

# Ministry Matters

- in the congregation and beyond -

## SUPPLY PASTORS FOR MARCH:

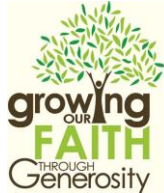
**March 4** - The Rev. Richard Bardo  
**March 11** - The Rev. Brenda Boyer  
**March 18** - The Rev. John Hazel  
**March 25** - The Rev. Paul Schoffstall  
**March 29** - The Rev. David Kistler



**“SOUPER” BOWL GIVING:** Thank you for your generous food donations to the Valley Food Pantry; we also had monetary donations to the Hunger Appeal of \$ 89.00.

And to just make this known, most of the monetary donations were placed in the Philadelphia Eagles soup pot! I think maybe that was a definite premonition of the outcome of the Super Bowl!

~ Melody Hinderer, WHHA



**CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR:** Our Learning Ministry Team is currently holding a Spring Book Fair. The fair is sponsored by Sparkhouse Family, now rebranded as Beaming Books. They publish high quality children's books, which are aimed to help children thrive emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Several of these award-winning books are on display in the St. Stephen's Room. The book fair also helps support our youth educational program. Our Learning Ministry Team gets to retain all the books on display, and they also receive a percentage of the proceeds from each book that is purchased. The book fair will continue through **Sunday, March 11.**



**EASTER TRIBUTES:** Forms for this year's Easter Tributes are available in this month's newsletter and in the church narthex.

Tributes, in celebration of Our Savior and Risen Lord and in honor or memory of loved ones, can be given in the form of *Easter flowers* that will decorate the church nave on Easter Sunday and/or in the form of a monetary donation to benefit *Divine Providence*, a shelter in Hazleton serving the homeless in our community. The deadline for placing an order for flowers is March 25.



**VALLEY FOOD PANTRY EASTER COLLECTION:** The Valley Interfaith Food Pantry is preparing for the Easter boxes to be given to the local families served by this ministry.



Several local churches participate in this call to serve others, each being asked to donate a specific food offering. This year, St. John's has been asked to provide **60 cans of pineapple**. Coffee and Easter candy would also be appreciated.

The deadline for collecting these items is **Sunday, March 18.** Items can be placed on the designated table in the narthex. Thank you, in advance, for your support in reaching this goal.

**MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES:** If you have not yet done so, please consider adding a midweek Lenten service to your Lenten discipline. This year, St. John's is working with St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mountain Top to provide both our members the opportunity to worship at the time of the day that works best for your schedule. Midweek Lenten services will be offered at St. Paul's Lutheran at 11:00 a.m. each Wednesday (followed by a luncheon) and an evening service will be offered at St. John's at 7:00 p.m. The same service will be offered at both locations by Pastor Kaufman. Should you place your offering envelopes into the plate, your envelopes will be returned to the appropriate church. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity. We look forward to having you join us.

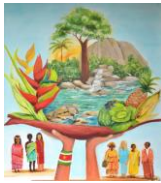


The Hands of Christ- Wednesday, February 21st  
The Eyes of Christ- Wednesday, February 28  
The Mouth of Christ- Wednesday, March 7th  
The Ears of Christ- Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>  
The Feet of Christ – Wednesday, March 21st

**LENTEN DEVOTIONS:** As in the past, you are invited to receive daily devotions that will help you reflect on God's role in your life and challenge you to follow in his example. Hard copies will be made available or you can receive them via email or on Pastor's personal or St. Paul's church Facebook page. You are encouraged to share them as well.



**CWU – WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:** If you haven't signed up yet, you still have time! Church Women United's annual World Day of Prayer worship service is **Friday, March 2 at 2:00 p.m. at Providence Place in Drums**. This year's host country is Suriname, and the theme is *"All God's Creation is Very Good."* Suriname, a small country in South America, with the world's largest nature reserve located in the Amazon, is striving to bring awareness to the abuse of God's creation and invoke change. We are invited to join women in solidarity from all over the world in the effort to combat pollution, climate change, and the mistreatment of our animals and environment. We are all entrusted to care for and be good stewards of God's creation. Please consider attending this important prayerful event.



**ELCA "GOOD GIFTS" CHALLENGE:** We recognize that God calls on us to help others. During March and April, St. John's will answer that call through participation in the ELCA Good Gifts program. Beginning on **Sunday, March 4**, during Coffee Hour, we will partake in **Buck-A-Chick /Stock-A-Backpack**, ministries within the Good Gifts program, and continue this endeavor through the end of April.



Melody Hinderer has challenged our members to help "fill a backpack"; \$10 would provide a weekend's worth of food for a child to take home to his/her family. In exchange, Melody will match each backpack that is filled in order to double our efforts. We thank Melody for leading this effort; let's meet her challenge and fill as many backpacks as we can. For more information, please see Melody Hinderer's article in this month's newsletter.



**LITTLE BOY:** The 2015 film "Little Boy" will be shown in the church nave on **Friday, March 9 at 6:00 p.m.** If you would like to attend and need a ride, please phone Tara Kushner (788-4809). Little Boy is a powerful and moving film about a boy who is willing to do whatever it takes to end World War II, so his father can return home. It is a story of the indescribable love of a father for his son and of a son for his father. The movie stars Emily Watson, Michael Rapaport, Kevin James, and Tom Wilkinson. Rating: PG-13 Running Time: 1 hr 46 mins



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME:** The 2018 Daylight Saving Time begins on **Sunday, March 11**. Don't forget to turn your clocks forward!



