth after Sunday School with the exception of our BFF group (post-confirmation) that meets there weekly at 9:30. Parents, please grab a drink and snacks from the coffee parlor at any time!

Confirmation

Confirmation classes continue to take place on the 4th Sunday of every month. Students meet in Fellowship Hall from 12:00 - 2:00. Are you able to provide a meal for our confirmands? If so, please let Crystal know your preferred month. Open months include April and May.

Vacation Bible School - June 8-12

Mark your calendars for this year's VBS! Want to be a volunteer? Contact Ellen Focht! More info will be coming as we get closer.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
1 9:00am Youth Chimes reh. (S) 9:15am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Sunday School (SS) 10:45am Worship Service 11:45am Sr. Choir reh. (FH) 6:30pm SS teachers' mtg. (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	2 5:45pm Girl Scout Troop 11135 (SS/FH) 6:15pm Girl Scout troop 1909 (SS/FH) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	3 10:00am Tuesday morning Bible Study. (FH) 11:00am Prayer Group. (FH)	4 7:00pm Lenten Se 7:00pm NA Meeti
8 9:00am Youth Chimes reh. (S) 9:15am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Sunday School (SS) 10:45am Worship Service 11:45am Sr. Choir reh. (FH) 1:00pm Sinfonia rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	9 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 1867 (FH) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	10 10:00am Tuesday morning Bible Study. (FH)	11 6:00pm Lenten Di 7:00pm Lenten Se 7:00pm NA Meeti 8:00pm Church C
15 9:00am Youth Chimes reh. (S) 9:15am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Sunday School (SS) 10:45am Worship Service 11:45am Sr. Choir reh. (FH) 5:30pm Sinfonia rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	16 5:45pm Girl Scout Troop 11135 (FH/SS) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	17 10:00am Tuesday morning Bible Study. (FH) 11:00am Prayer Group. (FH) 5:00pm Community Meal (FH/K)	18 12:00pm Exeter S (FH) 6:30pm Lions Clu 7:00pm Lenten Se 7:00pm NA Meeti
22 9:00am Youth Chimes reh. (S) 9:15am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Sunday School (SS) 10:45am Worship Service 11:45am Sr. Choir reh. (FH) 12:00pm Confirmation Class (FH) 5:30pm Sinfonia rehearsal (FH) 7:00pm AA mtg.	23 10:00am Soup Group (FH / K) 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 1867 (FH) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	24 10:00am Tuesday morning Bible Study. (FH)	25 7:00pm Lenten Se 7:00pm NA Meeti
29 PALM SUNDAY 9:00am Youth Chimes reh. (S) 9:15am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Sunday School (SS) 10:45am Worship Service 11:45am Sr. Choir reh. (FH) 3:00pm Sinfonia Concert (S / FH) 7:00pm AA meeting (SR)	30 10:00am Social Ministry Comm. Mtg. (FH) 5:45pm Girl Scout troop 11135 (SS/FH) 7:00pm AA mtg. (SR)	31 10:00am Tuesday morning Bible Study. (FH) 11:00am Prayer Group. (FH)	CAN our w Facebook Cha or ou

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

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Service (S) _____ Sing (SR) _____	5	6	7 Move clocks AHEAD one hour at bedtime.
Dinner (FH) _____ Service (S) _____ Sing (SR) _____ Council (FH) _____	12 9:00am Breakfast Bunch	13	14
Senior Citizens _____ Board meeting (FH) _____ Service (S) _____ Sing (SR) _____	19	20 2:00pm Exeter Area Food Pantry (EAB)	21 6:00pm Youth Lock-in (FH / SS)
Service (S) _____ Sing (SR) _____	26 2:00pm Worship and Music Comm. mtg. (FH)	27 6:00pm Pastor Jim's Gala (@ BlackJax)	28

CELLATION INFORMATION

Please check your email,
 website (www.schwarzwaldlutheran.org),
 Facebook page (Schwarzwald Lutheran Church),
 Channel 69 — WFMZ-TV Stormcenter,
 or answering machine (610-779-3480).

MARCH 2026

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

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

10:00 A.M.

FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES!

