

First News First

Volume 59, Issue 1

February 2024

Lent: Drawing Nearer to Jesus

It feels like we have only just begun the season of Epiphany as I am writing this. Very soon we will suddenly find ourselves thrown into a very different kind of place in the church year. In February we enter the deep and reflective season of Lent.

This year, it seems somewhat ironic that Ash Wednesday falls on February 14th — Valentine's Day. As odd as that seems on the surface, we may soon begin to realize how tightly bound together repentance and love are in our Christian walk.

In the Christian tradition, Ash Wednesday marks the start of the holy season of Lent, a time for reflection and repentance in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

Christians from many denominations including Lutheran recognize Lent as the holy season for 40 days leading up to Easter. For centuries, Christians have received a sign of the cross with ashes on their forehead at the beginning of Lent as a reminder of mortal failings and an invitation to receive God's forgiveness. The tradition has its origins in the Old Testament where sinners performed acts of public penance.

The use of ashes reminds us of our mortality. During Ash Wednesday worship, the phrase, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," from the Book of Genesis is spoken as ashes are placed on your forehead. On February 14 we will have 2 brief worship services at 9:30 and 5:30 in the chapel and a full worship service with communion and music in the sanctuary at 7:00.

On Wednesdays in the Season of Lent we will join together with our Brothers and Sisters from the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran traditions (LARC) to worship our Lord together. Each week we will be learning about a different name for Jesus. (Emmanuel, Beloved Son, Rabbi, Suffering Servant, and Lamb of God.) The schedule is included in this newsletter.

I would like to encourage you during the season of Lent to consider names for our Lord (either those listed above, or different ones) and create a poem or song or paragraph or game or crossword puzzle or reflection or artwork about one or more of the names we use and why that name is significant for you in your spiritual life. You may want to just focus on one project or one name or you may want to come up with a different idea each week. There are very few "rules" to this Lenten assignment. You are welcome to use Hymns, Bible commentaries, Devotional Books, the Bible, the internet – whatever is helpful for 'Drawing You Nearer to Jesus.' You may want to consider doing this as a family or with a friend.

You may choose to keep this project to yourself – or if you would be willing to share your creation, we will find ways throughout the rest of the year to share these concepts and revelations with the rest of the congregation. They may be anonymous or include your name – that is entirely up to you.

It is my prayer that you will be drawn closer to God during this Lenten season, however you choose to enrich your relationship with our Lord.

In Christ,
Pastor Jane Nicholson



Worship SCHEDULE

January 28 – Scout Sunday

February 4 – The Buzz Jones Jazz Sextet and Holy Communion

February 11 – Transfiguration Sunday with Holy Communion and the burial of the “Alleluia.”

February 14 Ash Wednesday Worship

9:30am Imposition of Ashes (Chapel)

5:30pm Imposition of Ashes (Chapel)

7:00pm Imposition of Ashes, Holy Communion, Music (Sanctuary)

February 18 First Sunday of Lent

Greetings from Jon Raber (Missionary in Peru) and Holy Communion

February 21 7:00 p.m.—LARC Lenten Worship at Corpus Christi

February 25 Second Sunday of Lent

Following worship we will have lunch and variety show.

February 28 7:00 p.m.—LARC Lenten Worship at Trinity Lutheran



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP Ash Wednesday is February 14. This year we will be having a 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. service with scripture, prayer, and the imposition of ashes. These services will last no longer than 10-15 minutes. The evening service will be our traditional service including music, imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. You are welcome to invite friends and neighbors to worship on this day.

Ash Wednesday Worship, February 14

9:30am Imposition of Ashes (Chapel)

5:30pm Imposition of Ashes (Chapel)

7:00pm Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

The Raber Family (missionaries we sponsor working in Peru) will be stateside and visiting First Lutheran on Sunday, February 18. During the Sunday school hour they will be sharing about their ministry in Peru. please join us in the parlor at 9:30 a.m.



LENTEN CALENDAR

LENT 2024 THEME: Drawing Nearer to Jesus

We will be having Wednesday Lenten services at the Lutheran, Anglican (Episcopalian), and Roman Catholic Churches (LARC Churches) February 21 through March 20 at 7:00 p.m. You are invited to stay for a time of conversation following worship.

