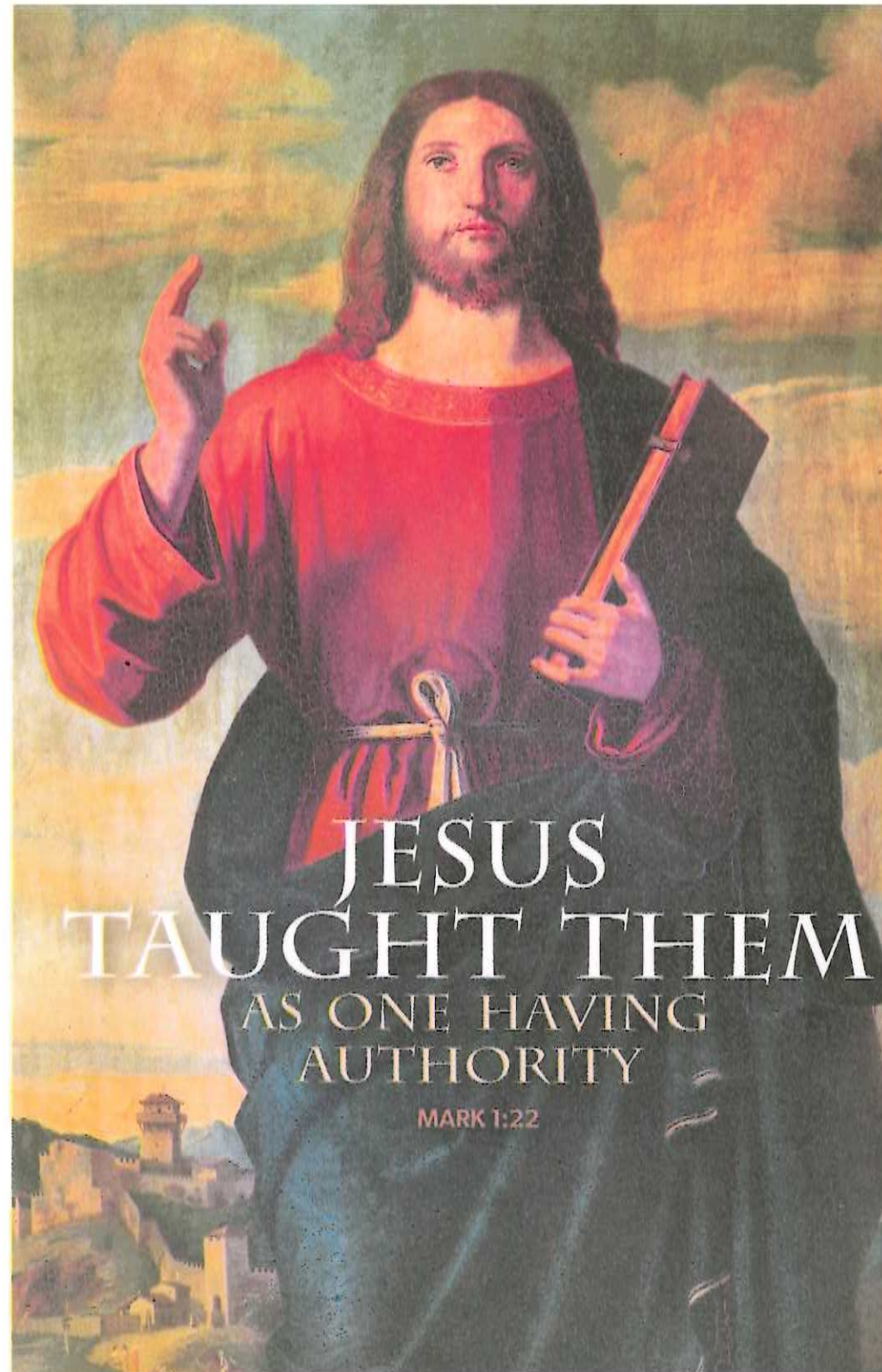


Teaching in Words and Actions

Jesus' teaching in the synagogue surprises, shakes, and even shocks the people of Capernaum who have gathered for the weekly celebration of the sabbath. His proclamation is different from what they are accustomed to hearing. Mark doesn't tell us *what* Jesus taught this particular day, but all the gospel writers describe his message as consistently one of compassion, peace, hope, and love. Clearly, listeners heard something they found surprising in Jesus' words.

