



Milton Lutheran Parish Newsletter

Serving God through faith formation, worship, service, evangelism, and fellowship

March 2020

March Message from Deacon Gary Schaeffer

As we begin our Lenten journey this month, the first Sunday in Lent begins with the story of Jesus being tempted by the devil in Matthew 4:1-11.

It's easy for us as Christians to forget just how human Jesus was. We often see him as perfect, beyond reproach, powerful and strong. We focus on his miracles, his ability to teach us lessons in life, and see him as model for our daily lives. The text in Matthew 4 shows us a different kind of Jesus.

For 40 days Jesus is fasting, he's tired, he's hungry, he's lonely. He's drained physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. And in this vulnerable state the devil comes and tempts him. He challenges Jesus to change his circumstances, to eat food and to leave the wilderness.

I wonder how many of us have been in a similar place. How many times have we felt what the very human Jesus is feeling in this passage? We too can become drained. We, too, can feel lonely, abandoned, like no one understands. And it's in these moments when sin can easily take over. We become tempted by selfishness and fear. We seek to blame others for our circumstances, even God.

These 40 days of Lent are a reminder for us that God has been there too. That God understands our suffering and temptations. As we journey together toward Easter, let us not lose sight of the grace that is in the world right now. Let us too stay focused on our relationship with God and one another.

Blessings,
Deacon Gary Schaeffer

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A Brief Look . . .

Sunday Worship Services for the month of March are at Christ Lutheran at 9:30 am.

Mid-week Lenten Services are at Christ Lutheran on Wednesdays on March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1. Meal at 6 pm with 7 pm service.

Combined Creative Worship Committee meets on Monday, March 2, at 6 pm at Christ.

Parish Council meets on Tuesday, March 17, at 6:30 pm at Christ.

Combined Councils meet on Tuesday, March 24, at 6:30 at Christ.

Parish Committees Renewal Luncheon is Saturday, March 28, from 11 am to 1 pm at Trinity. All are welcome!

Easter Egg Hunt is Saturday, March 28, at 7 pm at Trinity.

2020 Community Meal Schedule:
Sunday, April 19
Sunday, June 14
Sunday, August 9
Sunday, October 11
Sunday December 13

Visit the Milton Lutheran Parish Website for more information!
<https://miltonlutheranparish.faith/>

Mission Trip to Liberia

Before arriving to Monrovia, I had no idea what I should expect of the next two and a half weeks. Expectations usually lend themselves to disappointment and so I walked out of the airport with an open mind and heart. Looking back, I cannot articulate how invaluable this experience has been for me educationally, personally, and spiritually. Each day I was confronted with all the things I have studied in school, like peacebuilding, reconciliation, and international development. Even though I was missing class at home, I learned more in Liberia than I could have from a book alone. As most countries, Liberia faces several challenges which will be incredibly difficult to overcome. The governance is poor and citizens' needs are not being fulfilled. Basic amenities like electricity and running water are not always common, even in the hospitals. As patients and students cannot afford their fees, hospital staff at Phebe and Curran, and various teachers in Lutheran schools across the country have not been paid.

Yet, in spite of all these hardships, I have confidence in the future of Liberia for it is the people of every nation who make it strong. Along our journey up country and back to the capital, I was privileged to meet men, women, and children who are resilient beyond belief and fighting to make Liberia stronger. They have started from what they do have to create a source of sustainable revenue for their schools and communities. For instance, a group of 15 young adults from St. Luke's at Phebe have come together to cultivate a garden, easily 3 or more acres large, whose revenues will be used to open a microfinance center. There is also extraordinary work being done by Rev. Daniel Baba Wuelleh to revive the Lutheran Training Institute and expand its capacity to educate and empower youth. I look forward to sharing many more of these stories when I come home for spring break.

It is easy for a Westerner to look at the situation in Liberia and take pity on them, but that really is not the appropriate response. God's work is truly being done through their hands, and He is always to be found among the underprivileged and oppressed. Spiritually, I have been blessed to share in faith with the Liberians and to see and feel their fervent love for God. Even their singing is so joyous, it is impossible to walk out of the two to three hour Sunday worship feeling down. With their loving welcome and prayers that I will soon return, I have brought back their stories to share with you all. I wanted to extend my deepest gratitude to Trinity for their offering and to all those of the Parish congregation who helped to finance my trip. As not all the money was my own, I did not intend on leaving with much in my pocket. I am happy to let you know that your kind offerings have helped to support various projects: \$50 was given to support the youth garden project, \$40 for supplies at a school in Zorzor, \$205 to support the restoration of the Lutheran Training Institute, \$300 to assist a young man in finishing his studies at Cuttington University, and finally \$350 was given to F-SHAM, the girl's school which recently built the Nancy Hoffman Pastry Center, in honor of Nancy's commitment to the school.