Date /Time: 7:00	Name of Jesus	Location	Preacher
February 21	Emmanuel	Corpus Christi Catholic 320 Philadelphia Ave Chambersburg 17201	Pastor Mike Allwein
February 28	Beloved Son	Trinity Lutheran 431 Philadelphia Ave Chambersburg 17201	Pastor Jane Nicholson
March 6	Rabbi	Trinity Episcopal 58 S 2nd St Chambersburg 17201	Pastor Barb Barry
March 13	Suffering Servant	First Lutheran 43 W Washington St Chambersburg 17201 717-264-2015	Mother Pat Dickson
March 20	Lamb of God	Solomon's Lutheran 4856 Wayne Rd Chambersburg 17202 717-267-2266	Father Allan Wolfe



LENT SOUP SUPPERS A soup and bread supper will be held each Wednesday evening at 5:30 **AT THE CHURCH WHERE WORSHIP WILL BE HELD.** If you are able to help serve, clean-up, or provide soup on March 13 for the supper being held at First Lutheran, please contact Barb Evans at 717-360-2535.

LENTEN OFFERINGS The LARC Lenten offerings will be donated to NETWork Ministry. NETWork Ministry is an urban youth ministry for children and teens in Chambersburg. Since 1993, they have been committed to sharing the love of Christ with those who are most vulnerable in our community. Their desire is to minister to the whole person with the gospel of Jesus. They especially seek to equip children and young adults with the skills necessary for these four areas of focus: spiritual growth, academic achievement, life management, and Christian leadership. This is accomplished through a variety of after school and summer opportunities for youth. Checks may be made payable to LARC.

UPCOMING EVENTS

TALENT SHOW / VARIETY SHOW

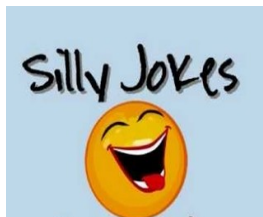


Come join us for an afternoon of fun and entertainment at our Congregational Variety Show on Sunday, February 25.

The youth are hosting this event as a fund raiser for their retreats and camps.



The Fellowship Committee is hosting lunch between Worship and the Variety Show. Please sign-up in Memorial Hall for the lunch.



Be creative with your act for the show – have fun and perform with some friends... skits, jokes, dance, magic, music, drama, and whatever else is good taste is welcome. Please let Kristy Nienstedt know of your willingness to assist. Kristy.nienstedt@gmail.com or 717-414-4468 (cell)

Are you looking for an opportunity to serve abroad and expand your horizon? The Social Missions Committee is organizing a mission trip to visit *Tree-4-Hope* and their work in El Aguata, Guatemala in January or February, 2025. We will experience first-hand the work our mission dollars support at Hope Academy for girls and at the Miguel Magone orphanage. This will be a hands-on experience. Whatever skills you bring to the table will be utilized... building, painting, gardening, technical, cooking, crafting, educational, etc. Everyone has something to contribute. Our mission dollars have been supporting the amazing work of *Tree-4-Hope* since 2021. If you have interest in joining us on this trip, offering your financial support or for more information, see Rose Wilson. Visit www.tree4hope.org for more information.



Update

From Kristy Nienstedt, Photo Directory Coordinator:

By now you have hopefully received a copy of our new updated photo directory. Many thanks to everyone who participated especially the members of the Evangelism Committee who worked on this project.

Please take note of the label/sticker included with this month's newsletter. It contains important address and phone number updates. You can peel off the backing and affix it to the address portion of the booklet. We will try to provide updates as needed so your book remains current!

On a personal note, I did want to apologize to Mary Beth McGraw-Warne. Her name and contact information were inadvertently omitted from the directory. I am sincerely sorry for this oversight! Her information is on this new label so please be sure to add it to your booklet.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

December Minutes

Finance Committee: The finalized budget for 2024 will be presented to the congregation on January 21, 2024 at the congregational meeting.

Visioning Committee: The Visioning Committee met prior to tonight's council meeting. At this meeting, the question arose as to where we can store non-perishable food items now that the food give-n-take box has been installed by the hygiene give-n-take box. The committee is asking that consideration be given to relocating the nursery upstairs and using the current nursery space for storage of the NTT items and give-n-take items. An upstairs nursery would also be a safer and more secure location for the children. This suggestion will be presented to the Property Committee.

Administration: Thank you to Tim Gotwald and Rose Wilson for their council service. Bulk mailing rates and the process for bulk mailings is changing over the next months. Pastor Nicholson and Cheryl will come to a decision as to the best method for distributing our monthly newsletter—via mail, handouts or digital copies. The following were elected to council offices for the coming year: Joyce Ray, President; Marlin Maclay, Vice-President; Sally Herritt, Treasurer; Mary Beth McGraw-Warne, Secretary.

