

*A publication to encourage and motivate participation in the family of God and an aid in ministry for the members of Myerstown United Church of Christ.*

**March 2020**

**Volume 39, Issue 3**



*The Vineyard*

### *Paul's Epistle*

Welcome and hospitality are such important aspects of life that seem to have fallen by the wayside in our society, especially in church organizations. It is no small part of the significant decline in membership of religious organizations across the board that our nation has experienced. I am so glad that welcome and hospitality have not been forgotten here at Myerstown UCC. My family and I have experienced such a warm welcome, and such hospitality, that I need to begin my epistle this month with my warmest thanks. I pray we will continue to practice hospitality, honing and expanding our skills, because there are many who are in need of that kind of welcome from

a loving, Christ-centered, community. Thank you for being a warm and welcoming Community!!

Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup> is the first Sunday of Lent. And as you may have heard at the Ash Wednesday Service, the theme for Lent is REPENT. Now that may seem like a pretty heavy theme to start out, it may even seem rather dreadful. But what I mean by Repent is its more literal translation. Literally, Repent means to STOP moving in the direction one is moving in, to TURN AROUND, and to START MOVING IN A NEW DIRECTION. In terms of Scriptural context, to repent is to stop doing that thing which is destructive to our relationship with God, or destructive to ourselves or others, to turn from that behavior and to follow a path that is guided by the God who loves us.

This pattern is repeated throughout our scriptural heritage. From the very beginning with the second creation story, to King David and his behavior surrounding another man's wife, to the people of Israel being called to repent of...just about everything. What they were being called by God to turn away from was darkness and despair and called to turn and approach the gentle light of peace, joy and hope.

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We will be exploring several examples of this turning in repentance from narratives from the Hebrew scriptures, the epistles and from the gospels. I have provided the main text from each sermon for the month of March along with a brief description of the theme. I invite you to read over those scriptures and discover what they mean to you before we share them together in Worship. I believe that you have called me to work with you to allow God to help us to turn around from decline, and even some despair and move in a new direction, guided by God, to light, joy and a renewed vision of positively impacting the lives of members of this community and the surrounding areas. I pray that this Lenten Journey will be a good beginning, and we will Journey with God.

The naming of each Sunday has some reminders of what is coming up. We hope you will note the time change on the 8<sup>th</sup>, One Great Hour of Sharing all church offering on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and of course St. Patrick's Sunday, on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when it would be a wonderful thing if you would join me in wearing green...just for fun.

I'm looking forward to a meaningful Lenten season together as we move toward the events in Jerusalem, culminating in an empty cross and the Joy of Resurrection!

Richest Blessings,  
*Pastor Paul*



## *March Worship*

### **March 1 Communion Sunday**

Sermon: "When In Doubt"  
Text: Matthew 4:1-11

The way in which Jesus deals with temptation enlightens and guides us when we think about temptation in our own lives.

### **March 8 Time Change Sunday**

Sermon: "From Above"  
Text: John 3:1-17

This narrative begins with the Pharisee, Nicodemus, sneaking to see Jesus under the cover of darkness, and ends with the best known of all scripture verses.

### **March 15 St. Patrick's Sunday**

Sermon: "Hope Does Not Disappoint"  
Text: Exodus 7:1-17

Squeezing water from a rock,  
Literally!!!!!!!

### **March 22 OGHS Sunday**

Sermon: "Blind Faith"  
Text: John 9:1-41

Although it is long, please read this amazing faith narrative from John's Gospel. So filled with depth, power and meaning!!!

### **March 29**

### **Spring Has Sprung Sunday**

Sermon: "It Brought Tears to  
Jesus' Eyes"  
Text: John 11:1-45

We are never alone when something brings tears to our eyes, whether good or bad. Our God understands because through Jesus, our God has experienced the same thing.



# Month of March

- 3 Jennifer Kinsey  
Carolyn Williams
- 17 Patrick Krum
- 18 Marcia Bicher  
Charles Williams

Is your name *missing* from the Birthday list? Please add your birthdate to the "Birthday Board" on the Information Table. Or contact the church office by email [myertownucc@comcast.net] or by phone [717.866.5252]. We will be delighted to add your date to our celebration list.

