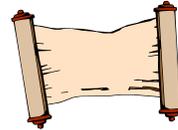


# Parish Parchment



The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish  
The Reverend Christine Kirchner, Pastor  
1558 Rock Glen Road  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9207  
March 2023

Return Service Requested



FIVEheartHOME

This newsletter is sent with a prayer for...

## The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish Newsletter

News and Information About Emanuel, Saint Peter's,  
and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Churches

**Rev. Christine Kirchner, Pastor**

**March 2023**

Phone: 570-384-4125

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### MISSION STATEMENT OF MOUNTAIN GROVE LUTHERAN PARISH

*"To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through a ministry of worship a*



O Lord, we pray that the visitation of your grace may so cleanse our thoughts and minds that your Son Jesus, when he shall come, may find in us a fit dwelling place; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## PASTORS PAGE

Dear siblings in Christ,

One of the more important things we do in our lives of faith is read the Bible. It seems like it should be one of the easier things we are called to do as Christians and yet *how* we read the Bible is an often debated subject. Simply read different English translations of the same Bible story, and you will notice discrepancies in how the stories are told. Or, simply read the same story as recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke, and you will see differences in how they describe the events. Given these differences, how then do we read scripture and still say it holds the authority of God's Word for us?

As a girl, I was taught to read the Bible at the same time I was taught to read other books. It was basically a **monologue** form of communication which is speaking in one direction. The author wrote the words, I read them verbatim, and then I would be able to repeat what the author wrote to show that I knew the text. It is a good and necessary form of communication. When giving instructions to your children on how to learn to drive it is good to have monologues. Here are the rules of the road; you learn them and then you have the right to drive. If you break them, there are consequences you will bear. No discussion.

But, is this the way God intends to communicate with us as we read the scriptures? Perhaps parts of the Bible should be read this way, but an uninterrupted monologue is not a loving way to communicate with people. Monologues are controlling, domineering and one-sided. The more I read scripture the more I see the love of God, and God's intent to recreate loving relationships with God's children - with me.

Love is created in **dialogue** not monologue. So, how do we read scriptures in dialogue?

Dialogues are all about creating relationships. Through the conversations hopes and dreams, hurts and disappointments can be shared. There is space for the other person to respond and in a growing awareness of each other a relationship is born. It is not one person or the other, but the interaction between the two that takes on life. One of the amazing things we discover in the dialogue of relationships is that the more you think you know the other person, the more you become aware of what you don't know. There is always more to share and learn.

I am trying to read scripture more as a dialogue than a monologue. It is not just the words on the page (*as important as they are, for they are the words of God who loves you*) but it is what happens between you and God's Word, as you bring your hopes, dreams and fears to the text and the text brings God's presence to you. It is not one or the other, but the new reality that is being created between you.

Have you ever had the experience of reading a Biblical text you have known all your life, but for some reason, this time when you read it there was a new insight or understanding you had not known before. You knew the text (monologue) but this time something new was communicated between you and the text (dialogue).

In the Gospel of John Jesus says to his disciples, *"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."* (John 16:12-13)

It is the work of the Holy Spirit allowing the Scriptures to speak anew to us, as we continue to speak to God's Word in our lives. It is not just one or the other, but what happens between us. This is the language of love as God continues the dialogue begun in the waters of Baptism.

Good reading this Lenten season!

Pastor Christine

### Prayer List

**The family & friends of:** **Jack Henry** 2/20 (Chuck Henry;s brother), **Paul Boudman** 2/17, **Bobby Dugan** 2/05

**Also:** **Pastor Stan & Carole Bower, Dale Schoepf, Bill Zimmerman & Dave Mormak & John Shalanski** (friends of Bill & Kathy Brior), **Jen Beaver** (Dale Michael), **Kaitlin Spudes** (Susie Spudes), **Judy Petrewicz** (Janet Cool), **Roberta Pepe** (Lois Levan's daughter), **George Lynn** (Susan Spudes), **Norman & Gloria Fritz, Ruth Fisher, Shirley Ackley** (Susan Spudes), **Lori Yutko** (Susan Spudes), **Christine Linde** (Mark Hartzell's great Aunt), **Jean Bankes, Robert Fritz, Russ Ebright** (friend of Dale Michael), **Paige Thomas, Tyson Neal** (Emily Sutherland's son), **Patsy Millard, Don Davis, Shirley Omalia** (Mark Hartzell's mother), **Audrey Bronson, young people of our congregation.** **Please pray for all the people of MGLP**, especially those in need of healing; those suffering from chronic health issues; & members who are confined to their homes or long-term care facilities.