The relationship between the Lutheran Church in Liberia and the Upper Susquehanna Synod is a precious one that we must continue to make a concerted effort to maintain. As brothers and sister in Christ, the Liberians have shown me great love and extend their peace and blessing back to all in the synod. It is only right that we return this love and continue to pray, support the efforts of the LCL and grow our friendship with the Liberians.

With gratitude,
Claire Weisner

Note: Claire will be sharing her experience in Liberia with us during worship on March 22.

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2020 Easter Services

The following is the worship schedule for the 2020 Easter Season:

- Wednesday Evening Lenten Services are March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1 at Christ with a meal at 6:00 pm and worship at 7:00 pm
- Maundy Thursday is April 9 at 7:00 pm @ Trinity
- Good Friday is April 10 at 7:00 pm at Trinity
- Easter Sunday is April 12 at 9:30 am at Christ
- All other April Sunday worship services are at Trinity at 9:30 am



Easter Egg Hunt



When: 7:00 pm Saturday, March 28

Where: Trinity Lutheran Church

Bring: A bucket and an adult for some fun collecting eggs and surprises. And bring friends, too!

We are asking for donations of small wrapped candy. Contact Tiffany Heimbach-570-412-5838 to help or with any questions.

Congregational Meetings – March 22

Congregational Meetings for both Trinity and Christ will be held on Sunday, March 22, during worship to present and accept Annual Reports for 2019, to select and approve Synod Assembly Voting Delegates, and to approve the updated Constitution (Christ Lutheran only). Please plan to attend to be part of the voting and acceptance of this church business.

Worship Participants – Help Wanted!

Worship participants are important volunteer positions and are integral to ensuring a smooth and seamless worship experience for all. These positions include: worship assistants, readers/lectors, communion assistants/servers, ushers, greeters, and alter guild. More help and new people are wanted! If you feel the spirit move you to serve in any of these capacities, please plan to attend training/re-training for worship participants. Dates for the training will be announced as they are decided. Any questions about this, please talk to Kellie Brouse and Chuck Stahl.

Opportunity, not Opportunities

The season of Lent serves as one opportunity for Christians to prepare for the coming celebration of Easter. The season of Lent is not made up of several opportunities of which you may pick and choose which services you want to attend. Each service is intended to be a part of the total preparation time of Lent. With that in mind, take advantage of this one opportunity of six weeks to prepare for the celebration of Easter. After these six weeks of dedicated preparation, the Gospel proclamation of Good Friday and Easter Sunday will be that much sweeter to taste.

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March 22, A Special Sunday

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, March 22. Our interim, Deacon Gary Schaeffer, will be presiding, and there will be two special events. Landon William Tanner, son of Lindsay Byers Tanner and Seth Tanner and grandson of Stephanie and Robert Byers will be baptized on this Sunday, and Claire Weisner will be sharing her experience in Liberia with us. Both of which make it a very special Sunday!

Buffalo Valley Lay School of Theology

The Buffalo Valley Conference Lay School of Theology event will be March 15, 2020 from 2:00-5:30 p.m. at United in Christ, West Milton, and will feature workshops and educational opportunities surrounding scripture, sacraments, and current events. Each workshop session will feature four workshops and there will be two time slots. Between sessions, Holden Evening Prayer will be done. The conference extends an invitation to all to participate in this day of learning and conversation. Continuing Ed contact hours available for Authorized Lay Worship Leaders. You may direct further inquiries to Rev. John Yost, 570-837-9232, prjohnyost@gmail.com. Freewill offering for refreshment costs. Advanced registration is helpful but not necessary. Call 570-837-9232 or 570-524-9778.

USS ARK

USS Ark is a monthly newsletter highlighting ministries in the Synod. Visit this link at the Upper Susquehanna Synod website to read the latest edition <https://www.uss-elca.org/uss-ark/>. Or, pick up a copy at either church building.

