

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain me with your bountiful  
Spirit. (Psalm 51:10-12)*

✝ At the beginning of Lent, on Ash Wednesday, we receive a cross of ashes on our brow and hear these words: *Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return.*

The cross of ashes reminds us we share a common humanity with Adam and Eve. Though they were created good, as God deemed all of God's creation when finished, the first human beings rebelled against God. They became full of sinful rebellion, wanting to do and be what they wanted, not trusting that God had provided everything they needed, but tempted into thinking God was withholding something from them. If they just get that, if they could just have and know everything like God, then they would be even better off. They disobeyed and distrusted the word of God.

The cross of ashes on our brow reminds us that just like our first human siblings, we rebel against God; we disobey and distrust God's word. We too are tempted into thinking we can get on in this life by our own power and knowledge. *But, deep down, we know.* We know how the realities of sin, evil and death make us vulnerable to the corruption of God's good creation. We know the reality of our human mortality and frailty and finitude. We know

that we cannot go it alone and fix ourselves or this world by our own human power and knowledge. *Deep down, we know that we need God.*

So, as we enter the season of Lent, marked with the cross of Christ, we might attend to the exhortation of the prophet Joel (2:12-13): *“Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment.”*

Dear people, hear God calling us to turn around, to acknowledge that we need God to take away our sin, to create in us a clean heart and a right spirit, and to give us purpose and mission. We need God with *God’s* divine power and knowledge to hear our cries of repentance, to forgive us our sin, to restore us to wholeness, goodness and newness of life again. All for the sake of being sent out into the world to bear God’s redeeming love and mercy into the world to our neighbor and to creation.

This is the cross-shaped journey of Lent. This is the cross-shaped journey of a life of faith.

A very blessed Lent and blessed journey to you all! - Pastor Kara

God forgives us all our sin!

We return to God and confess all our sin.

We praise and thank God by living generously & graciously towards neighbor and all

God creates in us a clean heart and right spirit.

# COUNCIL MINUTES

**Call to Order:** 02/16/2026 6:36 pm by Brian Gesalman, Congregation President

**Attendance:** Pastor Kara Propst, Andrea Territ, Andrew King, Brian Gesalman, Jenny Luffy, Jack Gesalman, Amy Donahue, Greg Bittner, Kathy Wolfe. **Absent:** Linda Harbaugh, Dennis Clawson, Jim Stewart, Diane (Dee) Salentino

**Devotions:** Greg Bittner

**Accept Agenda:** Motion to accept agenda with the addition of newsletter discussion and the rescinding of “Sunrise Service Easter”. Made by Andrea, seconded by Jenny and approved.

**Communications:** Brian invited council members to attend training at St. John’s in Pittsburgh to be held next Saturday as sponsored by the synod. RSVP due today. Revisited mounted heaters not working in the sanctuary. Amy volunteered that Tim had turned them off at the breaker. Issue remains unresolved.

## Officer reports

Pastor’s Report accepted as presented. Pastor Propst now has a lot of people to visit. May see each individual every 2.5 months unless there’s a need to see earlier. Discussed the date of council installation with at least two members away. Date to be determined.

Motion to approve the January minutes with an amendment to show Barb’s last name as “Terek”. Made by Jenny, seconded by Andrew and approved.

Motion to accept Treasurer/Finance reports by Amy and seconded by Andrea. Discussed Property Escrow expenses. Increased snow plowing causing the deficit. Motion approved.

## Committee Reports

A. Christian Education—Vacation Bible School scheduled for the week of June 22-25.

B. Community Fellowship—Chili Cook-off was a success with 8 chili makers and a net profit of over \$500.

## OLD BUSINESS

A. Church Organist Hiring/Contracts—Nancy Flinner and Greg met with Ronna, the organist from Salem Lutheran Church. Plan is to have Cara Remaley play two Sundays a month and Ronna the other two Sundays. Cara will rehearse all music with the choir before the Sunday service. This will begin after Easter for a trial period. Will need to determine who will be playing for weddings, funerals, and special services. The Worship and Music Committee to meet with Pastor Kara to determine wording for the contracts to be written by Personnel.

