

the Messenger



March 2024

Lent/Easter



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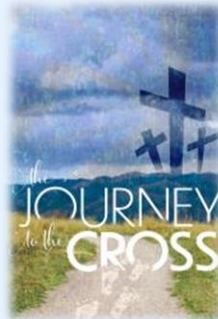
Find all the signups at the [SignUp Hub](#) in the Commons or [online](#) at godslovenewtown.org/signups.

A Holy Pilgrimage Lent/Easter 2024

Lent is a holy pilgrimage. A journey towards God's vision of new life for us personally and for our life together as a community of believers. God reveals Godself through worship, prayer, scriptural study, conversation and in the breaking of bread with one another. Trusting in God's merciful grace, we rise daily to be the church as we live out our individual vocations and, in our gatherings, here at God's Love.

I wonder...where have you experienced God most powerfully this Lenten season? What new insights has the Spirit placed on your heart? In our wilderness wandering, where have you experienced God doing a new thing and how might you be called to respond?

The Christian leaders at *Leadconnect* offer us this encouragement, *"God is present in everything. Life is a spiritual pilgrimage. Commit to your own journey. Open yourself enough to get curious about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit...Start to wonder. To hope. To surprise yourself with loving and knowing you are loved."* I am grateful to be on this holy pilgrimage alongside you and look forward to hearing about your Lenten experience this season.



This year we are planning very special worship experiences for **Good Friday, March 29**. Throughout the day, a **"Stations of the Cross"** art exhibit will be on display in the sanctuary. Stop by any time from 9:00am to 7:30pm for personal reflection and meditation, or attend a guided walkthrough at 12:00noon, led by Pastor Brandi. Then at 7:30pm, we will offer a **Tenebrae worship service**. *Tenebrae* means "darkness" or shadows." This meditative worship liturgy has been practiced since the 10th century and is an opportunity to experience the depth and drama of Christ's Passion. The experience will be enhanced through music with selections by a professional string trio, vocal ensembles, and congregational singing.

I look forward to seeing you in worship this month as we continue our holy pilgrimage that by the grace of God will lead us to Easter Sunday and resurrecting new life together.

In Christ, Pastor Brandi



The month of February was a bit busier than usual for the Church Council. At our regular business meeting on February 15, we welcomed two new members to the Council, **John Ortendahl** and **John Rozolis**, and welcomed back two

council members who had been elected for a second term, **Don Ginelli** and **Linda Sartor**. In addition to reviewing the Pastor's report as well as the financial and staff reports, the Council addressed and approved a number of motions, including:

1. Extension of Madison DeLuca's employment at the conclusion of her Field Seminary Internship, to Labor Day 2024;
2. A donation to the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund administered by the Newtown-Yardley Ministerium;
3. Designation of our Church's Easter/Lenten offering to the ELCA Disaster Relief Fund;
4. An additional donation of \$3,875 to the Southeast Pennsylvania Synod, and
5. Engagement of RPM Construction and Restoration LLC for the purpose of correcting drainage issues at the Church entrances.

At the conclusion of the regular business meeting, an executive session was held to elect officers.

The Church Council came together again on Saturday, February 24 from 9:00am – 2:00pm for its annual retreat, led by Pastor Brandi. We shared breakfast and lunch together and participated in a *Lectio Divina* exercise. We broke into small groups to discuss the role of God's Love in the context of its neighborhood/surroundings, then shared and discussed our thoughts with the entire group. We then had the opportunity to discuss with our Interim Consultant, **Teri Lanan**, who attended our retreat, some of the nuts and bolts of putting together a Transition Team, which will be the next task for the Council as we move forward in this period of discernment. Teri provides a great deal of experience, and she will work with the Transition Team, providing advice and guidance as they move forward with their work.

Our next Church Council meeting will be held on **March 21** at 7:00pm.