## Prayer Requests

*If you don't tell us, we won't know.*

- Nancy Brown
- Rosene Duffy
- Jewel Fessler
- Linda Feaser
- Joanne Frantz
- Suzanne Fritsch
- Ellen Goodyear
- Bill Gracely
- James Haines
- Linda Herr
- Rosalla Hollenbach
- Russ Kahl
- Joyce Mitstifer
- Steve Norford
- Heather & Elvin Perez
- Bernadette Petzinger
- Ruthann Snoke
- Ralph Woynarowski



- 7 Marie Hibshman
- 10 Eleanor Schnoke
- 15 Annamarie Behm
- 19 Angie Bicher
- 25 Susan Herr
- 27 Elwood Schnoke
- 28 Ellen Goodyear



# from Julius Muthengi

Dear Prayer Partners,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Agnes and I count it a great privilege to have you as our friends and partners in the ministry. I trust all is well with you as it is with us. As many of you know, our friend Jack Reed and his wife (when she was alive,) have played a major role in our lives and ministry over the years. Each time I visited the US the Reeds were my hosts. Also, when friends send gifts to help us Jack has made sure that these gifts are sent to us in order to help supplement what comes through Campus Crusade for Christ. As I have mentioned in the past, our support level is still a little over 70%. Out of this amount, Campus Crusade takes 12%, and when the money reaches here, 30% goes towards the government tax, leaving with very little to live on!

Let me now share with you a critical prayer need. As I plan to visit friends in the US next year Lord willing I need a host person/family and church, especially

during my stay in Pennsylvania. Our friend Jack has been facing health and other challenges. Besides, his age is quite advanced and he cannot continue doing what he has been doing for us any longer. He is, however, willing to help sending gifts to us which come through him (and also his church for those who need tax deduction receipts). I know all what I wanted to communicate with you may not be clear through this e-mail!. My request is that you pray for this need, and if the Lord leads you to help me or us in this matter, I suggest that you write to me for any further clarification. You can also call our friend Jack at 717-365-3272 (home) or 717-439-8742 (cell). Thank you so much beloved for your willingness to stand with us in this ministry. I will be writing to you regarding my visit to the US Lord willing in the next one month or so. God bless you.

Your friend in Christ,

Julius



THE GREAT HOUR  
OF SHARING



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

**OGHS Offering to be received  
on Sunday March 22nd**

**Invest in Futures! Give to OGHS!**



# Community Meal

The monthly community meals resume in March.

March 12th: 4:-6 pm

Ham, noodles with brown butter, broccoli salad, dessert, coffee & tea.

April 9th: 4:-6 pm

**This date was originally the 16th;  
it has been changed to coincide with Maundy Thursday.**

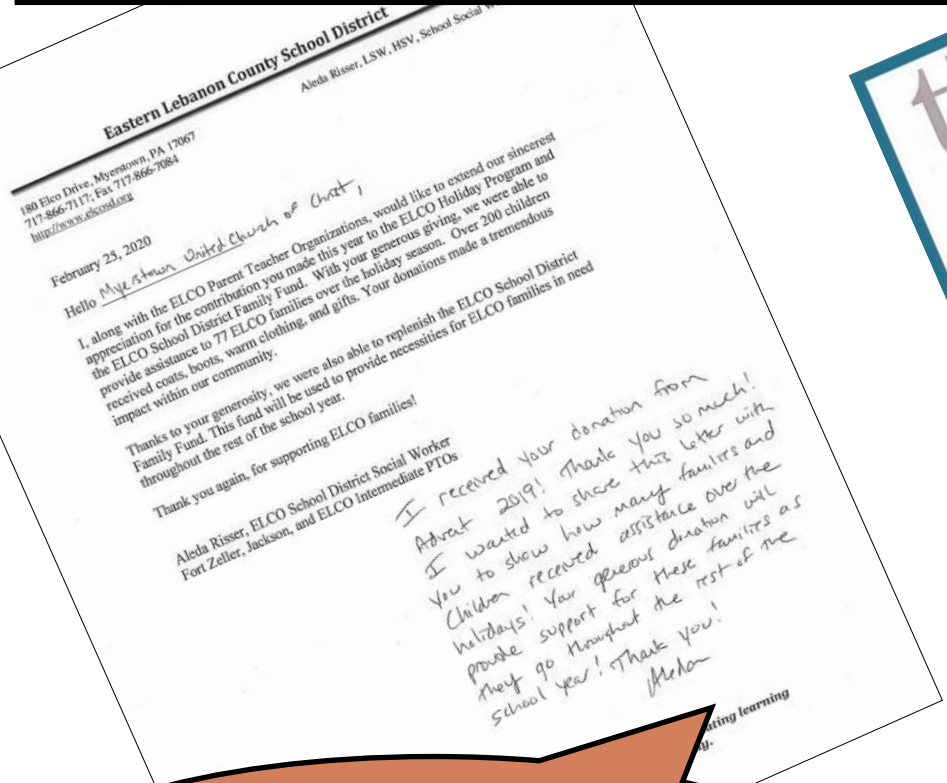
Baked chicken, filling, broccoli salad, dessert, hot beverages.

