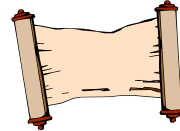


Parish Parchment



The Mountain Grove Lutheran Parish
The Reverend Christine Kirchner, Pastor
1558 Rock Glen Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9207
March 2024

Return Service Requested



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 2024

Phone: 570-384-4125

E-mail: mglp@frontier.com or pastorkirchner@gmail.com

MISSION STATEMENT OF MOUNTAIN GROVE LUTHERAN PARISH

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



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 things I like about our worship service is during the Prayers of Intercession when we pray for those who are in need of healing. There is a space at the end of the prayer for people in the congregation to name those for whom they want to pray. I love how many people speak the names of loved ones aloud. Growing up, I never felt comfortable doing this. It's not that I did not want to or that I felt it wasn't worthwhile. But I was afraid. I always worried that I might forget someone's name. What if someone was hurt that I didn't mention their name? I know it is silly. But it still kept me from speaking names out loud, instead trusting God to know my heart and my mind.

I changed this practice when my grandmother went into a nursing home. She had dementia and as she became more confused, it was too much for my grandpa to care for her. Moving her into the nursing home was not an easy process. She did not understand why she could no longer live in her home of over fifty years. I wanted to help, to be there with my mother and grandpa and uncle as they struggled with moving my grandmother. But I was over 2,000 miles away studying in college. And so that first Sunday during the prayers I whispered one word: Granny.

For four years I whispered only one name during the prayers. The Sunday after her funeral, it was time for the Prayers of Intercession and the pastor invited us to say the names of those we wanted to pray for. Once again, I was silent. It felt odd after speaking her name for four years. There was an emptiness - a space that she would no longer fill. And yet in a strange way, it also felt good not to say her name. In the silence of that moment, I knew I did not have to worry or be concerned for her anymore.

The past few weeks have been challenging for our church family as both Walter Gottstein and Norman Fritz started hospice care. It is difficult when our prayers for healing take on a different meaning – praying for wholeness and comfort rather than simply prolonged life. And it is heartbreaking knowing that some day soon there will be an emptiness as their names are no longer spoken during the prayers of intercession. And yet in that silence we know that their suffering will be at an end. In the silence, we know that their name will be spoken in the Kingdom of God. In the silence, we hear that God's grace is enough and, with clarity and freedom, Walter and Norman will continue in the love of God which does not end. In the silence it is enough to whisper: Amen.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Christine

Prayer List

The family & friends of:

Also: *Dan Davis, Walter (Jake) Gottstein, Loretta Baldwin* (Friend of Karen Henry), *Jane Troy, Sheri Eley* (Charlotte Thomas' niece), *Taylor Thomas* (Charlotte Thomas' granddaughter), *Diane Derr, Susan Brior* (Kathy & Bill Brior's cousin), *Mary Corcoran* (friend of Karen & Chuck Henry), *Donald Cool Jr.* (Janet Cool's grandson), *Dylan Newman* (Gail Horne), *Jayme Keller* (Jordan Keller's daughter), *Pearl Spudes, Albert Bellum* (Susan Spudes), *Elsie Buehler, Pastor Stan & Carole Bower, Dale Schoepf, Jen Beaver* (Dale Michael), *Judy Petrewicz* (Janet Cool), *Roberta Pepe* (Lois Levan's daughter), *George Lynn* (Susan Spudes), *Norman & Gloria Fritz, Lori Yutko* (Susan Spudes), *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), *young people of our congregation.*

Please pray for all the people of MGLP, especially those in need of healing; suffering from chronic health issues; & members confined to their homes or long-term care facilities.

UPDATES: Sharon Hartzell at 384-4107 or shartzell@ptd.net

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

Prayer Ventures for March 2024

1 *Women's History Month* Give thanks for women throughout history and in our lives who have shared their gifts and leadership with the church and society, raised and cared for us, inspired us and nurtured our faith, and fought for justice, equity and inclusion. Pray for women everywhere who suffer injustice, demeaning stereotypes, violence and poverty, that they will not lose hope but will be delivered from their suffering and persecution to live freely and boldly.

2 Pray for our neighbors and siblings in Christ who have been driven from their homes and communities by conflict, persecution, disaster, political turmoil, economic crisis or the effects of climate change.