Barbara Steen, *Council President*



Holy Week Worship

- **Palm Sunday, March 24:** 8:45am and 11:00am
- **Maundy Thursday, March 28:** 7:30pm
- **Good Friday, March 29:**
 - Stations of the Cross at 12:00noon
 - Tenebrae Worship at 7:30pm
- **Easter Sunday, March 31:** 8:45am and 11:00am (NO Sunday School on Easter Sunday)

Throughout Lent, the “on-loan” materials on the *Ministry Resource Table* correspond to the Adult Faith & Life (AF&L) emphasis on the *Priesthood of All Believers*. Pastor Brandi and members of the AF&L planning team have contributed books that have been particularly significant in their faith formation and spiritual lives. Members of the congregation are invited and encouraged to add their own inspirational books and/or peruse the collection and borrow what looks interesting. Write your name inside any book(s) you contribute so they can be returned to you. **Welcome!**



“The Priesthood of All Believers”

Down & Out: Where Grace Takes You

Sundays, March 3, 10, 17 and 24

10:00am • Fellowship Hall



A video series for Lent on the life-changing reality of God's promises, and how to live as part of the priesthood of all believers.



Grapevine of Friends

Friday, March 8

11:30am • the Café

This fellowship event is open to all in the congregation looking for small group connection. The group gathers quarterly for lunch, socializing, and occasionally planning an outside event. Bring a friend!

RSVP to the church office **by March 4.**

Future dates: June 25, September 25, and December 17

Children-Led WORSHIP

Children-Led Worship and Congregational Breakfast

Sunday, April 7 • ONE SERVICE • 9:30am

Breakfast • 10:30am • Fellowship Hall

You're in for an after-Easter treat when the children of the congregation lead the worship service on **April 7 at 9:30am**. Don't miss the opportunity to participate in this special worship, and witness our youngest disciples use their talents to praise God. A congregational breakfast will follow at 10:30am in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

If your child would like to participate, please see their **Sunday School Teacher** or contact **Sandy Anthony**.

March's Collection: Egg-citing

To get ready for our annual **Easter Egg Scramble** we are collecting filled plastic Easter eggs during the month of March. We are asking for donations of 4 dozen (or more) plastic Easter eggs filled with *non-peanut* candy or other small prizes.

Place donations in the **Lobby of Love** ❤️ **by March 17.**

NOTE: This collection lasts *only* 3 weeks to give us time to prepare for the Scramble.

Questions? Contact **Sandy Anthony**.



Easter Egg Scramble

Saturday, March 23 • 1:00pm (rain or shine)

Outdoors near the preschool playground

Save the date for something “egg”cellent at God's Love—an Easter Egg Scramble! This event is co-hosted by the church and the preschool and is open to the public.

Registration begins at 12:45pm; the scramble begins at 1:00pm (if rain, the event will be held in Fellowship Hall).

All ages are welcome so invite your friends and family. If you know someone looking for a preschool, this is a great opportunity to get information. **Hope to see you there!**

Questions? Contact **Sandy Anthony**.



2024 Altar Flower Dedications

The Altar Flowers can be dedicated on any Sunday in memory of a loved one, or in honor of a special occasion. The *requested donation* is **\$50** per dedication; payable to *Lutheran Church of God's Love*. [CLICK HERE](#) or visit the **SignUp Hub** to select a week(s).



from the Church Staff

We are all very grateful for the generous staff gifts we recently received from the congregation's collection this past December.

We very much appreciate your kindness and support.
Kay, Susan, Cheri, Bill, Josh, and Aeden

HOPE Supporting Those in Need

It looks like the worst of the winter weather is past but that doesn't mean hunger is in our rear-view mirror. Hunger and homelessness are a daily struggle for many people right here in Bucks County. God's Love is helping to combat this by providing lunch three days a week to the *Reach Out Foundation* in Penndel. Here our most vulnerable neighbors receive food, showers, laundry, and social services. You can help by providing an item for Tuesday's bagged lunches. This is an easy but meaningful way to share God's love with others.