In addition, Jesus' teaching goes *beyond* words; he lives out his message in transforming and liberating actions, as we see in his healing of the man with an unclean spirit. The people sense an authority in Jesus only found in one whose words and deeds match—one who moves beyond theory to practice. It's like learning from a physician who regularly practices medicine, a theologian who pastors a parish, a coach who plays the sport personally. In the synagogue, when Jesus unexpectedly practices what he has been preaching, it's so new to his audience that they find it frightening and life-giving all at once.

At first, the healing miracle Jesus performs in today's reading may seem distant from the preoccupations of our contemporary society. This kind of exorcism may be uncommon for us in mainline Christian churches, but we know well that various troubles have a grip on our existence and our being. On the one hand, we experience our own "unclean spirits" such as despair, jealousy, hatred, or guilt. On the other hand, we regularly encounter the "unclean spirits" of our society: intolerance, selfishness, indifference, materialism, or contempt. But even in the moments when we are divided, disoriented, and destabilized, Jesus speaks surprising, wondrous words that challenge and heal us, so we can be restored to the life God intends us to enjoy and share with others.



Millcreek Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
January 28, 2024

A warm welcome to our church! We appreciate your presence here today and enjoy the new and the familiar faces as we gather together. If you are a visitor and believe that Christ is your Savior and present in the Sacrament, you are welcome to receive Holy Communion with us. All children who have received Communion instruction and have been approved to receive Holy Communion either here or at another church are also welcome to commune with us. Any child may come forward for a blessing. Visitors, please sign our guest book, fill out a visitor's card in the pew rack and introduce yourself to Pastor Scott as you leave. We're glad you're here!

Prayer: Father in heaven, whose Son taught with authority which compelled obedience and surrender: Take control of our lives, and cast out all evil which possesses our souls; that we may be free to follow your will. We pray in our Savior's name. Amen.

The Service

- Prelude of Entrance
- Announcements
- Prelude of Preparation
- *Confession & Forgiveness: Page 56
- *Opening Hymn: **No. 242 (LBW)**, *Let the Whole Creation Cry*
- *Greetings: Pages 57, line 5
- *Prayer of the Day: (On the lesson insert, read in unison)
 - Children's Sermon
 - The First Reading
 - The Psalmody: (On the lesson insert, read responsively)
 - The Second Reading
- *The Gospel
- *Responses: Page 63, lines 15 & 16
- The Sermon
- Hymn of the Day: **No. 559 (LBW)**,
Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing
- *The Apostles' Creed, Page 65

- Choir Anthem: *Ever Gentle, Ever Sweet*
- *The Prayers: Page 65, line 22
- *The Greeting of Peace: Page 66, line 23
- *The Great Thanksgiving: Pages 68-71, lines 28, 29 & 31
- *The Lord's Prayer, Page 71 (spoken)
 - Holy Communion (table)
- *Post Communion Prayer: Page 74, line 40
- *Benediction & Dismissal: Page 74, lines 42 & 43
- *Departing Hymn: **No. 530 (LBW)**, *Jesus Shall Reign*
 - Moments of Meditation: Congregation seated
 - Postlude
- *Please stand

Serving you this morning:

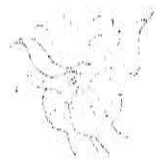
Pastor,	The Rev. Scott J. Paradise
Lay Leader,	Scott Johnson
Organist, Pianist,	Debra Tice
Lay Reader,	Linda Sheetz
Ushers, Audio,	Frank Hoffman and Scott Johnson

When we are baptized, we are baptized into the body of Christ. We understand this body to be the communion of saints, a diverse witness of men and women across time and space. Throughout its history, the church has sought to lift up Christians who have been unique, exemplary people of faith.

Today we commemorate Thomas Aquinas, who died in 1274. Thomas Aquinas is considered One of the most brilliant and creative theologians in the church's history. He was first and foremost a student of the Bible and profoundly concerned with the theological formation of the church's ordained ministers. Aquinas worked to bring together scripture and the philosophy of Aristotle whose work was important to educated people of the thirteenth century.