May 14th: 4:-6 pm

Swiss steak, potatoes, corn, corn bread, dessert, hot



On Aug 9th, 2019 I celebrated my 50th wedding anniversary. On November 9th I lost it in the Giant parking lot. Your generous thank you gift for my short time as Bridge Pastor will allow me to get one I like. You see, I only want to pay now what I paid in 1969!  
Blessings, Jim



*I received your donation from Advent 2019! Thank you so much! I wanted to share this letter with you to show how many families and children received assistance over the holidays! Your generous donation will provide support for these families as they go through the rest of the school year! Thank you!  
Aleda*

**We sent \$200 from the Joy to the World Ornament sale to the ELCO Family Fund. This response identifies the number of students / families that were by us and others.**





LEBANON COUNTY CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

# 2020 LENTEN BREAKFAST

Saturday, March 28, 2020  
8-10 am  
Tickets: \$15  
Cedar Crest Middle School  
101 E. Evergreen Road, Lebanon

This annual breakfast buffet will be held on Saturday, March 28th, in the Cedar Crest Middle School cafetorium. The speaker is Steve Sabol, community pastor of Lifeway Church, Lebanon. Musical entertainment is by Celebrate Recovery Praise Team band, Church of the Good Shepherd, Lebanon. Tickets are \$15; please contact Carolyn Williams for tickets. The last day to order tickets is Friday, March 20th. Seating is limited, and no tickets will be sold at the door. Please consult the bulletin board in the Gathering Area for additional information. This is a unique opportunity to experience ecumenical worship within Lebanon County. Remember: **no tickets sold at the door.**



February 6, 2020  
Myerstown United Church of Christ  
306 West Main Avenue  
Myerstown, PA 17067

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your gift in support of the ministry of theological education at Lancaster Seminary.

Your gift provides support for Lancaster Seminary's mission "to educate and nurture leaders to join God's redemptive and liberating work so that all creation may flourish." We seek to bring a gifted and dedicated faculty, committed and called students, and supporting churches, organizations, and friends into a vibrant community of faith.

The support you provide with your prayers and your gifts opens the doors for our students' education, opens their minds to learning, and opens their hearts to serving.

In Christ,  
*Elizabeth Bennett*  
Elizabeth Bennett  
Vice President of Operations and Finance

*Thank you so very much!*

Received: 02/06/2020 \$250.00 \*Annual Fund

Many Opportunities

Conversational  
Worship-time Nursery  
Faith Formation Leader-Helper  
Altar Flower Sponsor  
Church Council  
Elder

Where do you fit in?



# Worship Assistants



**Mar 1**

**8:00 am Open:** Cal Beamesderfer, **Greeter:** Lindy Bennetch,  
**Worship Leader:** Wanda Rabold, **Communion:** Jackie Shaak, Sue Harvey

**10:00 am Greeters:** Ted & Carol Batdorff, **Sound:** Paulie McQuate,

**Worship Leaders:** Kristi Fields, Darryl Brown

**Nursery Care:** Angie, Gabby & Gavin Bicher

**Ushers:** Doug, Stephanie & Braden Bohannon, Kenny Patrick

**Communion:** Doug, Stephanie & Braden Bohannon, Dave & Jen Blystone

**Counting Team:** Ted & Carol Batdorff, Darryl Brown



**Mar 8**

**8:00 am Open:** Mark Herr, **Greeter:** Nancy Weaber,

**Worship Leader:** Wanda Rabold

**10:00 am Greeters:** Ed & Candy Hibshman, **Sound:** Paulie McQuate,

**Worship Leader:** Margo McQuate, **Nursery Care:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ushers:** Travis, Angie, Gabby, & Gavin Bicher, Kenny Patrick

**Counting Team:** Marie Hibshman, Kathy Grose, Charles & Carolyn Williams



**Mar 15**

**8:00 am Open:** Marcia Bicher, **Greeter:** Nancy Weaber,

**Worship Leader:** Wanda Rabold

**10:00 am Greeters:** Pat & Trudy Yeager, **Sound:** Bob Dash,

**Worship Leader:** Sally Kulp, **Nursery Care:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ushers:** Jeff, Holly, Hannah, Jared, & Leah Rosen, Kenny Patrick

