



# The Epistle

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 117 East Arch Street, Fleetwood, PA

## Lutheran Disaster Response

### The Situation:

Multiple wildfires have broken out across Los Angeles County in California, with tens of thousands of people under evacuation orders. Sparked by dry conditions, strong winds and a limited water supply, these fires have destroyed homes and businesses and have led to injuries and loss of life. News is still unfolding about the full impact as firefighting efforts continue.

### Our Response:

Lutheran Disaster Response is coordinating with the Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod and other partners to assess the needs of people impacted by the wildfires. We will work with them to provide for immediate needs and recovery amid the widespread destruction. Lutheran Disaster Response is committed to accompanying recovering communities for months and years to come.

### What you can do:

Pray

Please pray for communities in California impacted by the wildfires. May God's healing presence bring them peace and hope in their time of need and give strength to those working diligently to contain the fires and care for affected communities.

### Give:

Your gifts to [Lutheran Disaster Response](#) equip us to respond to communities affected by wildfires and related disasters. These gifts also empower us to respond to disasters whenever and wherever they strike. Gifts to "[U.S. Wildfires](#)" will be used in full (100%) to assist those affected by wildfires until the response is complete.

**March 2025**

### Up Coming Events

**Men in Mission Sam Borrell  
Breakfast - Meet & Greet  
Pastor Fox  
Sun. 3/9 at 9:45 a.m.**



**MARCH 9, 2025**

*(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 1)

To give by phone call:

**800-638-3522.**

Checks or money orders can be mailed to:

**Lutheran Disaster Response  
P.O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009**



## Council Corner

### **Pastor Fox's Proposal:**

Council approved the proposal, effective March 1, 2025, with quarterly reviews.

### **Parish Administrator's Report:**

Issues with bulletin printing due to vendor problems.

Representation at Opportunity House luncheon highlighted strong community outreach.

### **Financial Updates:**

A new AV team computer was purchased.

No discrepancies found in the completed financial audit.

### **Committee & Team Reports:**

**Preschool:** Open House & Art Show scheduled for February 27, 2025. Bright Wheel to be used for communication/payments next year.

**Property:** Light fixture replacement in progress.

**Worship:** Easter services planned; Lenten soup suppers with learning sessions.

### **Editor's Note:**

All articles, announcements etc. should be emailed to Gretchen Mertz (Editor) at [gkm321@ptd.net](mailto:gkm321@ptd.net) or hard copies put in her mailbox in the choir room/library and copied to Donna Locke at [office@spelcfleetwood.com](mailto:office@spelcfleetwood.com).

Thank you,  
Gretchen Mertz

# Prayer List

## Prayer List

**The prayer list** is an instrument to remind us of our responsibility to intercessory prayer for our community, world, and church. To add a name to the prayer list, call the church office. Names will be removed after four weeks, unless otherwise advised. Prayer makes a difference!

**Pray for those serving in the military:** Connor Geer, Rob Geer, Daniel Keller, Brayden Kiebach, Travis Meck, Lauren Moyer, Sydney Plucker, Matt Roberts, Ryan Stitzel, Colin Walbert.

**Pray for those in need of ongoing, long-term prayer:** Andrew Beerer, Kathy Boalton, Marion Boyer, Barbara Faust, Essie & Barney Dietrich, Maggie Emerick, Lynnwood Fegley, Dennis Gillner, Nancy Heffner, Maya Hein, Jane Hill, Gino Hinnershitz, Gavin Iradi, Martin Keller, Don Kirby, Sharon Kirkhoff, Betty Kurzweg, Bonnie Loy, Steve Miller, The Neff

Family, Marilee Noesges, Ruth Oxenreider, Charles Pinter, Bruce Rimmel, Viola Snyder, Lori Spatz, Mabel Stopp, Frank Vroman, Daisy Wahl, Marie Wessner, Bonni Buss Whitman, Kathy Yoder.



## A Note about Pastoral Care

Please contact us if you or another member of your family enters the hospital or experiences a significant illness, trauma, or need.

Pr. David Blitch at 484-663-4911

Pr. Allen Forsman at 610-682-7028

Pr. Marty Milne at 610-682-7664



A reminder to please call the church office with any hospital admission, as only Tower Health Hospital notifies our church office and only if St. Paul's Lutheran Church is listed at time of admission.



## NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month reminds us that early detection is key to treating colorectal cancers. The month-long observance shines a spotlight on risk factors, research, and aims to raise awareness.

According to the American Cancer Society, more than a million people in the United States count themselves as survivors. While early detection and treatments make a difference, there is more that can be done. Knowing the causes and risk factors helps prevent colorectal cancer.

### Risk Factors We Control

- **Diet** - Studies show that diets rich in red and processed meats may contribute to colorectal cancer risks. Also, how we prepare our proteins may increase our risk, too. Grilling, frying, and high-temperature cooking release chemicals that may contribute to colorectal cancer risks. Diets full of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains reduce our risk of colon cancer as well as other health risks.

- **Exercise** - Sedentary lifestyles and obesity are two more risk factors for colorectal cancer. Once again, physical activity helps to reduce our risk factors for another disease.
- **Smoking and heavy alcohol use** - Quit the one and limit the other. Ask your physician if you need help with either one.
- **Family history** - While you can't control this, you can know it. Report it to your primary care physician so if your family history shows an increased risk for you, she can decide if you need early screening. Knowledge is power.

### How to observe Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

- Take action during Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Speak with your doctor about your risk factors and collect your family history.
- Visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) to learn more about risk factors, early detection, and treatment and use:

#ColorectalCancerAwarenessMonth to share on social media.

Celebrate Every Day®



The Cultural Series Team will be having Vince's Famous Cheesesteak truck Thursday, May 29 from 12 PM to 6 PM. Why make dinner when someone else can do it for you!  
**Mark your calendar today for May!**



## Coffee & Conversation/Chit Chat

### **March 2 - Pastor Tom Scornvacchi**

#### ***Addiction and Spirituality***

The Rev. Tom Scornvacchi is pastor of Common Ground Recovery Ministry in Wyomissing. As a person in long-term recovery, Pastor Tom works with individuals and families affected by the disease of addiction. In his work he combines the wisdom and practice of the 12-steps with the forgiveness and grace that comes from his Christian faith. Pastor Tom holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Behavioral Health and Addiction Studies from Alvernia University and a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

### **March 9 - Men in Mission Sam Borrell Breakfast at 9:45 a.m. - Meet and Greet with Pastor Susan Fox**

Pastor Susan Fox will be attending our Men in Mission Sam Borrell breakfast on March 9!

We are so excited to have her be our pastor and spiritual consultant.

Please plan on attending and welcome Pastor Fox to St. Paul's while enjoying a delicious breakfast prepared by our Men in Mission team.

What a great opportunity to greet and meet Pastor Fox in a relaxed setting.

We are blessed to have a Pastor who has felt her time with us as a supply pastor has been a blessing.

### **March 16 - Coffee & Chit Chat**

### **March 23 - Coffee & Chit Chat**

## **Senior & Friends Lunch**

The Seniors and Friends will be returning to the Leesport Diner for a luncheon on Thursday, March 27 at 11:30 a.m. Everyone seemed to enjoy it there. They have a nice menu and salad bar along with senior specials. You can arrive as early as 11 a.m. to pick a good seat, chat, look over the menu, change your mind a few times, and order your drink. The waitress will take your meal order beginning at 11:30 a.m.

You can sign up on the sheet on the kiosk or call Sharon Neff at 610-657-8727 or 610-944-9820.

If you prefer you can email me at [sneff@ptd.net](mailto:sneff@ptd.net) or text me at the first phone number.

We hope to see you there. It is always nice to have some new seniors & friends be part of our gathering.



# MARCH WORSHIP HAPPENINGS

## WORSHIP AT 8:30 AM EACH SUNDAY

### March 2 – Transfiguration of Our Lord

Pr. Tom Scornavacchi will be our Supply Pastor

Witnesses to the glory of God in the face of Jesus reflect that glory in the world. It was true for Moses. It was doubtless true for Peter, James, and John. We pray that it will be true of all of us who see God's glory in the word and in the supper and who are being "transformed into the same image" by God's Spirit.



### March 9 – First Sunday in Lent

Pr. Susan Fox will be our Supply Pastor

These forty days called Lent are like no other. It is our opportune time to return to the God who rescues, to receive the gifts of God's grace, to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the wonder of God's love in Jesus, and to resist temptation at every turn. This is no small pilgrimage on which we have just embarked. It is a struggle Jesus knew. It is a struggle Jesus shares. The nearness of the Lord, in bread and wine, water and word, will uphold and sustain us.