The altar flowers are given to the honor and glory of God and in memory of Ronald and Selah Sheetz, and loved ones of the Hauck Family by Logan, Linda and Stephanie Sheetz.

The bulletins are given to the honor and glory of God and in celebration of the 26th birthday of Stephanie Sheetz, love Mom & Dad and the 31st Anniversary of Logan and Linda Sheetz.



Today's Readings

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
January 28, 2024

Prayer of the Day

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

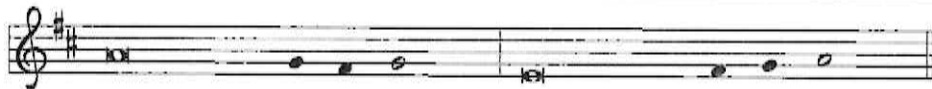
Deuteronomy 18:15-20

[Moses said:] The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their

own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

Psalm

Psalm 111; tone 6



Hallelujah!

I will give thanks to the LORD
with ¹my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright,
in the ¹congregation.

²Great are your ¹works, O LORD,
pondered by all
who de- ¹light in them.

³Majesty and splendor
¹mark your deeds,
and your righteousness
en- ¹dures forever.

⁴You cause your wonders
to ¹be remembered;
you are gracious
and full ¹of compassion.

⁵You give food
to ¹those who fear you,
remembering forev- ¹er
your covenant.

⁶You have shown your people
the power ¹of your works
in giving them
the lands ¹of the nations.

⁷The works of your hands
are faithful- ¹ness and justice;
all of your pre- ¹cepts are sure.

⁸They stand fast forev- ¹er and ever,
because they are done
in ¹truth and equity.

Psalm, continued

⁹You sent redemption to your people
and commanded your cove- ¹nant
forever;
holy and awesome ¹is your name.

¹⁰The fear of the LORD
is the begin- ¹ning of wisdom;
all who practice this
have a good understanding.
God's praise en- ¹dures forever.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as

food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸"Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Gospel

Mark 1:21-28

[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One

of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

TODAY'S READINGS January 28, 2024

Volume 55, Number 1

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39.

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Lectionary year B.

continued

Let the Whole Creation Cry

242

1 Let the whole cre - a - tion cry, "Glo - ry to the Lord on high!"
 2 War-riors fight - ing for the Lord, Proph - ets burn - ing with his word,
 3 Men and wom - en, young and old, Raise the an - them loud and bold,

Heav'n and earth, a - wake and sing, "Praise him, our al - might - y King!"
 Those to whom the arts be - long Add their voic - es to the song,
 And let chil-dren's hap - py hearts In this wor - ship take their parts;

Praise him, an - gel hosts a - bove, Ev - er bright and fair in love;
 Kings of knowl - edge and of law, To the glo - rious cir - cle draw;
 From the north to south - ern pole Let the might - y cho - rus roll:

Sun and moon, lift up your voice; Night and stars, in God re - joice.
 All who work and all who wait, Sing, "The Lord is good and great!"
 "Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly One; Glo - ry be to God a - lone!"

Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

559

1 Oh, for a thou - sand tongues to sing My great Re - deem - er's praise, The
 2 My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, As - sist me to pro - claim, To
 3 The name of Je - sus charms our fears And bids our sor - rows cease, Sing
 4 He breaks the pow'r of can - celed sin; He sets the pris - 'ner free. His

glo - ries of my God and King, The tri - umphs of his grace!
 spread through all the earth a - broad The hon - ors of your name.
 mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, Brings life and health and peace.
 blood can make the foul - est clean; His blood a - vails for me.