Parish Committees Renewal Luncheon

March 28, 11:00 to 1:00

Trinity Lutheran Fellowship Hall

Church Committees serve and care for others in Christ's name. The committee work and responsibilities are carried out through the gifts, talents, time, and energy of the people. This work is done out of love and gratitude to God for what he has done for us in Christ. Are you currently a member of a Trinity, Christ, or Parish committee? Or, were you in the past? Or, would you like to become involved with church committee work? All are invited to attend this working luncheon where we will be reviewing and renewing our Parish committees. Lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP by March 20 to Krista Yaiko or Donna Spear by email, text, phone, or in person to let us know you will attend.

yaikok@yahoo.com 570-742-7772

speardonna@gmail.com 570-492-5006

Here is the agenda:

Opening Prayer and Overview 11:00 – 11:15

Breakout Committee Work 11:15 – 12:00

Lunch 12:00 – 12:30

Wrap Up and Share Out 12:30 – 1:00

Renewed Parish Committees: Faith Formation (formerly Christian Education); Creative Worship (formerly Worship and Music); Service and Evangelism (formerly Stewardship, Social); Fellowship (formerly Parish Life and Hospitality); Property

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Worship Options for Milton Lutheran Parish

Overview:

As we approach April of 2020 the leadership of the Parish needs to make a decision on the worship schedule for the Parish. In September 2019 it was decided that for six months we would worship under the current configuration of having one worship service and switching back and forth each month. This decision was made so that the members of the parish could experience this worship style, and we could evaluate its effectiveness in accomplishing our mission.

Factors to Consider:

1. Effective Decision Making- In order to effectively make the decision about what the worship schedule will look like permanently there needs to be several things in place.
 - A discernment process that allows the congregation to engage in helpful dialogue about the worship options and which is best.
 - A clear sense of what our mission and vision are and what they mean.
 - An evaluation of the existing needs of the community and how we can structure our worship to meet those needs.
 - A commitment from the leadership to make a permanent decision.
2. Growth- Both churches have expressed a willingness and desire to grow. However, the two worship models that have been used as a parish do not position us to grow. Quite the opposite is true.
 - Having two separate worship services spreads your resources too thin to sustain growth (Examples: Pastoral leadership, cost of upkeep, choir, and organist.
 - Rotating back and forth between two churches is confusing and not welcoming to potential visitors.
3. Transitional Leadership- The parish remains in a place of transitional leadership. This kind of a decision is difficult to make effectively without a permanent Pastor in place. It is likely that you would need to revisit this conversation when you welcome a new Pastor into your community.

Recommendation:

The Parish council recommends that the two councils take the month of March and consider two options for worship that will be implemented from May 2020-November 2020.

Option 1- Continue rotating back and forth between churches with one church hosting each month.

Option 2- Have two separate worship services based on the original schedule that was established a few years ago when the parish was formed.

At the March council meeting the councils will make the decision to follow one of the two options and communicate that decision to the parish as a whole.

For the period of May-November the parish will conduct a discernment process that enables the parish members to make a permanent decision by November of 2020.

Questions for Discernment:

What value has option 1/option 2 brought to you and your family?

What value has option 1/option 2 brought to our community of faith?

What challenges or issues has option 1/ option 2 brought to you and your family?

What challenges or issues has option 1/ option 2 brought to our community of faith?

Which option do you feel is best for our parish during this transitional time?

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Steward Your Soul for a Fuller Life

Jesus teaches, “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?” –Mark 8:36, 37 (NIV)

Instead of the superficial “How’s it going?” a wise colleague asks friends, “How is your soul?”

The question requires effort. To answer it I must plunge deep inside – below the constantly churning waters of everyday joys, hopes, ambitions, desires, anxieties and disappointments. These are so strong, especially our desires and ambitions, that if we are not careful they can absorb all our time and energy.

Jesus repeatedly warns us not to let our desires and our worries overwhelm us, keeping us from paying attention to the soul. Our soul is where we connect with God, the source of our greatest strength and truest identity. Without attention, our soul can wither like a plant without water. As with all the treasures God has given us, we must be stewards of our souls.

The mystics of old and modern prophets (such as Richard Rohr, Marjorie Thompson, and Howard Thurman) teach us to employ prayer, holy silence, and other spiritual disciplines to tend our souls and keep worldly worries and desires from drowning us.