### March 16 – Second Sunday in Lent

Pr. Susan Fox will be our Supply Pastor

Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek God's face again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

### March 23 – Third Sunday in Lent

Pr. Susan Fox will be our Supply Pastor

The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God's invitation to attentiveness: "Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live." The landowner's ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener's readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!

### March 30 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Pr. Susan Fox will be our Supply Pastor

The psalm sets the tone this day: "Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!" Happy are those who have "become the righteousness of God" in the merits of Christ Jesus. Happy are those for whom the forgiveness of God has "rolled away . . . the disgrace" of former times. Happy is the father at the return of his prodigal son. Happy are we that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Rejoice!



# Lent



## Ash Wednesday, March 5 - 7:00 PM

Pr. Susan Fox will be our Pastor

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism.

While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.



On the following Wednesdays during Lent, there will be a soup supper beginning at 5:30 PM, followed by a short service “Open my Life, Lord”, lead by Roger Bowman & Friends.

## Welcome to Worship

We want everyone to feel comfortable worshipping with us and realize that some people are still anxious when gathering in groups of people. For your convenience and safety, consider the following: Hand sanitizer will continue to be available as you enter worship. There are also masks available for anyone choosing to wear one. Please be aware: If you test positive for COVID-19 within five days of worshipping with us, we kindly ask that you follow proper quarantine protocols and contact the church office as soon as possible. Please do not come to worship or other activities if you are not feeling well, even if you think it's just a cold. If at any time you have concerns, please contact the office or a member of the Worship & Music Team. Members of the team are: Gretchen Mertz, Marla Gieringer, Cindy Borrell, Donna Fick, Nancy Bowman, Donna Ahrens, and Martin Hinkley. Our team listens carefully to your comments, making adjustments to our services as necessary, and delights in new ideas!

# Cultural Series

## Mark Your Calendars!

### Sunday, April 6 at 3:00 p.m. Scotty Inman St. Paul's Cultural Series and Hess Productions

Tickets \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door; Children 5-12 \$5

For Tickets call Sharon Neff 610-657-8727 or 610-944-9820 or Liz Hess 717-669-1785

Credit Card accepted with \$2 processing fee at 717-669-1785

*Tickets will be available in February 2025*

### Sunday, May 18 at 3:00 p.m. Jeff Krick as Elvis Presley Gospel Concert (Ticketed Event)

## Scotty Inman in concert



Hess Promotions is partnering with the Cultural Series Team to **present Scotty Inman** in concert at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Sunday, April 6 at 3:00 pm.

Mark your calendar, tickets will be on sale in February.

You may remember Scotty. He is returning to St. Paul's. He was here on October 31, 2021, as the baritone and youngest member of the Triumphant Quartet. He has set out on a solo career, but he brings a musician/singer with him, and both will sing and play instruments. Scotty's genre is Southern Gospel with a Western flair.

He has two CDs, "Anywhere Jesus Is" and "My God." Listen to songs from these albums

on Sirius Enlighten. You can also find some on YouTube and his website.

Come and welcome back Scotty and enjoy an awesome concert.

Tickets for adults are \$20.00 in advance and \$22.00 at the door, children's tickets for ages 5 to 12 are \$5.00.

For tickets call Sharon Neff, 610-657-8727 or 610-944-9820 or Liz at 717-669-1789

Credit cards are accepted with a \$2.00 processing fee if you call Liz at 717-669-1789.

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## St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church Bus Trip to the Philadelphia Phillies

A bus trip has been arranged to visit Citizens Bank Park to enjoy an evening of major league baseball. The playoff contending Phillies are returning to Citizens Bank Park for another year of championship baseball!

On Friday, August 1, 2025, a 56 passenger Elite Coach bus will leave the church parking lot at 2:30 PM to travel to the home of the Phillies. The opponent is the Detroit Tigers. Seats are in Section 327, Rows 6, 7 and 8 (same seats as last year). Game time is scheduled for 6:45 PM. Round trip transportation and entrance to the ballpark is \$90.00 per person. Bus driver gratuity will be an optional, additional expense on the night of the game. Payment is required prior to May 15, 2025 to reserve your seat. Please make check payments payable to Tim Heffner.