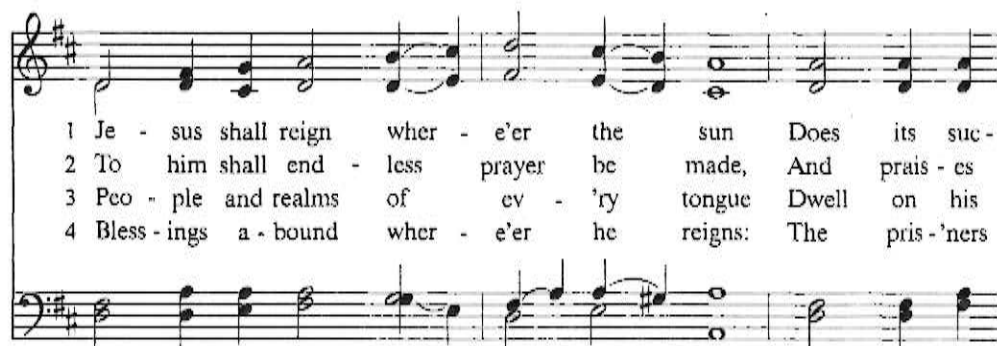
5 To God all glory, praise, and love By saints below and saints above,
 Be now and ever giv'n The Church in earth and heav'n.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.
 Tune: Carl G. Glaser, 1784-1829

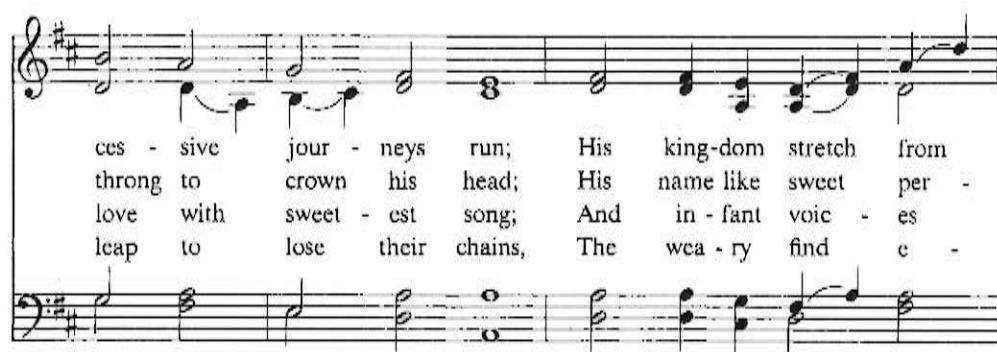
AZMOT
C1

530

Jesus Shall Reign



1 Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun Does its suc -
 2 To him shall end - less prayer be made, And prais - es
 3 Peo - ple and realms of ev - 'ry tongue Dwell on his
 4 Bless - ings a - bound wher - e'er he reigns: The pris - 'ners



ces - sive jour - neys run; His king - dom stretch from
 throng to crown his head; His name like sweet per -
 love with sweet - est song; And in - fant voic - es
 leap to lose their chains, The wea - ry find e -



shore to shore, Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
 fume shall rise With ev - 'ry morn - ing sac - ri - fice.
 shall pro - claim Their ear - ly bless - ings on his name.
 ter - nal rest, And all who suf - fer want are blest.

- 5 Let ev'ry creature rise and bring
 Honors peculiar to our King;
 Angels descend with songs again,
 And earth repeat the loud amen.



"The Church on the Hill"

Church Office
(610) 589-2570
secretary@millcreeklutheran.com

221 North Sheridan Road
PO Box 399
Newmanstown, PA 17073
www.millcreeklutheran.com

Pastor Scott Paradise
Home: (717) 628-1241
Cell: (540) 335-1693
pastorsscottparadise@gmail.com

Our Mission

Helping God restore and renew our community, our congregation, and our selves.

Sunday, January 28, 2024

You can **listen to the worship service** over the phone patch at 10:15 AM. Just dial **717-628-0125**. You will hear a message welcoming you to Millcreek. At that point you are connected to our church sound system, so just stay on the line. You may also watch the service later on You Tube.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Millcreek Lutheran Church's Annual Meeting will be held following the worship (i.e., about 11:30 am) on Sunday January 28, 2024. The agenda consists of several important items:

1. Election of 4 adult council members
2. Adoption of the proposed budget for 2024

Please direct questions regarding these items to Lay Leader Scott Johnson or Pastor Scott Paradise.

Helping God Restore and Renew our Community

We celebrate with our friends at Frieden's Lutheran Church, Myerstown who voted last Sunday to call Stacy Chavis as their next Pastor.