**SHELTERING THE HOMELESS IN OUR COMMUNITY:** In February 2016, a program "Divine Providence," was created by Catholic Social Services in Hazleton to shelter the homeless in our local community.



Rooms are open daily to the homeless from 7:00 p.m. through 8:30 a.m. A warm meal is provided each night and a light breakfast each morning. The shelter is open to both male and female individuals ages 18 and older. (For those with children, Divine Providence works with an organization in Wilkes-Barre to facilitate shelter for the families.) Other services are also provided, from counseling and rehabilitation to employment services. Since its inception, Divine Providence has served over 300 individuals. Currently located on Laurel Street, the organization is renovating a building on Walnut Street for their services. This year, St. John's is joining in the community effort by helping to raise money for this important ministry through our Easter Tributes. What better way to do God's work, follow the example of Jesus, and give tribute in honor or memory of a loved one than by helping others?

**FEEDING THOUSANDS WHO HUNGER:** A non-profit organization known as "The Outreach Program" was created to provide safe water, food, medical



care and education to children and those in need both in the United States and abroad. The organization has helped to package more than 354 million meals to help those in need. Large scale Outreach Meal Packaging Events have been set up across the United States by businesses, schools, and churches. One such event is being held at **Christ Lutheran Church on March 17** and our church, among others, has been invited to participate. The first block of volunteer time begins at 9:30 a.m. and runs until 12:00 p.m. The second block of time begins at 1:00 p.m. and ends when the packages are completed. The packaging is set up like an assembly line. There is a sign-up sheet in the St. Stephen's Room for those wishing to help. The goal is to package as many meals as possible, with the hopes of helping to feed thousands of people.

**EASTER EGG HUNT:** The Youth Sunday School will hold an Easter Egg Hunt during class on **April 1, Easter Sunday**. Come and discover how Easter eggs can help teach the story of Jesus' resurrection.



**SHOO-FLY PIE BAKE:** Our Spring Shoo-fly Pie Bake is quickly approaching. This year, it will be held on **Monday, April 9 and Tuesday, April 10**. The proceeds from this annual fundraiser benefit the many ministries of St. John's LCW (Lutheran Church Women). These ministries have included: the Valley Interfaith Food Pantry, the American Red Cross, Brandon's Forever Home, and Beyond Violence Women's Shelter, just to name a few. All are invited and welcome to volunteer. Sign-up sheets to volunteer and to order pies will be available in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact Carol Crawford at 788-1361 or Arlene Poltrock at 788-3710. Thank you in advance for your support!



**"JESUS" – SIGHT & SOUND THEATRES:** Tickets are still available for the production of "Jesus" at Sight & Sound Theatres in Lancaster. A bus trip has been planned for members of St. John's and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mountain Top for **Saturday, June 16**. The cost is \$130 for adults and \$73 for children (12 and under), and that includes the cost of a ticket, bus fare, and dinner at Shady Maple. A \$50 deposit is required to reserve your seat; seating is first come, first served. Please register and hand in payments to Betty Kushner. Checks are to be made payable to *St. Paul's Lutheran Church*.



**REMINDERS:** LCW resumes this month. The first meeting will be held **Tuesday, March 6 at 1:00 p.m.** Please attend and be part of the decision-making pertaining to our outreach ministry work.



This month's Fritzingertown Senior Living worship service will be held **Monday, March 26 at 2:30 p.m.**

**SAVE THE DATE – SAUSAGE SUPPER:** Our annual Spring Sausage Supper will be held on **Saturday, May 5**.



## Holy Week and Easter Services



*Come Worship With Us!*

**Sunday, March 25: Palm Sunday/  
Sunday of the Passion**  
*[10:00 a.m. Service w/ Holy Communion]*



Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week and commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. He was welcomed by crowds waving and laying down their palms calling out, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven."

**Thursday, March 29: Maundy Thursday**  
*[7:30 p.m. Service w/ Holy Communion & Laying on of Hands]*



"Given for you..."

This evening we commemorate the Lord's Last Supper with his 12 disciples and celebrate His love expressed in giving himself in bread and wine. We receive forgiveness in the absolution and laying on of hands. The theme is *love* and we remember His commandment – to love one another "as He loved us." We then remember his betrayal, as the altar is stripped. We leave in silence without benediction.

**Friday, March 30: Good Friday**  
*[7:30 p.m. Tenebrae Service of Shadows]*



The Passion Story is read recalling the suffering and crucifixion of our Lord, while the lights are gradually dimmed and the candles are progressively extinguished until the only light remaining is the Christ Candle. Finally, the Christ Candle is removed from the sanctuary and we are reminded that Jesus died and took the punishment for our sins.

**Sunday, April 1: Easter Sunday/  
Resurrection of the Lord**  
*[10:00 a.m. Festival Service w/ Holy Communion]*



Easter marks the end of Holy Week and celebrates the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!