EGG HUNT

MUSIC

STORIES

CRAFTS

PRIZES



MUSIC MINISTRY

KATHY SNYDER

As I sit to write this article, we are just coming out of the deep freeze! We are starting to be able to see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel! The choir has endured two knee replacements, several disabled vehicles, and a variety of illnesses but we're hanging strong as we move toward Lent, Holy Week, and Easter!

In February we had Robin Lilarose as a guest artist who accompanied our adult choir and enhanced our worship with her wonderful gift of music. On Palm Sunday, she will join us again along with Kirstin Meyers and our own Crystal Jordan as the group 'Trio Jolie' will enhance our worship with their unique blend of flute, oboe and cello! It's always a blessing to be able to incorporate the talents of our own members into our worship and I know this will be a real treat for everyone!

I am still working on a joint effort with St. Marks to do a combined anthem which I'm hoping to pull off sometime in March as well. Along with our adult bell choir, youth chimes, youth chorus and adult choir, there are so many musical happenings in the upcoming months you won't want to miss a single service!

As always, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your devotion and continued support of the music ministry program at SLC!

Musical Blessings...Kathy



GIRL SCOUT TROOP #1867

**collects empty drink cans as a
recycling fundraiser for their troop.**

Please help them out and bring your empties to church.

A box is provided in the narthex for the can collection.

(You can also pull the tabs off and place them in the can tab collection!)



**DONATIONS OF CANDY FOR THE
EASTER EGG HUNT WOULD BE GREATLY
APPRECIATED. THE DONATED CANDY SHOULD BE
INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED AND SMALL ENOUGH
TO FIT INTO A PLASTIC EGG.**

**DONATIONS CAN BE PLACED IN THE CHURCH KITCHEN,
THE CHURCH OFFICE OR IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AREA.**

THANK YOU!



SOUP GROUP

Monday, March 23

From 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

in Fellowship Hall Kitchen

We will make soup,

have some lunch, and package

the soup for distribution!



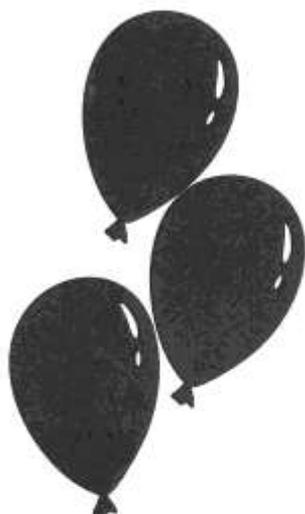


Hopewell Love Community Services

invites you to join us for

PASTOR JIM'S 60TH BIRTHDAY & WAKE GALA

*A fun evening of celebration and community
at BlackJax American Pub & Grill Restaurant*



Friday, March 27th

6pm - 10pm

\$60 per person

*Gift Basket Raffles, Live Auction
& Cash Bar*

*All Proceeds go to support the services of
Hopewell Love, including food distributions*



Scan to purchase tickets

For more information call
610.582.8167 or email us at
hopewelllovecs@gmail.com

April 11 - 12, 2026

ACTIVITIES • BUILD COMPASSION • UNDE

RAISE AWARENESS • CHANGE PERSP

BOX CITY

Youth Event

STAND BETTER • SEE DIFFERENTLY

What is Box City?

Box City is a social justice learning experience designed for youth in grades 6–12. The event combines education, empathy-building, and community action by simulating aspects of homelessness and food insecurity. Participants engage in lessons and discussions that highlight real-world challenges faced by unhoused individuals, reflect on the social and economic factors contributing to poverty, and learn how they can make a difference through advocacy and service.

By spending the night outdoors (weather permitting) and raising funds for a local shelter, youth gain a deeper understanding of compassion and community responsibility.

Christ Lutheran - Harleysville

A SEPA multi-congregation event hosted at
Christ Lutheran Church, Harleysville

For Youth Grades 6-12 • Friends Welcome!

Learn • Raise \$ • Play Games • Worship

Details on Website <https://bit.ly/boxcity26>





VBS 2026

June 8 - 12

"Let the children come to me"

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR A WEEK FULL OF FAITH,
FELLOWSHIP AND FUN!**

AGES 4-12

DINNER WILL BE SERVED EACH EVENING

BEGINNING AT 5:45 PM.