[SIGNUP FOR APRIL](#), or visit the **SignUp Hub** to donate item(s) for the lunches. Directions are in the sign-up link. Place donations in the **Lobby of Love** on Tuesdays by 10:30am. **Questions?** Sandy Anthony.



AHTN Shared Meal
Saturday, March 30
4:00pm • Fellowship Hall

AHTN Shared Meals help support folks who are homeless and food insecure. Our next opportunity to share God's love with those in need is March 30. Although it is "Easter Eve" we are hoping for the same enthusiastic volunteer turnout we have had since returning to in-person meals.

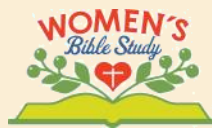
We will serve our traditional taco casserole meal beginning at 4:00pm. **Want to help?** Please [SIGN UP HERE](#).

Questions? Ask the team: Sandy Anthony, Amy Carr, Kathy Bauer, Valerie Greaud, Robin Pecuch or Barbara Roth.

Women's Bible Study
Tuesdays • 6:30pm • the Lounge

Women of all ages are invited to gather weekly for this emerging small group ministry. The group uses devotional materials to spark questions, conversation, and prayer. **Welcome!**

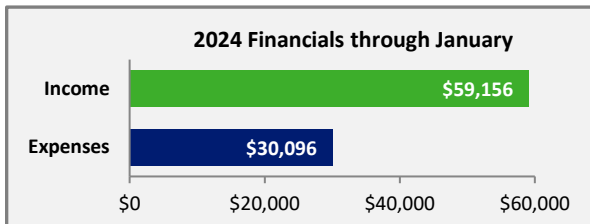
Questions? Contact **Elizabeth Karagrigoriou**.



God's Caring Stitchers

Friday, March 22 • 1:00pm • Room A1/A2

We are working on items for our blanket blessing in March. All items go to local charitable organizations. We meet twice a month and we enjoy camaraderie and laughter while we stitch. All are welcome and we are happy to teach those new to the craft! **Questions?** Contact **Cindy Sundstrom**.



Questions? Contact Treasurer, **Bob Smoose**, or Financial Secretary, **John Tidd**.

Ways you can SERVE

Usher, Reader, Altar Guild, Acolyte, Communion Assistant, Basket Bearer

There are many opportunities for adults and youth to assist during worship services. Any of these roles are wonderful opportunities to engage in service, meet new people, and deepen your own worship experience.

[MARCH/APRIL SIGNUP](#), or visit the **SignUp Hub** to choose weeks and roles convenient for you.



Service Projects were front and center during the month of February. The 2s and 3s assembled **100 Breakfast Bags** for *Caring for Friends*. Thank you to **Janet** and **Eric Nordberg** and **Ruth Anne Woolsey** for delivering the bags to the *Caring for Friends* in Philadelphia. The 4s logged **7,847 hops** in the Sue Heinze Memorial Hop-A-Thon and raised **\$650** for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society!

Seven chicken eggs have arrived and they are in the incubator as we patiently wait for them to hatch. We look forward to a visit from "Chick Farmer" **Sandy Anthony**, who will bring some of her chickens and share her knowledge of chicks and chickens with us. The Karagrigoriou family has offered to adopt our chicks once they have hatched.

We also look forward to a Fire and Ice show from *Mad Science*. Last year's show, "Wacky Science," was a hit and we hope this year's show will be just as fascinating.



Would you or someone you know like to know more about God's Love Christian Preschool? We have openings for 2024 – 2025 and would be happy to schedule a tour. Information and registration forms for our classes can be found online on the church website at godslovenewtown.org/preschool.

Designer Bag B-I-N-G-O

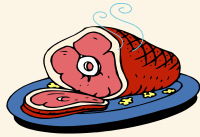
benefitting the Preschool

Friday, April 12

Doors open 6:15pm
Bingo begins 7:00pm

Tickets are **\$35** in advance; **\$40** at the door. Purchase them in the preschool office with cash, check or Venmo to **Nicolette Hendricks** by **April 2**.