Pastor's Report: 1) Thank you to Kristy Nienstedt for her work on the new church directories which have been distributed. 2) Kristy is organizing a luncheon/variety show for after worship on February 25; proceeds will benefit the youth attending the National Youth Gathering.

Staffing: Council approved an additional week paid vacation for Pastor Nicholson (on the anniversary of her ten years of service) beginning 2024. 2) On a Rose Wilson motion, second by Mary Beth McGraw-Warne, council approved gifting \$100 to each staff member for Christmas—Pastor, Cheryl, Freda, Carol, Sally, Jennifer, Jose.



WELCA



as leader for Chapter 5, "I Will Speak to You in Your Language". All women of the church are welcome.

The February gathering and Bible study will be held on Thursday, February 8 at 1:30 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. We will continue our study of Max Lucado's book He Chose the Nails with Jane Love



Ladies' Breakfast

**The Women's Fellowship
Breakfast**

will be held at The Texas Lunch at
8:30 a.m. on

Wednesday, February 21

**ALL LADIES ARE
WELCOME.**

NEIGHBORHOOD TASK TEAM

Sharing God's love in our community

Hats, Scarves and Mittens Project Martin Luther King weekend 2024
First a big THANK YOU to St. Luke Lutheran, Little Daisy's Closet, First Lutheran and a grant from Thrivent for all of the donations to keep our neighbors warm. The weather was perfect-cold-so many of our neighbors needed the items that we hung on our fence. Items were hung, Saturday, Sunday and Monday .Approximately 500 items were hung in total. Thanks to the NTT volunteers who sorted, bagged and hung all of these items. Pictures will be shared in next month's newsletter.



Homeless Matters-Thanks to everyone for your support of this organization as our Christmas Project this year. I know we all learned something about what this agency does for our neighbors from Jacqui Wolfe, a board member who spoke to our congregation. who visited our congregation on December 3. First Lutheran was able to give this organization personal care items, snack food, bottled water, sleeping bags, throws and socks. Cash donations from the congregation in the amount of \$970. will help this agency support more homeless neighbors. THANK YOU!!!

Homeless Matters also gave blankets to all of the children at Stevens Elementary School in December. One of our members donated the funds for this. Mary Gotwald from NTT was privileged to help give the blankets to the kids. A heart warming experience. Thanks you so much to our donor. Know that you are helping keep kids warm this winter.



SCAN Student Clothing Assistance Network

If you attended the January 14 service or watched on line you would have become acquainted with this new NTT project. Kim Martin is coordinating the program with a CASD social worker, Gabriela Juarez-Lemus. This project is to assist school district children and families that need clothing. Many of these students are homeless or in emergency housing and have been left with few belongings.

How Can you help?

- * volunteer to be on a list of helpers
- * donate by cash or check to the NTT fund from which purchases will be made-
Checks should be made out to First Lutheran Church with SCAN in the memo line
- * pray for those in need and for those involved in this ministry

To help: contact Kim Martin at 717 446 0842 or at kmartin_898@hotmail.com

Saint Seraphin is a soup kitchen that offers meals to those in need. The meals are provided on Thursdays and Saturdays when the Salvation Army does not provide meals. NTT has joined with St Luke Lutheran to help provide servers for this ministry. St Seraphin is located near the Salvation Army. Upcoming volunteer opportunities are Saturday February 24th and Saturday March 9th. If you are willing to help serve please call Mary Gotwald at 717 264 4759



THANK YOU



Little Daisy's Closet

On behalf of Little Daisy's Closet, I am writing to express deepest gratitude for your generous donation. We have provided over \$547,000 in no charge basic needs to our community in 2023.

Your contribution of \$500 will have a significant impact on our ability to provide much-needed clothing, food, toys, personal care items, house goods and pet food to a hurting community. It is your generosity that is making a huge difference in our community during these troubling times. Thank you again for helping us as we are "Living God's Call to Serve".

Sincerely,

John B. McCrae, Founder and President



CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

HOMELESS MATTERS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY

Thank you for sharing your love, compassion and generosity of \$970 with Homeless Matters.

Thank you so much!!

You have truly blessed many people!