THE EVENING WILL INCLUDE A GROUP OPENING, BIBLE STORIES, MUSIC
CRAFTS AND ACTIVE PLAY.

PICK-UP AT 8:00 PM.

THE CHILDREN WILL PROVIDE SHOWCASE OF THE LESSONS THEY HAVE
LEARNED ON FRIDAY, 6/12 AT 7:00 PM .

WITH AN ICE CREAM SOCIAL TO FOLLOW.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL PARTICIPANTS, THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS TO ATTEND CHURCH ON
SUNDY, JUNE 14TH SO THE CHILDREN CAN SHARE ALL THEY HAVE LEARNED WITH
OUR CHURCH FAMILY.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (January)

Pastor's Report

Lenten Services will be at 7:00 p.m. Pr. Jim will supply. We will use *Holden Evening Prayer*.

Maundy Thursday, April 2 – A Christian Seder meal will be held at 7:00p at St. Mark's. Reservations are needed.

Treasurer's Report

The Finance Committee approved the disbursements. The end-of-year receipts were close to budget.

A laddered CD is coming due, and we will invest in a short-term CD so that in case we get the grant, we will have money access.

Old Business

The start of the installation of the fire detection system is pushed off until January. It will take 2-3 weeks to complete the work throughout the church. The fire extinguishers will be labeled and we will change vendors.

Blatt Construction has done the work downstairs - Boiler room door repaired, a new door was installed on electrical room, the door between the Scout room and class rooms has been fixed, a new lock on kitchen door with panic bars will be secured tomorrow, and the Upper Room has new key lock. They will also look at the broken window in the stair well. The office door is finished and a new entry buzzer will be installed. A ring doorbell will be installed.

We will look into a hydraulic closer for office door.

We will get a dumpster and clean out many areas especially around electrical boxes, heating areas and fire extinguishers.

Soup Ministry update:

During a Zoom meeting, it was discussed that we can longer cook meals at home for the Soup Kitchen. Instead, we will have a monthly soup date. If you are unable to attend to cook, it is suggested to donate items needed for the soup. We will stagger the times with daytime, evenings, Saturdays, holidays, and split shifts.

Social Ministry:

St. Paul's Lutheran, at 16th and Perkiomen Avenue, is starting a hospitality center. They will open up their Fellowship area to serve breakfast. They are asking us to partner with them. SLC is on the list to help on March 14 for 3.5 hours. We need to purchase embroidered hats and heavy-duty aprons.

Community Meal:

SLC discussed having a community meal. We have \$500 start-up money from Giant. It would be nice if council could do the first one. By the February meeting, we should have a plan. We would like to do this meal on St. Patrick’s Day. Menu TBD.

New Business

Security team meeting:

We met with members of Glad Tidings Church. The committee chair there is Nelson Ortiz, a detective with the DA’s office in Berks County. Their church has 1500 to 2000 in attendance on a Sunday morning. Their security team has 44 members, 22 of which are armed. They have security guards at all entrances and also cover VBS and Sunday School. They provide training for the armed security people. We will take their written plan and rewrite it for our use. We need to establish a security team and identify those members who carry firearms. The legal portion will require necessary insurance and include hold harmless clauses.

Staff:

We received thank notes from the staff for their Christmas gifts. Staff reviews will be done in March.

Sunday School:

On February 1, they are hosting a breakfast. All council members are invited. There will also be a talent show.

Earlier in the year we discussed a fund raiser utilizing *Heifer International*. Possibilities include a coin cascade donation box for a year-long collection. Perhaps this could be incorporated during Lent. Pastor Jim could gear the Children’s Sermon to this and have kids hand out the small barns to the congregation.

Budget Information—Monthly totals (January)

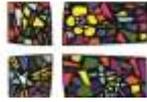
Income:

Budgeted Income	\$16,557 (Current envelopes)
Actual Income	\$ 9,518 (Current envelopes)

Expenses:

Budgeted Expenses	\$36,633 (Amount includes a full-time pastor salary)
Actual Expenses	\$25,622

Published monthly by



Schwarzwald
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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 2026