**Printed game day tickets are no longer available.** The Ballpark mobile app is required to receive your tickets. Electronic tickets will be distributed to one person for couples or larger groups. It will be the responsibility of the small group leader to distribute electronic tickets to the individuals in their group.

Individuals, couples or small group leaders must sign-up by sending an e-mail to [theffner2@ptd.net](mailto:theffner2@ptd.net) and provide the requested number of tickets which will be paid by the person sending the sign-up e-mail. Individuals without the Ballpark app and wanting to attend the game shall contact Tim Heffner by phone or in-person to make specific arrangements.

For additional information, please contact Tim Heffner at 610-944-8197, 610-587-5232 or [theffner2@ptd.net](mailto:theffner2@ptd.net).

## Food Collections are ongoing!

**Now more than ever, food insecurity is a problem throughout our nation and world and in our community. Kindly remember the many families and individuals who are struggling to afford food. Simply drop your non-perishable donations in the food bin in the lobby.**



# Mystery Members

Submitted by Melissa Neff

**T**his month's mystery family is a couple who has been coming to St. Paul's since 1999 when Pastor Simmons was here. Mrs. was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Milton, Pennsylvania, and Mr. grew up near the state border in Athens.

They met through a mutual friend after college. Mr. was living in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Mrs. and some friends would stay at his place when they would go to the beach after college. They were able to see New York City from his place.

They both went to college. Mrs. went to Lock Haven for social work, and Mr. studied engineering at Penn State. He works for Intel in engineering, and Mrs. retired in 2021. Mrs. spent her career doing social work and then worked at the Fleetwood Middle School. At school, she was a building aide and substitute. Since she retired Mrs. loves playing pickleball. Her husband's favorite activities include bicycle riding on trails, camping, and hiking.

They have two grown children. Their son is thirty and lives in Philadelphia. He is a digital editor with a production company. Their daughter is thirty-three and lives in Ireland. She is a journalist for the New York Times and is a published author. Her first book will be released in March and is a true story about a gun-running case.

There are no pets. A husky was living with them, but the husky has gone to Ireland to live.

Their travels have taken them to various countries. They have visited Europe many times, as well as Canada. During their trips they have enjoyed biking vacations, spending time riding their bicycles. Last year they went to Iceland, and in a few days after being interviewed for this article, they were going to Ireland to visit their daughter.

They have been active at St. Paul's. Mrs. has helped with Bible School and Sunday School and still helps with Bible School. She is a Eucharistic minister, usually at the Keystone Villa. Mr. has been involved with teaching catechism and the personnel team. They have seen many changes at St. Paul's throughout the years.

Do you have an idea who these members are? Find out in the April Epistle.



*Last month's mystery family was Ken and Anne Sanders.*



## St. Paul's Future is Bright

We are currently in the process of upgrading all the old fluorescent light fixtures in the building to LED. Led by the efforts of Mark Coutts we are kicking off this project to retrofit all the rooms with brand new energy-efficient LED flat panel fixtures and occupancy sensors in all the rooms throughout the building. We worked with a local electrical distributor to secure the latest and greatest fixtures that maximized the instant rebates from First Energy of \$4,530. They also provided us with a very friendly discount on the material. Mark is graciously providing his talents to this project and doing all the installation. We are very fortunate to have these great resources and opportunities, but the project will still cost the church around \$8,000.

The time, talent, and treasures of our congregation are such an integral part of our history and our continued success. They will assist in completing this project over the next few months. Your ongoing support is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to Mark for undertaking this project! We will brighten up all the rooms and save energy as well! Once the project is complete, be on the lookout for the before and after pictures in a future newsletter!

## Special Monthly Offering

We're celebrating you

### Relay for Life

We continue our support of the good work done by our local Relay for Life Chapter. Not only are loved ones honored and remembered but monies raised through RFL for the American Cancer Society fund cancer research, improve cancer survival, support cancer patients and their caregivers, and much more.