CHILI/SOUPER SUNDAY will be held on Sunday February 11-***IF WE HAVE VOLUNTEERS*** to make soup or chili. Please sign up if you would like to make soup on the sheet on the table in the narthex. Others can bring sandwiches, sides or desserts. Cans of soup will also be collected and donated to ELCO Raider Food Pantry and Caring Closet.

FRIENDS OF SPANG CREST: There are a host of activities coming up at Spang Crest, starting with the annual membership drive in February, our resident birthday celebration in April, chicken BBQ in May & September and 2 free music concerts this summer. There are volunteer opportunities-contact Karen Kreiser at Spang Crest if interested.

RICHLAND FIRE CO. AUXILIARY will have (Purse) BINGO on February 11, 2024 at the firehouse. Doors will open at 12:00, with BINGO starting at 2:00 PM. Food will be available for you to purchase. For more information contact the Richland Auxiliary 717-866-2675 or Mary Ream 610-509-2468

DAFFODIL DAYS: The annual Daffodil sale sponsored by the American Cancer Society is taking place. Orders will be accepted through February 13 with pick up/delivery on March 21. Cost as follows: Bunch of daffodils \$12; Mini-potted daffodils \$15; Bunch of tulips (assorted colors) \$15; Gift of Hope \$25 (donated to cancer center/hospital/nursing home facility). Contact Debbie Tice or sign up on sheet in narthex of the church.

Helping God Restore and Renew our Congregation

CONGREGATION COUNCIL will meet next Sunday after the worship service.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION will be shared next Sunday February 4th.

TREASURER'S REPORT: January 21, 2024-Current Offerings-\$609.00, Plate-36.00, Initial, 17.00, Coffee-11.00, **Total-\$673.00.00.** Attendance-57, Sunday School-15

2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS may be picked up from the table in the narthex. If you do not see yours there, please let David Engle or Linda Sheetz know ASAP for distribution.

THE FEBRUARY PARISH ECHO hard copies may be picked up from the table in the narthex or from the wall rack outside of the office.

SWEET SUNDAY will take place next Sunday February 4th. Baked goods will be available for purchase in the multi-purpose room after the worship service. All proceeds from the sales are donated to the church. Thank you to Charmayne!



Evangelism Project for January-We found there is a need for extra tissues at our elementary schools. The committee is collecting Kleenex or Puffs tissues (no brand X please) for the students. There will be a container for the tissue box collection in the narthex or if you prefer a monetary contribution, there will be a money box available for your donation. Thank you.

CHOIR REHEARSAL: Our rehearsals are Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM. Consider joining us in our music ministry. Contact Debbie Tice with questions.

2024 FLOWER AND BULLETIN SHEETS are now available for folks to sign up for sponsoring. Prices are \$30 for flowers and \$10 for bulletins.

Helping God Restore and Renew Our Selves

Thank you all for the Christmas cards and ornaments. Lynn was very happy when he got them and I read them all to him. He really appreciated them all and said thank you for all of them. The Selinsgrove Center Staff.

WEATHER ALERT: In case of bad weather, please listen to WJBR 1270AM for a notice of cancellation of church services. Pastor Scott will send out an email to those on the email address list. You can also tune to Channel 27 WHTM (Comcast Channel 12) for notices of church service cancellation, which scrolls across the bottom of the TV screen. **When church is cancelled due to the weather, there is no one at the church for a service on the Phone Patch.**

THIS WEEK WE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) WITH CARDS & PRAYERS:

Lorraine Eberly, 118 Memorial Blvd., Newmanstown, PA 17073

IF YOU ASKED FOR A MILLCREEK MEMBER TO BE PUT ON THE PRAYER LIST, PLEASE TELL THE CHURCH SECRETARY WHEN OUR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED SO SHE CAN KEEP THIS LIST CURRENT.