Sincerely,

Jacain Wolfe, Director

Dear friends at First Lutheran Church,

On behalf of Noah's House, Inc. and the community we serve, we wish to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude for your financial support as we continue to provide a supportive, compassionate environment where men and women can focus on long-term recovery and spiritual growth. Your prayers are appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Lloyd



THRIVING IN THE STORM...



Pastor Jane & My Church Family,

Thanks for my visits and communion. Thanks to all for the many cards and phone calls I received during my recovery. I enjoyed the beautiful poinsettia and WELCA flowers.

Thanks to Bill Nienstedt, Mary and Tim Gotwald for the Christmas Caroling and visit. It lifts you up!

Love you all,
Marilyn

THANK YOU

Dear First,

Thank you so much for thinking of me and giving me a Christmas gift. You make me feel very appreciated.

Love,



Thank you to all for their prayers, cards and well wishes after my surgery.

You all provided such uplift and support.

Thank you!
Joyce Ray

Dear First Lutheran Church,

We are so thankful to be part of such a wonderful church. We feel blessed by God and each of you as well. Thank you to the congregation for the \$100 Christmas gift to our family as well as to the other employees at First. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.

Pastor Jane & Mark Nicholson

On behalf of the Emergency Clearing house Fund of the United Churches of the Chambersburg Area, I would like to thank you for your very generous donation of \$5,000. It will go a long way to ensure that those in need of help and are struggling during these difficult times will have funds available for necessities.

We are so very thankful for our support of this vital ministry in our area. May Gods blessings always be with our as you carry out His work.

Gratefully yours, Candice Wagner, Treasurer
Emergency Needs ClearinghouseFund

Dear First Lutheran Church:

Thank you for your financial gifts totaling \$200. These gifts were donated to the Lower

Susquehanna Synod, Chambersburg Conference Deans Fund.

This donation is being used to pay the rent for a conference furniture storage unit.

God's Work. Our hands.

The Rev. Jane Nicholson
Chambersburg Conference Dean



Dear Congregation,

We sincerely could not do this without you.

Because generous donors like you are willing to give out of their own pockets, WIN is able to serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in our community every single day.

From the bottom of our heart, we thank you for your selfless donation. With your \$1,000, WIN will continue in our commitment to help victims of sexual assault and domestic violence live a life free of abuse.

We, and the survivors we serve, sincerely appreciate your generosity.

Thank you!

Barbara A. Channing, Executive Director, Women In Need



HELPING HANDS

2024 Council

President: Joyce Ray
 Vice President: Marlin Maclay
 Secretary: Mary Beth McGraw-Warne
 Treasurer: Sally Herritt
 Pastor: Jane Nicholson
 Deacon: Freda Dorand
 Jeff Dorand
 Barb Evans
 Gerry Wilson
 Financial Secretary: Carol McCoy



February BIRTHDAYS

Nancy Shoop	2/2	Victoria L. Buselli	2/16
Spencer Hurst	2/3	Doris K. Feight	2/17
Kelci Depner	2/4	Alexis K. Rankin	2/18
John Huber	2/5	Alison Perry	2/18
Alex Buselli	2/10	Dawson McCoy	2/18
Lisa Sekel	2/10	Mary Beth Warne	2/19
Melodie Lensbower	2/10	Bob Wildeson	2/22
Diane V. Boock	2/12	Pat Dent	2/24
Gloria Hammond	2/12	Tara Savary	2/27

PRAYER CHAIN

May we include you in our prayers? Do you have a prayer need that we can help you with? If so, please call our prayer chain group leader:

Marcia Hunt @
 717-263-0781

Names are kept on the prayer chain for 1 month. After that month, please contact the office again if you would like to have a name on for another month.



TRANSPORTATION

Need a Ride?

Our church provides transportation to church on Sundays!

Please call if you need a ride. Church office: 717-264-2015



**Deadline for
 The March
 Newsletter
 will be
 February 15**

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

43 W. Washington Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
E-mail: felccoffice@gmail.com
Website: www.felcc.org

 @FirstEvangelicalLutheranChurch
 @felccyouth

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Church Office Hours
Monday-Thursday
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

CHURCH OFFICE	717-264-2015
Parish Administrator	ext. 1
Director of Music	ext. 3
Pastor	ext. 4

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BUZZ JONES SEXTET

Join us on Sunday, February 4 at 10:45 a.m.
for a unique Jazz Worship Service with the
emphasis being on our Epiphany Season of Light.
The Buzz Jones Sextet was with us in December
of 2022 and we are excited about their return.
Please invite your friends and neighbors.