3 *Bold Women's Day (Women of the ELCA)* Celebrate and give thanks for Lutheran women who act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ through prayer, service to neighbors in need, advocacy, leadership, hospitality and telling their stories of faith.

4 Promise that we will never use our faith, our service to neighbors or our identity as followers of Christ to benefit ourselves, enhance our reputations or earn a profit. Ask the Spirit to nurture in us humility, generosity and gratitude for the gift of grace and salvation God has given us through the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

5 Remember in prayer individuals, families and communities as they continue to recover from natural disasters, and ask God to give them strength, resilience and hope. Promise that we will persist in our commitment to support and assist these individuals, families and communities through a process that can be long, difficult and lonely.

6 There are those who consider our beliefs and faith to be foolish and misguided. Pray for the Spirit to deepen our understanding of God's wisdom and ways, strengthen our faith in Christ and guide our imperfect words and actions to convey God's merciful love for humankind, so that others will be moved to believe and to follow Jesus Christ.

7 Pray for the children and youth in your congregation, and for young adults involved in long-term volunteer service, careers, military service or study at colleges, universities, trade schools or seminaries.

8 "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14). Praise God for being attentive to our thoughts, prayers and lamentations — spoken and unspoken.

9 Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with The Episcopal Church, a full communion partner since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength, resources and encouragement for the work of sharing the gospel, serving our neighbor and growing the church.

10 Pray that we will clearly see God's relationship with humanity and the implications for our daily life when we reflect on the familiar proclamation Jesus made: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16).

11 Ask God to bless the Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers working alongside our companion churches and organizations in six countries around the world and in the Cambodia program, which will reopen this year.

12 Give thanks for the food we receive and for those who grow, manage, harvest and prepare our food resources. Promise to respond to the needs of our neighbors and siblings in Christ who are hungry, and pray that the work we do together through ELCA World Hunger will have a deep and sustained impact.

13 At the heart of our faith is the belief that, though we are weak and imperfect, we are saved from ourselves and given new life through God's gift of grace in Jesus Christ. Lift up humble prayers of thanksgiving to God!

14 Pray for the ELCA Justice for Women program, which helps us work from faith & Lutheran theology to educate, advocate for change & lead into the future, addressing sexism & encouraging all genders to work together.

- 15** Sing for joy and give thanks to God for providing comfort in times of distress, healing us when we are broken and reassuring us that we are valued when we feel insignificant.
- 16** Remember in prayer seminarians and international students preparing to serve as leaders in the church and society, including those supported through ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarships, the International Women Leaders program and the International Leaders Program.
- 17** Reflect on the people for whom you have concern. Pray for them and commit yourself to expressing your love and care in a personal way — an in-person conversation; a phone call offering help; a note, text or email.
- 18** Pray for the work of the Creation Care Network, which connects the ELCA with ecumenical ministries and organizations that equip us to be faithful stewards of God's creation.
- 19** *First day of spring* Praise our Creator and give thanks for the sun and the heavenly bodies of the universe, which impact every aspect of life and reflect the amazing creativity, mystery and power of God.
- 20** Let our Lenten prayer for today be: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Psalm 51:1-2).
- 21** Remember in prayer youth, adults and congregations preparing for their faith-stirring experience at the ELCA Youth Gathering and related events in New Orleans this summer.
- 22** Rejoice & give thanks for the wonderful variety of songs & musical styles that calm, energize, unite & inspire us.
- 23** Pray for God to open our hearts and minds to the needs of our neighbors and to guide our responses of love, support and advocacy. Give thanks for the ways our church encourages and provides opportunities for service and volunteerism, including Young Adults in Global Mission, ELCA World Hunger, Young Adult Ministry, Lutheran Disaster Response and "God's work. Our hands." Sunday.
- 24** *Palm Sunday* With shouts of "Hosanna!" and the waving of palm branches, we plead for Jesus to save us and welcome him into our lives and the world as our true hope and salvation — the risen Messiah and Savior, who endured betrayal, suffering, public ridicule and death for the sake of all people.
- 25** Ask the Spirit to help us when we feel ill-prepared to talk about our faith, that we might tell the story of God's love and mercy revealed in Jesus and how our faith in Christ shapes our daily lives.
- 26** Lift up prayers of confession for the things we have done or failed to do that cause harm to others and grieve God. Plead for forgiveness and redemption, trusting that God is our ever-present hope and merciful Redeemer.
- 27** Give thanks for the great cloud of witnesses — our community of faith and our siblings in Christ — who help us persevere when we are tired and discouraged.
- 28** *Maundy Thursday* On this last day of Lent, pray that we will be mindful of the needs and struggles of our neighbors and siblings in Christ and that we will respond as followers of Jesus, reminded by our baptism to serve others with a respect and sincerity that reflect the abundant love and mercy God has shown us.
- 29** *Good Friday* Pray that, when we gather, worship and study as siblings in Christ, we will encourage one another to grow in faith, understanding and gratitude for God's sacrificial, life-giving love, witnessed in Christ's suffering and death on the cross.
- 30** Much what we profess to believe seems like a mystery to us & others. Ask Spirit to help us live with the mystery &, at the same time, grow in faith & awe of the triune God, who claims & gathers us close as loved children.
- 31** *Easter Sunday* Praise God that sin, fear and death have no control over us — Jesus Christ has risen for the redemption and healing of humanity! "Christ is living! Gone with sorrow! Tears and terror, be no more" (*All Creation Sings* 934).