NON-MEMBER REQUESTS ARE LISTED ON A WEEKLY BASIS. TO BE INCLUDED, YOU MAY CONTACT LINDA EACH WEEK WITH YOUR REQUESTS BY NOON ON THURSDAY. secretary@millcreeklutheran.com or 610-589-2570

MILLCREEK MEMBERS PRAYER LIST: R. Hart Beaver, Debbie Hartman, Violet Hepler, Abbie Keath, Shad Kreitz, The Leibig Family, Ronald Merkel, Barbara Potteiger, Norm Sharp, Thomas Tice, Debra Webber, Stewart Wolf, Aaron Yiengst, Devon Yiengst, Michael Yiengst, Jr., Greer Zellers

Things Pastor Scott Learned this Week...

Following our forum last Sunday, two members gave me constructive feedback that I gratefully share here as a way of shaping my leadership.

First, my announcement referred to a former pastor of this congregation being “removed from the roster.” One member shared not being sure of what that meant. “When a person’s name is removed from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, the privileges, rights, and responsibilities of that person to serve as a minister of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA cease.” (*Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Page 38.) “Minister of Word and Sacrament” is our formal title for those we call “Pastor.” Our denomination does not use the word “defrocked” to describe former pastors; “removed from the roster” is our equivalent term. I appreciate knowing I can always do better to avoid “insider language.”

Second, one member mentioned that—even though I am always available on my cell phone (540.335.1693) and by appointment—it would be helpful to know when I would be in the office in case anyone wanted to talk. This week I will be in the office after 3:00 PM on Wednesday, January 31 and after 12 noon on Thursday, February 1. I sometimes do get called away unexpectedly, so a quick phone call (610.589.2570) to make sure I am in is always recommended.



Sponsored by the Newmanstown/Richland Ministerium

All services begin at 7:00 PM

Lenten Theme: "Return..."

Ash Wednesday, February 14

Millcreek Lutheran, 221 N. Sheridan Rd., Newmanstown, with Pastor Jay Heberling speaking. Topic: "A Call to Return to the Lord" – Joel 2:12-14

Wednesday, February 21

Church of Christian Outreach, 101 W. Main Street, Newmanstown, with Pastor Mario Madden speaking. Topic: "Return to Prayer" – Romans 8:26-28

Wednesday, February 28

United Christian Church, 2 Memorial Blvd., Newmanstown, with Pastor Bruce Farrell speaking. Topic: "Return from Betrayal" – Acts 2:22-24

Wednesday, March 6

St. Paul's UCC, 13 Church Road, Newmanstown, with Pastor Matt Grant speaking. Topic: "Return from Denial" – Mark 14:66-71

Wednesday, March 13

Tulpehocken Trinity, 961 Tulpehocken Road, Richland, with Pastor Bill Wink speaking. Topic: "Return to the Kingdom of God" – John 18:36-38a

Wednesday, March 20

Grace UCC, 22 Church Street, Richland with Pastor Jay Heberling speaking. Topic: "Return to the Church" – John 14:6-7

Wednesday, March 27

Elias UCC, 9 N. Sheridan Road, Newmanstown with Pastor Scott Paradise speaking. Topic: "Return to the Table" – John 15:1-4

Good Friday, March 29

Richland Church of the Brethren, 215 S. Race St., Richland, with Pastor Jim Artz speaking. Topic: "Return and See Life" – John 10:10-11

Light refreshments and fellowship will follow each service.

Weather related cancellations to be determined by the home church and will be announced on the Ministerium Facebook page.

Offering taken will go to the Newmanstown/Richland Ministerium Emergency Fund to assist local families in need. Please make checks payable to Newmanstown/Richland Ministerium.

EASTER FLOWERS



Anyone interested in purchasing Easter Flowers this year, please contact Carol Sova at 717-507-4721. This is my cell number, you may text me or call. I will confirm all orders if you don't sign-up directly at church. If you don't hear back from me to confirm, please call me.

The flowers will be available on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024.

The choices of potted flowers are as follows: tulips (request color), daffodils (regular), hyacinths (one color or pink, blue, white trio), Easter lilies (white), L.A. Hybrid lilies - colored) or mums. The cost is \$8.00 each except for the lilies which are \$9.00.

I will be available after church most Sundays or you can call me. I will place the order mid-February. If you want to specify color, please have your order in as soon as possible for the best selection. (Those I will be ordering as soon as possible as there were some supply issues in the past).

Thank you,
Carol Sova