Celebrate  
Remember  
Fight Back

## Finances at St. Paul's

	<u>Jan-25</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>Actual</u>
<b>Income</b>		
Non-Preschool M&M	\$ 11,824	\$ 11,824
Preschool M&M	\$ 13,112	\$ 13,112
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 24,936</b>	<b>\$ 24,936</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
Non-Preschool	\$ 16,522	\$ 16,522
Preschool	\$ 8,218	\$ 8,218
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 24,740</b>	<b>\$ 24,740</b>
Income Less Expenses - Non-Preschool	\$ (4,697)	\$ (4,697)
Income Less Expenses - Preschool	\$ 4,894	\$ 4,894
<b>Total Income Less Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 197</b>	<b>\$ 197</b>

### **ELCA Federal Credit Union: A financial partner that shares its profits *and* shares your values**

ELCA members and employees of congregations and ministries are eligible to join the ELCA Federal Credit Union and take advantage of membership benefits, including:

No-fee checking accounts, with no monthly maintenance, minimum balance or overdraft fees.\*

Auto loan rates for up to 50% less than the national average.\*\*

And, for a limited time, no payments for up to 60 days and rates as low as 5.99% on personal loans for home improvement projects, repairs and other expenses.

The ELCA Federal Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative that shares its profits in the form of lower fees and better rates — helping you and the ministries you love do more with your money.

Did you know that you can now manage your giving to St. Paul's online? Simply Giving is an easy, secure, and convenient way to have your weekly, monthly, or yearly offering transferred directly to St. Paul's from your checking or savings account. No more writing checks and searching for that offering envelope. It just takes a few minutes to enroll and you are on your way to Simply Giving! Enrollment forms are available in the church office or visit [www.spelcfleetwood.com\give-online](http://www.spelcfleetwood.com\give-online)

Simply  **giving**®



# St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church



117 East Arch Street  
Fleetwood, PA 19522

## Office Hours

Monday—Wednesday  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
(except the 3rd Tuesday 2-5pm)

Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk  
in his ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor;  
*Blessings and prosperity* will be yours.

Psalm 128:1-2



Happy Saint Patrick's Day

## Purpose

*Filled with the Holy Spirit*

*We inspire Spiritual Growth in the Community of  
Christ by striving to ...*

## Guiding Principles

- ◆ *Welcome All People*
- ◆ *Pray Daily*
- ◆ *Worship Weekly*
- ◆ *Read, Listen, Reflect and Share the Word of God*
- ◆ *Serve at and beyond St. Paul's*
- ◆ *Encourage Spiritual Friendships*
- ◆ *Share God's Blessings Generously through the  
Giving of Our Time, Talents and Resources*

## Contact Us

### Donna Locke

Parish Administrator 610-944-8388

**Email: [office@spelcfleetwood.com](mailto:office@spelcfleetwood.com)**

### Cindy Oesterle

Treasurer 610-944-8388

### Sue Rummel

Financial Secretary 610-944-8388

### Donna Ahrens

Organist, Interim Choir Director

Director of Handbells 610-944-8388

### Carol Cox

Sunday School Director 610-944-8388

### Gretchen Mertz

Epistle Editor 610-944-6492

**Email: [gkm321@ptd.net](mailto:gkm321@ptd.net)**

### Jenn Davies, Director

Preschool 610-944-0922

**Phone:**

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**[office@spelcfleetwood.com](mailto:office@spelcfleetwood.com)**

**Website:**

**[www.spelcfleetwood.com](http://www.spelcfleetwood.com)**

**Facebook:**

**[www.facebook.com/spelcfleetwood](http://www.facebook.com/spelcfleetwood)**

You are welcome to call with questions or concerns or to stop in to discuss your needs in person. Please ring the doorbell and Donna L. will meet you at the door for admittance into the building.





# March 2025

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

						1 10:00 a.m. Private Event
2 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat Class, Coffee & Conversation 10:30 a.m. Worship & Music 7:00 p.m.	3 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts	4 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts	5 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 10:30 a.m. GWBU 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Service	6 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts	7	8
9 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat Class, Breakfast, Pastor Meet & Greet 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	10	11 7:00 p.m. Preschool Meeting	12 10:30 a.m. GWBU 5:30 p.m. Soup/Lenten Service 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Choir	13 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Cultural Series	14	15
16 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat Class, Coffee & Chit Chat 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	17	18 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts Council Meeting	19 10:30 a.m. GWBU 5:30 p.m. Soup/Lenten Service 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Choir	20 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. AA District Meeting	21	22
23 <i>Food on the Fourth</i> 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat Class, Coffee & Chit Chat 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	24	25	26 10:30 a.m. GWBU 5:30 p.m. Soup/Lenten Service 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m.	27 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts	28	29
30 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat Class, Coffee & Conversation 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	31					