**Counting Team:** Sara Zeller, Sally Kulp



**Mar 22**

**8:00 am Open:** Fritz Firestine, **Greeter:** , Terry, Teresa, & Christine Wolfe

**Worship Leader:** Wanda Rabold

**10:00 am Greeters:** Terry & Suzie Schott, **Sound:** Bob Dash,

**Worship Leaders:** Charles & Carolyn Williams, **Nursery Care:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ushers:** Ed & Candy Hibshman, Terry & Suzie Schott, Kenny Patrick

**Counting Team:** Ed & Candy Hibshman, Terry & Suzie Schott



**Mar 29**

**8:00 am Open:** Ed Hibshman, **Greeter:** Shirley Krall,

**Worship Leader:**

**10:00 am Greeter:** Dawn Hassler, **Sound:** Bob Dash,

**Worship Leader:** Steve & Marianne Fritsch,

**Nursery Care:** Gia & Camilla Zimmerman

**Ushers:** Kory & Ryan Leppo, Bob Dash, Kenny Patrick

**Counting Team:** Ed & Candy Hibshman, Terry & Suzie Schott

[April 5th Worship Assistants on the next page.]

## Worship Assistants for Palm Sunday

**8:00 am** Open: Cal Beamesderfer, **Greeter:** Lindy Bennetch,  
**Worship Leader:** Wanda Rabold, **Communion:** Jackie Shaak, Sue Harvey  
**10:00 am** **Greeters:** Ted & Carol Batdorff, **Sound:** Paulie McQuate,  
**Worship Leader:** Doug Bohannon, **Nursery Care:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ushers:** Travis, Angie, Gabby, & Gavin Bicher, Kenny Patrick  
**Communion:** Suzie Wartluft, Travis, Angie, Gabby, & Gavin Bicher  
**Counting Team:** Ted & Carol Batdorff, Darryl Brown



## Afterthoughts

During my tenure as Bridge Pastor, there were many thoughts and ideas that moved [sometimes quickly] through my brain! Decisions were made to write this now and save others until later. Well, I guess later has come & gone.

One of the thoughts I encountered early in this ministry was a statement made by Rev Dr Carrie Call, our Conference President. At the Lebanon Association Fall Meeting. She said, "The church is like a mosaic." As she went on to interpret these words, my mind went with her and then sped ahead.

To me, a mosaic is many different shapes, sizes, colors, and media that come together and make a recognizable picture or exquisite design. The artist is able fashion and refashion all the elements that works well together.

Every person who is part of the Myerstown UCC community has been entrusted with gifts. Our skill sets are very different. You certainly don't want me to try and fix a broken screen. I can bake a cake — maybe better than some and worse than others. So while someone else is repairing the screen, I can make lunch, and you can organize closet as another is playing the guitar.

There are two questions that come to my mind. 1. What gifts and skill are hiding in the congregation? 2. Once we know what they are, how can we put them to the best use?

Paul [the apostle!] said that we are members of one body. The leg has its importance; at the same time, the leg isn't better than the ear or the hand. It's like a mosaic. It takes everyone to come together and become an exquisite design. Our Artist has endowed and entrusted us, Let's bring all the shapes and sizes and colors and media together. NOW!

Blessings—Jim





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
Holy Communion	8:30 am Strong Bones	6:30 pm Church Council	6:30 pm Troop 20	8:30 am Strong Bones		
8am Worship	7:00 pm Women's Club			9:30 am Piano Tuning all day		
8:45 am Faith Formation				1:30 pm Women's Bible Study		
10 am Worship						
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
8am Worship	8:30 am Strong Bones	9:30 am Piano Tuning	6:30 pm Troop 20	8:30 am Strong Bones		
8:45 am Faith Formation		6:30 pm Transition Team	7:30 pm Choir	9:00 am Community Meal Prep		
10 am Worship				4:00 pm Community Meal		
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
8am Worship	8:30 am Strong Bones	10:30 Leb Assoc	6:30 pm Troop 20	8:30 am Strong Bones		1:00 pm New Horizons
8:45 am Faith Formation	9:30 am Staff Meeting	Ministerium @ Christ, Annville	7:30 pm Choir	1:30 pm Women's Bible Study		
10 am Worship						
11 am Personnel						
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
8am Worship	8:30 am Strong Bones	10:00 am Elders	6:30 pm Troop 20	8:30 am Strong Bones		2:00 pm Social Hall
8:45 am Faith Formation	6:30 pm WST					Reserved
10 am Worship						
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				
8am Worship	8:30 am Strong Bones					
8:45 am Faith Formation						
10 am Worship						