B. Church Anniversary 2027 Planning Committee Meeting—scheduled for March 1st at 7 pm. Anyone welcome to attend.

C. Payroll Direct Deposit—The Treasurer and Finance Chair met and discussed. To set up an appointment with First National Bank to determine cost, etc.

D. Parish Council—Linda Turchetta will be representing the congregation, Bill Benton the Finance Committee and Kathy Wolfe the Congregation Council. Feedback from the congregation regarding our partnership with Salem Lutheran in Delmont can be brought to any of these individuals.

E. Contract with Precision Copy Company—meeting held with the Treasurer, Finance Committee chair and the Precision Copy Company. Rocking Horse Preschool can be tied in and the copy machine is compatible with Apple. New company will take care of removing the old machine. Motion to enter into a contract with Precision Copy Company beginning in March or April at a cost of approximately \$300 per month. Made by Jack and seconded by Andrea. Approved.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

A Lenten Soup Dinner Committee Signup—All Wednesdays in Lent have a committee and soup maker. Amy has agreed to make soup for Worship and Music in addition to another Wednesday.

B. Looking for Grant Writers for church maintenance projects—Kathy learned that the Lutheran Church in Trauger received a grant to replace their stained glass windows. Also spoke to Mike Sullivan at Salem to determine how to possibly work with Scott Electric regarding the replacement of lights in the social room. Mike agreed to provide a name of someone to contact.

C. Mission Support for 2026—this is in regard to Good Shepherd's church wide apportionment to the synod. To be signed and forwarded.

D. Rocking Horse Preschool yard sign—Andrea presented a picture of a sign requested by the preschool to place in the church yard. Motion to approve the sign made by Andrea and seconded by Andrew. Approved.

E. Scouts/Cleanup after meetings—discussed updating the agreements between the church and each of the scout groups meeting at the church. Kathy has agreed to speak with Matt Fisher and the Wednesday night leader about cleanup.

F. Newsletter—several council leaders concerned that the newsletters are not being read. Rachel to be asked to put a blurb in the bulletin and the newsletter to say that there are three ways to receive newsletter information—it can be mailed, read online and picked up in the commons area or church office. If you would like to change the way you receive the newsletter, please contact Rachel in the church office. No action necessary if you do not want to change.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion made to close made by Jenny and seconded by Kathy and approved. Closed with the Lord's Prayer. Next meeting is March 16, 2026.

## Wednesdays in Lent at Good Shepherd

**Soup Supper: 6pm**  
**Lent Devotion: 7pm**

The church invented Lent with Easter and baptism in mind. From the very beginning, Lent was not about small stuff. Lent has aimed to place us in the center of it all: the crucified and risen Christ, our identity given in baptism. Lent is a yearly invitation deeper into the heart of Christianity. Like Jesus did with Nicodemus, he beckons us toward the reign of God through a new birth by “water and Spirit.” (*From Worship Guidebook: for Lent and the Three Days, Augsburg Fortress, 2009, p, 38*)

Lent devotion on Wednesday nights will focus our attention on baptismal identity in Christ. We are people who consider all things — God, ourselves, others, daily life, etc. — through the lens of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus — so that we too may walk in newness of life with him, not only in our Lent pilgrimage but in earthly pilgrimage.

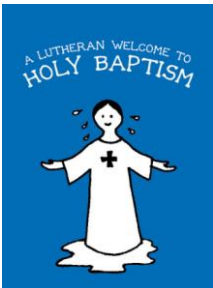
**Feb 25: God comes to us**

**Mar 4: God speaks**

**Mar 11: Jesus makes trouble**

**Mar 18: Everything is a gift**

**Mar 25: This is all going someplace.**



We will use a *Lutheran Welcome to Holy Baptism* to guide our devotion.

If you would like a copy, use the sign-up sheet at church or call the church office.

**All Are Welcome!**

**Holy Week in the Parish**  
*Mark your calendar. Set a reminder.*



**Palm Sunday, March 29**

8:30am Salem

11am Good Shepherd

**Maundy Thursday, April 2**

Good Shepherd, 7pm

**Good Friday, April 3**

Salem, 7pm

**Vigil of Easter, April 4**

Greensburg Cluster Churches & Clergy

Good Shepherd, 7pm

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**Easter Sunday Worship in the Parish**

**8:30am at Salem**

**11am at Good Shepherd**



Come and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior,  
Jesus Christ!