This month, begin a daily practice of caring for your soul. You might begin with five minutes of spoken prayer followed by five minutes of silence. Or reflect deeply on a Scripture passage. Or try prayerful yoga. (Your pastor might be able to give you some resources or ideas.)

With a little practice and attention, you can become stronger, more centered, and more spiritually resilient. How is your soul?

--Rob Blezard (“The Stewardship Guy” for the Lower Susquehanna Synod)

March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays		Anniversaries
Stanley Bower- 3/1 Aaron Coup- 3/1 Tiffany Heimbach- 3/2 Doris Heffelfinger-3/5 Russell Bastian-3/10 Zachary Scott- 3/11 Jerrold Roush-3/13 Bebe Bolich-3/14 Ryan Byers-3/14 Terry Valiquette-3/19	Linda Bastain- 3/25 Penny Coup-3/25 Bonnie Hauck-3/27 Ely Reitz- 3/27 Leroy Ishler-3/28 Logan Spangler-3/30 Joe Solomon- 3/31 Matt Spangler- 3/31 Rachael Spear-3/31 Stella Webb- 3/31	Ron & Amy Mull -3/22 Russell & Linda Bastian- 3/26 Dale & Carol Mausteller- 3/28 

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New ELW Hymnals at Christ Lutheran

Beginning in January, the pew hymnals have been updated at Christ Lutheran to the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship edition. More comprehensive than previous worship books, the Evangelical Lutheran Worship Pew Edition is still compact and easy to handle. It introduces a rich and broad selection of new songs and prayers—yet it includes much that our churches know, cherish, and use from existing resources.

If you would like to sponsor a new hymnal (or hymnals) and have your name or a loved one's name on a placard in the inside cover, please fill out a form (for each) that you will find on both church bulletin boards or below, and place it in the offering plate with your donation of \$25 for each sponsorship. Checks should be made payable to Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. Or, send the form(s) and payment to the church office at 1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847. Feel free to call the church office with any questions.

We would also like to purchase four or five large print ELW hymnals to help people with visual imparities. If you would like to sponsor a large print hymnal, the cost is \$60.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal Sponsorship Form

Please complete this form and place it in the offering plate
or return it to the church office along with payment

Your Name _____

Sponsorship (circle one): In Honor of In Memory of

Name as you want it printed on the inside cover placard (Please Print):

Payment Amount (regular print \$25; large print \$60) _____

Circle one: Check Cash

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Milton Lutheran Parish Prayer Concerns

Members, Friends and Family of Milton Lutheran Parish Prayer List

Note: Names will remain on the parish prayer list for 30 days. After 30 days names will be removed from the prayer list unless you notify Donna Riccio that you wish to remain on the prayer list.

Barb Ashenfelder, Patsy Aunkst, Linda Bastian, Rodney Bastian, Betty Baumer, MaryLou Benshoff, Julie Benshoff, Harry Berger, Mary Billhime, Dolores Boonie, Georgia Boyer, Betty Callenberger, Mary Jane & Melvin Crist, Ken Delp, Bonnie Erb, Judy Farr, George & Joanie Fisher, Helen Fisher, Charlene Francis, David Gauger, Ken Gaugler, Ann Gelnett, Gerald Greenly, Rhonda Hall, Kimberly Handy, Valerie Handy, Wayne Hauck, John Heffelfinger, Doris Heffelfinger, Florence Ishler, Pete Ishler, Katy Mahn, Nancy Mensch, Nicholas Francis-Miller and family, Shannon Moll, Rod Moore, Ron Mull, Ed Nelson, Mark Nolder, Nora, DorithiJean Poeth, Dan Ritter, Jerry Roush, Alice Roush, Troy Schlegel, Connie Sholly, Beth Ann Slusser, Dean Slusser, Laurie Staley, Matt Swartzlander, Karen Walters, Nancy Walters, Shirley Wargo, Nancy Weikel, Mike & Lynnette Weisner, Cleo Yocum, Darlas Yost, Harold Webb, Robert White, Deanna Williams

Those serving in the military:

Trent Wargo

Our leaders, guides, & activities:

Deacon Schaeffer, Rev. Brian & Christine Palmer, missionaries, Bishop B.J. Collins, Synod Staff, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Authorized Lay Worship Leaders, our Parish Call Committee, Mutual Ministry Team, Parish Council, Parish Stewardship, Christian Ed Ministry and Spiritual Growth Ministry.