**UPDATES:** Sharon Hartzell at 384-4107 or [shartzell@ptd.net](mailto:shartzell@ptd.net)

-----PLEASE REVIEW PRAYER LIST AND UPDATE AS NECESSARY-----

## Prayer Ventures for March 2023

- 1** *Woman's History Month* Remember, celebrate and give thanks for the contributions, achievements, leadership, wisdom & gifts of women & girls throughout history in the church, our communities and the world.
- 2** In January there were 52 mass shootings in our nation. Pray that God will hear our yearning for the peace, safety and transformation of our society for the sake of protecting life. Ask the Spirit to awaken us from the fear, numbness and feelings of powerlessness that can discourage us from taking risks and making sacrifices that will lead to consequential change in our nation.
- 3** Pray for people & communities impacted by flooding/storms in California & by tornadoes, flooding & severe weather across southern United States. Remember those who grieve the loss of loved ones & homes, those suffering trauma & those in the long process of recovery, especially those without shelter & most vulnerable.
- 4** Pray invasion of Ukraine ends & Russia will halt the violence that stands in the way of peace, reconciliation, recovery & healing. Pray especially for those who suffer most from unrelenting misery, violence & destruction.
- 5** Ask God for the curiosity, boldness and humility of Nicodemus, a Pharisee who sought to understand Jesus, the ways of God and the work of the Spirit.
- 6** Remember in prayer people and communities recovering from the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. Ask God to sustain their hope, ease their grief and give them the resources they need for relief and rebuilding, especially in remote areas.
- 7** Give thanks for siblings in Christ, throughout history and in the present, who proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and incite our faith in God's promise of love and forgiveness.
- 8** *International Women's Day* On this day we join our neighbors and siblings in Christ around the world in praying for the total inclusion, equity and advancement — social, economic and political — of women and girls everywhere. Give thanks for the work we do together through the ELCA International Women Leaders program, the Justice for Women program and ELCA World Hunger.
- 9** Pray that when we see or use the symbol of the cross, we will remember the sacrifice made by the Son of God -Jesus Christ- for the sake of the world, to free us from the constraints of human weakness, fear & death.
- 10** "I lift up my eyes to the hills — from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2). Give thanks that God is mindful of our struggles and uncertainties and provides care, support and counsel through the people around us, including strangers. In turn, ask God to work through us so that we will be alert, empathetic and responsive to the needs of our neighbors.
- 11** Pray for college and university students during spring break, that they will be renewed, build friendships and serve their neighbors in need through service-learning experiences.
- 12** "I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'Behold, I freely give the living water, thirsty one; stoop down and drink and live'" (*ELW* 611). Give thanks that God attends to our spiritual thirst through the life-giving gift of Jesus Christ, who restores & sustains us to face life's challenges, share the gospel and do God's work in the world.
- 13** Pray for ELCA missionaries serving with our global companions in Asia and the Pacific: the Rev. Jeffrey Truscott & the Rev. Charles Peterson (Indonesia), Rev. Jessica Derise (Thailand) & Julie Gerrish (Malaysia).
- 14** Pray that our prayer and song will express our joy, thanksgiving and praise to God — our creator, our defender and our source of salvation.
- 15** Give thanks for mid-week Lenten meals that draw us together, that we might reflect on our humanness, find hope & comfort in God's love & mercy, and strengthen our unity as children of God and siblings in Christ.

**16** Pray, when we experience quarreling, division & hardship as a community of faith, we'll trust one another as siblings in Christ & turn to God for reassurance, knowing the Spirit leads us to reconciliation & unity.

**17** Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the Moravian Church in America, a full communion partner since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

**18** Give thanks to God for those who harvest the abundance of lakes, rivers and oceans to feed themselves and others. Pray that they will be safe, that their fishing will be successful and that they will wisely and generously steward our food resources and environment for the sake of all generations.

**19** Pray that, as our neighbors suffer misfortune, poverty, hunger, homelessness or physical or mental illness, we will not judge them, blame them or decide where they do and don't belong but will instead respond as Jesus did, with boundless mercy, respect, care and hospitality.

**20** Remember in prayer leaders meeting in Minneapolis for the Assistants and Associates to Bishops Gathering. Pray that their faith, lives and ministries will be enriched and supported by their time together.

**21** Give thanks that God has brought us out of darkness and into the light of Christ, which reveals what is good, just and pleasing to God.

**22** *World Water Day* Praise God for the gift of water in all its forms. Pray that we will not take water for granted or squander it. Ask the Spirit to guide and sustain our efforts to guarantee all people and communities access to clean, safe and abundant water, a life-nourishing resource and gift from God.

**23** Pray for the leaders across our church who serve on the ELCA Church Council. Ask the Spirit to guide and inspire their deliberations & work, which support, shape & further growth & mission of our church in the world.