***He is Risen!***  
***He is Risen, indeed!***



Don't want to miss out on events & interested in joining the youth group!?

Contact: Rachel King 724-454-6476

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**March**

**1<sup>st</sup>- 9:45AM**

**8<sup>th</sup>- NO Sunday School**

**15<sup>th</sup>- 9:45AM**

**22<sup>nd</sup>- 9:45AM**

**29<sup>th</sup>- 9:45AM**



Chili Cook Off had a great turnout!

Congrats to the winners

1<sup>st</sup> Place- Tracy Baker

2<sup>nd</sup> Place- Kathy Wolfe

Thank you to all who braved the cold to come out and participate in this FUN event!

Join Us in 2027 for our Soup Cook Off!



Lenten offering envelopes are available in the Commons Area on the table. Please return in the offering plate. If you would like to mail in a Lenten offering, please indicate on envelope and check that it is for Lent and include your offering envelope #. All Lenten monies will be divided between Good Shepherd Food Pantry, West Point Volunteer Fire Department & Westmoreland County Food Bank.

# Community Fellowship Upcoming Events



**Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 12:00PM-**

Lunch with the Bunny

Adult Cost-\$8.00

12 & Under- FREE

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**April 25<sup>th</sup> -Alice in Wonderland Party- More Info Coming**

**June -Rainforest Falls VBS- Date TBD/More Info Coming**

**June 13<sup>th</sup> -Community Yard Sale**

**July -Christmas in July**

**September -Chicken BBQ Date TBD**

**October 16<sup>th</sup> -Trunk or Treat**

**December 4<sup>th</sup> -Light Up Night**

(\*All activities are tentative & subject to change\*)



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church



[www.goodshepherdgbg.org](http://www.goodshepherdgbg.org)

*Good Shepherd Lutheran Church*

# Lunch *with* *the* Bunny

Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>

\$8.00/Adult • Kids 12 & under FREE  
*Scan the QR below to register online by March 15*

Lunch Served promptly at 12:15  
Easter Bunny Will Arrive at 12:30



Questions? Call the Church Office  
at 724-834-1940





# Hot Dog Sunday

Join us for Hot Dog Sunday! On the last Sunday of every month\* gather in the Social Room following the 10:30am service. Enjoy a toppings bar, chips, side, and a drink with your hot dog!

\*Excluding November, December, June, July & August.

## *News & Announcements*

The deadline for the April Newsletter is March 16<sup>th</sup>.



### **Find the cross (+)**

In each monthly Newsletter there will be a hidden cross (+) that can be found in one of the articles! If you find, please turn in where it was found including page # and article found in with your name & number on a piece of paper. At the end of each month, all who turn in will be entered into a monthly drawing to win a prize!

In order to be entered your slip must be turned into office into container labeled

Find the cross by the  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday** of the month.



**Congratulations to our February winner**

**Mary Ann McMurtrie**

\*The cross was located on page 8...Bonus cross 2

**Women's meeting & BGS (Books, Games & Scriptures)**  
**Sun., Mar. 8<sup>th</sup> 12:30 - ?**

All women are invited to pack your own lunch and stay for an afternoon of fun (& business)! If you'd like, bring any book(s) you might want to share with the group. Then lend & borrow for a nice spring read. We'll be discussing plans for the next couple months and your input is greatly appreciated. **We will be choosing the menu for our annual May dinner. So please come and vote for your favorite.** Then as time allows, we'll have some laughs and play a game or 2.

Contact Karen Gesalman at 724-309-2667 with any questions.



Annual May Dinner will be held  
**Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

**2026 Designated Outreach is Reagan's Journey.**

When Reagan was born with a brain injury in 2008, her family had to figure out how to acquire the proper equipment to help her thrive. When she outgrew those items, no one would take them back but they had so much life left in them. That's when, in 2012, her family decided to start a free pediatric closet where families, caregivers, agencies, and hospitals could help the children they serve get equipment they desperately needed without waiting upwards of 6 months and navigating through insurance denials and appointment wait times. Custom equipment is best, but no child should have to wait to sit, stand, and walk. Often, insurance will only cover ONE piece of equipment every 3-5 years.