We will raffle off some beautiful gift baskets – watch for the display in Fellowship Hall in April and take a chance(s) to win!



Got Ham? Not sure what to do with that **FREE** Easter ham you got from your grocery store? Bring the ham to church any day now through Easter. Place donation in the freezer in the large kitchen or bring it to church on Sunday and put it on the "Ham Cart" in the Commons. Donated hams will be delivered to local food pantries so that less fortunate families can have a nice Easter dinner. **Questions?** Contact **Sandy Anthony**.

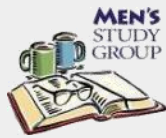
- **Rolling Harvest Food Rescue:** *On behalf of [our organization] I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for your generous support of our mission. On August 30 we received \$1,000.* Elyse Yerrapathruni, Executive Director [This was part of the Endowment Distributions for 2023 approved by church council.]
- **Interfaith Food Alliance:** *Thank you for providing 12 holiday gifts for 6 children. Your gifts put smiles on their faces and were deeply appreciated by their parents.* Diane Coyle, President [One of the recipient organizations for St. Nicholas Day gifts.]
- **Rev. Roshan Soans:** *As I celebrate 5 years in ordained ministry, I reflect upon all those who were there at the start. Thank you for all the support over the years!* [Intern at God's Love from September 2015 to April 2016; ordained at Trinity UCC in Holland, PA on January 27, 2019.]



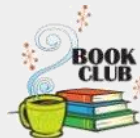
♥ **GOOD STUFF THRIFT** ♥
INVITES YOU TO THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GOD'S LOVE
Spring Collection Drive

Saturday, March 23 • 9:00am to Noon
In the church parking lot

Donate your gently used clothing, shoes, household goods, toys, baby items, furniture, jewelry and more!



Men's Bible Study
March 4 and 18
7:00pm • the Lounge
"The Gospel of Mark"



Gals' Book Club
Thursday, April 4 • 7:00pm • the Lounge
"The Only Survivors" by Megan Miranda
NOTE the new date for this meeting.
Questions? Contact **Sharon Sottung**.

MARCH 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
A door is truly an amazing thing. Closed, it is an agent of separation... But swing it Open and it becomes an invitation, uniting what was separate. — <i>Drew Lede</i>					1 Blood Drive 12p Knit & Crochet 1p	2 Dinner Church 6pm
3 Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a Worship Min 12:15p	4 Counters 9:30a Men's Bible Study 7p	5 Women's Bible Study 6:30p Rejoice! 7:30p	6 Midweek Prayer Noon Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	7	8 Grapevine Lunch 11:30a Knit & Crochet 1p	9 Quilters 10a-3p
10 Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a	11 Counters 9:30a	12 Women's Bible Study 6:30p Rejoice! 7:30p	13 Midweek Prayer Noon Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	14 Exec Committee 7p	15	16
17 Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a	18 Counters 9:30a TLC Meeting 11a Men's Bible Study 7p	19 Women's Bible Study 6:30p Rejoice! 7:30p	20 Midweek Prayer Noon Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	21 Church Council 7p	22 Knit & Crochet 1p	23 Good Stuff Collection 9a – NOON Easter Egg Scramble 1p
24 PALM SUNDAY Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a	25 Counters 9:30am	26 Property Team 1p Women's Bible Study 6:30p Rejoice! 7:30p	27 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	28 Maundy Thursday Service 7:30p	29 Good Friday Stations of the Cross (all day) Services NOON and 7:30p	30 AHTN Shared Meal 4p
31 EASTER SUNDAY Worship 8:45a & 11a NO EDUCATION	Approach this new door with great confidence in your heart, for you have so much to offer. Open each new door with trust, holding your dreams very near...knowing the world is waiting for the goodness and the love you carry within you. — <i>M.E. Miro</i>					



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