Sunday School

While having joint services, we have a unique opportunity for joint Sunday School as well. Pastor Christine will be leading an adult Sunday School starting Feb. 4 after worship. Rosey Tretter will lead a children's Sunday School every other Sunday after the children's sermon. Those dates are March 3 (St. Peter), March 17 (Mainville).

St Peter's Easter Flower

Tulip \ \$7.00
Hyacinth /
Lily \$8.00

Pink Oriental Lily \$9.00

Orders due Sunday, March 10
Betty Tretter 570-387-1631

Winter Worship Schedule

We'll continue to worship jointly thru Lent. Individual services will resume Easter Sunday (March 31)

3/03 Worship 9:30am St. Peter

3/06 Soup/Sandwiches 6pm, Worship 7pm St. Peter

3/10 Worship 9:30am Trinity

3/13 Soup/Sandwiches 6pm, Worship 7pm Trinity

3/17 Worship 9:30am Emanuel

3/20 Soup/Sandwiches 6pm, Worship 7pm Emanuel

3/24 Palm Sunday w/HC Worship 9:30am St Peter

If you have Thrivent choice dollars, the deadline to designate them to a nonprofit of your choice is March 31.

40 Days of Giving

This year our 40 Days of Giving outreach project will be going to Camp Mount Luther to help with their renovation projects. 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 on to the camp. You can also give a check made out to your church. Any questions, just ask Pastor Christine.

Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday Trinity 7pm

Good Friday Emanuel 7pm

Easter Sunday

Trinity 8am

St. Peter 9:30am

Emanuel 10:45am

Trinity will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30 at 1:00pm. All kids are welcome to participate. If you would like to help, please take some plastic eggs located in the back of the church, fill them, and bring them back by March 30. We will also need help hiding the eggs during the event. If you have any questions, please ask Pam Starr or Pastor Christine.



March Birthdays

- 03/01 Leah Bankes
- 03/03 Donna Bankes
Miriam Rhody
- 03/04 Amy Matyas
- 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 Lauren Hauck



/St. Peter Worship Service Schedule for February

- 9:30 am on March 3
- 9:30 am March 24 w/HC – Palm Sunday
- 9:30am on March 31- Easter Sunday

Emanuel Worship Service Schedule for March

- 9:30 on March 17
- 7:00pm on March 29 - Good Friday
- 10:45am on March 31- Easter Sunday



March Anniversaries

- 03/15 Robert & Terri Mock

Pastor contact info:

The Rev. Christine Kirchner
pastorkirchner@gmail.com

808-652-6740 or 570-384-4125

Joint services Sundays 9:30am

March

- 3 – St Peter 9:30am
- 10 – Trinity 9:30am
- 17 – Emanuel 9:30am
- 24 – St Peter 9:30am
- 31 – Easter Sunday
8:30am Trinity
9:30am St. Peter
10:45am Emanuel



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