This is a hardship for families when children experience growth spurts and developmental changes. Reagan's Journey accepts gently used pediatric durable medical equipment and unused medical supplies. The items are sanitized and redistributed to children in need. Equipment donations come from local durable medical equipment companies, therapists and therapy facilities, special education schools, families, caregivers, and grant funds. Anyone in PA, surrounding states and even Canada, who is caring for a child with special needs and is willing to make the trip can schedule an appointment to have access to the items. Each week 10-15 families, caregivers and/or therapists visit. On average they serve 500 families per year. Since 2017, they have saved families over \$4 MILLION by giving them the supplies they need for their kids - for FREE! We are asked to help by donating to their Wish List:

- Monetary Donations: Their greatest need. It costs \$150 per family to operate the Reagan's Journey Closet. Financial support keeps it FREE. Please make checks payable to: SWPA Women of the ELCA & Designate to: Reagan's Journey  
Mail checks to: Janet Fishovitz 136 Clearwater Drive  
Ellwood City, PA 16117
- \$25 Gift Cards: Amazon, Walmart, Sheetz
- Baby Wipes
- Disposable Adult Bathing/Cleansing Wipes

Thank you for your donations and if anyone has any questions, please let me know.

**New nominees are needed for our 2027 Designated Outreach** which will be voted on at the May convention. If you have a favorite non-profit group that helps women &/or children, please provide them with an application to fill out and turn it in by April 1<sup>st</sup>. See the Friends Inc. newsletter or Karen for forms & more information

## **SWPA Women of the ELCA annual Convention**

**Fri., May 1<sup>st</sup> - Sat., May 2<sup>nd</sup>** will be held at Good Shepherd again this year. The theme is “From Memories to New Beginnings” to celebrate both our new SWPA president, Donna Petrel and our new SWPA Bishop, Melissa Stoller. We are planning to have some musicians for entertainment this year as well as some interesting speakers. Friday night sign-in will start at 6:00pm and we’ll wrap up for the evening around 9:00. Then we’ll pick up Saturday morning at 8, We’ll have worship with the bishop, conduct some business, have a wonderful overloaded baked potato lunch by Lynn’s Franks and wrap things up midafternoon. There will be an opportunity to shop the Equal Exchange products and visit with each other. **We are in need of someone willing to be a delegate & cast their votes to represent our church.** If you are interested in doing this, please let Karen know and our group will pay your way. *We also need other volunteers but please be aware you need to register to attend.* Registration is \$20 plus \$8 for Saturday lunch. Registration forms and money are due by March 31<sup>st</sup>. There are grants available for help with the cost which must be applied for by March 31<sup>st</sup>. See the SWPA website under ministries/welca in the Friends Inc newsletter for more details and registration forms or contact Karen and she will be happy to answer questions & provide you with forms.

### **Save the dates:**

**July 16-19, 2026 Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering in Des Moines, IA**

**Sept. 25-27, 2026 SWPA & NWP A Retreat at Camp Lutherlyn**

# ATTENTION MEALS ON WHEELS COOKIE BAKERS



**Homemade or Store Bought are welcome!** Please drop your cookies off **AT THE CHURCH.**

## MARCH

**COOKIE BAKERS (GROUP 3) Cookie Sunday is March 8, 2026.**

Doris Wood	Karen Gesalman
Dorothy Gesalman	Jill Hixson
Carol Clawson	Dixie Mowl

We are still collecting cookies for **Meals-on-Wheels**. At **180 meals per day, 5 days a week**, we get enough cookies for about **2 days**.

***New contributors are always welcome.***

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Need Girl Scout Cookies? Girls from Troop 27099 will be selling cookies after service **Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**! Already bought cookies and don't need anymore? Consider purchasing a box to + be donated! ALL donated boxes from this sale will go to **Meals on Wheels**. Cookies are \$6.00 per box.



2027 will mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Good Shepherd. We will be forming an Anniversary committee early 2026 to plan festivities to make this exciting milestone. We are also looking to do a new directory next year. If you are interested in being involved in either or both, please contact the church office! Come share your ideas to make this the best Anniversary yet!! **1<sup>st</sup> meeting will be held March 1<sup>st</sup> @ 7:00PM**

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Enrollment for Rocking Horse Preschool for the 2026-2027 year is OPEN for 3 Year Old & 4 Year Old Classes.