**24** *Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador (1917-1980)* Give thanks for the life of Bishop Romero and those who demonstrate courage and persistence in their faith, public witness, compassion and advocacy. Pray for those who still suffer poverty, violence, oppression and injustice in Central America.

**25** With joy & thanksgiving, praise God for drawing us close & restoring our relationships, & celebrate nothing can separate us from God's love, demonstrated to us thru the life, sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**26** Amid solemn Lenten reflections, take heart and give thanks for the promise and proclamation Jesus made to Martha, the sister of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live" (John 11:25).

**27** Lift up prayerful sighs of relief and gratitude that God is our help and refuge, trustworthy and ever present. "My Jesus is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in the time of storm" (*ELW* 333).

**28** How is the Spirit at work in you? Pray that we will be mindful of how the Spirit dwells within us and of the diverse and surprising results of its work.

**29** Pray for ELCA missionaries serving with our global companions in Slovakia: Megan Freudenberg, Naomi and Nicholas Sveholm, the Rev. Kyle and Anna Svennungsen, the Rev. Bradn Buerkle, Elizabeth Kuster, Michelle Laudermilk, Mitchell McDonald, John Rogers and Christina Sunstone.

**30** Give thanks for the Lilly Endowment grant that will enable the ELCA and ELCA Youth Ministry Network to collaborate on new models for youth ministry, equip 3,000 leaders for ministry with younger generations and provide ELCA congregations with accessible and affordable resources to engage youth in faith formation.

**31** Pray that our congregations will prove resilient to the severe weather that often comes with spring, serving as centers for relief, shelter and hope when disasters occur in their communities.



### 40 Days of Giving

This year our 40 Days of Giving outreach project will be going to Lutheran Disaster Response to help those affected by the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. To participate, take a collection bag located at the back of the church and use it to collect your loose change at the end of the day. Then on Easter Sunday, bring the bag to church where we will collect the money and send it out to help those in need.

#### FYI ~ Holy Week Schedule:

- 4/02 ~ Palm Sunday ~ 9:30am ~ St Peter
- 4/06 ~ Maundy Thursday ~ 7:00pm ~ Trinity
- 4/07 ~ Good Friday ~ 7:00pm ~ Emanuel
- 4/09 ~ Easter Sunday ~ 8:00am ~ Trinity  
8:30am ~ St Peter (UCC)  
10:15am ~ Emanuel

Trinity, UCC, Rock Glen is having their annual Pizza Sale. Orders due March 6, 2023 and delivery will be March 14, 2023. The 4 pack of 6" pizzas is \$6.75 ~ the large 12" pizza is \$5.75. Place your order by calling Bonnie Adams 570-384-3300 or Kay Riotto at 570-384-4441.

#### Winter Worship Schedule

- 3/05 9:30am Emanuel
- 3/08 6p soup/sandwich 7p worship E
- 3/12 9:30am St Peter
- 3/15 6p soup/sandwich 7p worship St P
- 3/19 9:30am Trinity
- 3/22 6p soup/sandwich 7p worship T
- 3/26 9:30am Emanuel
- 3/29 6p soup/sandwich 7p worship E

#### Joint Services

We will be continuing joint Sunday morning worship services through the season of Lent. Beginning Easter Sunday, worship will go back to individual services at each church every Sunday.



## St. Peter Worship Service Schedule for March

9:30 am on March 12

7:00pm on March 15

## Emanuel Worship Service Schedule for March

9:30 on March 05 & 26

7:00pm on March 08 & 29

**Coffee Klatch** will March 5.

Pastor contact info:

The Rev. Christine Kirchner  
pastorkirchner@gmail.com

808-652-6740 OR 570-384-4125

## March Birthdays

- 03/01 Leah Bankes
- 03/03 Donna Bankes  
Miriam Rhody
- 03/04 Amy Matyas  
Doris Longenberger
- 03/05 Sandra Robbins  
Alexandra Bankes
- 03/08 Jared Keller
- 03/10 Kyle Maylath  
Cynthia (Pam) Hummer
- 03/11 Matthew Davis
- 03/16 Barry Bower
- 03/18 Logan Hartzell
- 03/19 Kristina Brown
- 03/20 Pam Keller
- 03/21 Jeromie Brown  
Keith Henry
- 03/22 Lauren Maylath Conston
- 03/26 Colby Adler
- 03/29 Gail Horne
- 03/30 Laureen Hauck



## March Anniversaries

- 03/15 Robert & Terri Mock



Emanuel's volunteer for Heat/AC & Communion for March is Peggy Pickin

Make sure to wish Miriam Rhody a Happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday!!!  
Miriam's birthday is on Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>.