\*AM Classes fill quickly so register early\*



Preschool Class Portal  
(3 & Young 4 year olds)



Pre-K Class Portal  
(4 & 5 year olds)



SAVE THE DATE!  
Vacation Bible School  
June 22-25<sup>th</sup>

Blood Drive will be held at Good  
Shepherd on Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>  
12-5:30PM



**Just a  
reminder...**



There are 3 ways to receive your  
newsletter. Read Online  
([www.goodshepherdgbg.org](http://www.goodshepherdgbg.org)),  
Pick Up or Mailed. If at any time  
you would like to change how  
you receive yours, please contact  
the church office!

# Happy Birthday to:



## March

James Askey	(03/01)
Drezden Gesalman	(03/06)
Antonio Mariani	(03/08)
Deborah Sullenberger	(03/13)
Elaina Fearer	(03/15)
Alexander Ryan	(03/15)
Michele McMahan	(03/22)
Scott Meyers	(03/23)
Mary Ann McMurtrie	(03/24)
David Welsh	(03/27)
Darlene Fligger	(03/28)
Erin Hill	(03/30)
Betty Nagy	(03/30)
Beverly Sarp	(03/31)

(If we have missed your birthday, we do not have it in our records. Please help us update them. Thank you)

**PRAYER LIST - Our thoughts and prayers are with the following:**

**Good Shepherd Members:**

Tony Mariani  
Jackie Guhl  
Jane Elliott  
Val Pollock  
Erik Williams  
Mac McMurtrie  
Bill Ambrose  
Jerry Plummer  
Nancy Flinner  
John Strasser  
Chuck Ober  
Kay Wright  
Joy Stynchula

**Friends and relatives of the Good Shepherd family:**

Lauren Floyd  
Brian Murphy  
Janice Territ  
Gianna  
Chris Brinker  
Tobi Geyer  
Maxine Shroyer  
Bob Neumann  
Elaine Grace  
Kevin Ober  
Silas Howells  
Maria Meyers  
David Beistel

**Those in care facilities:**

**Redstone Highlands:** Donna Sheridan, Dorothy Stewart

**Mt. View Senior Care:** Carole Bridges

**Woodcrest Senior Living Community:** George Billig

**Those in the Service**

**NATIONAL GUARD**

Spencer Geohrig

**NAVY:**

Derek Leach

We pray for the safety of all military personnel and their families and give thanks to God for their service to our nation.

We welcome names for the Good Shepherd prayer list. Names will appear on the list for one month unless we are contacted to keep them longer. Thank you.

# SPRING

## WORD SEARCH

E V F B U N N Y S B V X R Y A D V B C V  
 G N G L F Q N E S T Q R C H I C K N B W  
 G R K Z O F O M Y F G A P B I R D S U D  
 S R A I N W K T A N P I H E W J S P T B  
 F L J R T T E D X G O N U D T U G I T P  
 B A D D G E C R Z G R B L E L A B C E E  
 Z C I A F N S U S A N O J I T O N N R J  
 M G A F A Y P V E R Z W W I Q T H I F M  
 Q K W F E N H G L D S E E D S T U C L K  
 K N W O I K V P K E M Q F T D Y T L Y A  
 V Q Q D V H W L F N B L O S S O M X I S  
 A M N I A P L A N T S U A H Q L L P W P  
 X S O L W E J O U T D O O R S U E L U L  
 O J G R E E N D X G G J M X L P M A X T  
 H F P C D A J K E A S T E R N J E Y F B  
 Y I W E T K N W A R M A F H E I U G L J

WARM  
 RAINBOW  
 BIRDS  
 BUNNY  
 NEST  
 CHICK

GARDEN  
 EGGS  
 GREEN  
 PLANTS  
 BUTTERFLY  
 EASTER

PICNIC  
 TULIP  
 DAFFODIL  
 PLAY  
 BLOSSOM  
 LEAF

FLOWERS  
 GROW  
 OUTDOORS  
 RAIN  
 KITES  
 SEEDS