PLEASE CHECK THIS LIST EACH WEEK IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN AND LET THE OFFICE KNOW OF ANYONE WHO NEEDS ADDED OR CAN BE REMOVED. THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PRAYER WARRIORS!

Silent God- Edwina Gateley

This is my prayer—
That, though I may not see,
I be aware
Of the Silent God
Who stands by me.
That, though I may not feel,
I be aware
Of the Mighty Love
Which doggedly follows me.
That, though I may not respond,
I be aware
That God—my Silent, Mighty God,
Waits each day.
Quietly, hopefully, persistently.
Waits each day and through each night
For me.

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Milton Lutheran Parish on the Web

Find us and follow us on Facebook by searching Trinity Lutheran Church and Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. Visit our website regularly for all MLP information.

<https://miltonlutheranparish.faith/>

Office Hours – 8 am-3:30 pm (Trinity-Mon.-Fri. mornings; Christ- Mon.-Fri. afternoons)

Deadline for the next newsletter is March 20. Please e-mail the Parish Office Administrator with any bulletin announcements or newsletter articles or drop them off at either church.

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 Church Phone- 570-742-7473

Parish Office Administrator – driccio@christlutheranmpa.org

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

100 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 Church Phone-570-742-4601

Parish Office Administrator- tlcmilton@ptd.net

Milton Lutheran Parish Website: <https://miltonlutheranparish.faith/>

2020 Parish Council	2020 Christ Council	2020 Trinity Council
Krysta Yaiko, President Don Fisher, Vice President Lynnette Weisner, Secretary Rose Handy Bill Heimbach Donna Spear	Donna Spear, President Tonya Wargo, Vice President Penny Ulmer, Secretary Rich Handy, Treasurer Kellie Brouse Kay Dunn Don Fisher Nancy Mensch Nancy Walters	Krista Yaiko, President Jeff Coup, Vice President Crystal Gnidovec, Secretary Kate Budman Kevin Fry Bill Heimbach Seth Reitz Dawn Russell Cindy Trapane
Church Staff Deacon Gary Schaeffer, Interim Pastor Donna Riccio, Parish Office Administrator Donna Spear, Parish Webmaster Bob Greenly, Christ Groundskeeper Rich Handy, Christ and Parish Treasurer Nancy Walters, Christ Church Music Director and Choir Director Helen Billhime, Christ Custodian Charles Stahl, Trinity Sexton John Warfel, Parish Organist and Bell Choir Director Carol Yost, Trinity Treasurer		

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March 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 1st Sunday of Lent <i>Combined Service 9:30am At Christ</i>	2 <i>ARC 6-8pm</i> <i>Staff Meeting- 1:00pm</i> <i>Combined Worship & Music Meeting 6pm</i>	3 <u>Bible Study- 9:30am</u> <u>Call Committee- 7:00pm</u>	4 <i>Lenten Service 6:00pm-meal 7:00pm-service</i> <i>Bell Choir 6pm</i> <i>Choir 6:30pm</i>	5	6	7
8 2nd Sunday of Lent <i>Combined Service 9:30am At Christ</i>	9 <i>ARC 6-8pm</i>	10 <u>Bible Study- 9:30am</u>	11 <i>Lenten Service 6:00pm-meal 7:00pm-service</i> <i>Bell Choir 6pm</i> <i>Choir 6:30pm</i>	12	13	14
15 3rd Sunday of Lent <i>Combined Service 9:30am At Christ</i>	16 <i>ARC 6-8pm</i>	17 <u>Bible Study- 9:30am</u> <i>Parish Council Meeting 6:30pm</i>	18 <i>Lenten Service 6:00pm-meal 7:00pm-service</i> <i>Bell Choir 6pm</i> <i>Choir 6:30pm</i>	19 <i>Community Meal Planning 6:30pm</i>	20	21
22 4th Sunday of Lent <i>Combined Service 9:30am at Christ</i>	23 <i>ARC 6-8pm</i>	24 <u>Bible Study- 9:30am</u> <i>Combined Councils Meeting 6:30pm</i>	25 <i>Lenten Service 6:00pm-meal 7:00pm-meal</i> <i>Bell Choir 6pm</i> <i>Choir 6:30pm</i>	26	27	28 <u>Parish Committees Renewal Luncheon 11am to 1pm</u> <u>Easter Egg Hunt 7pm</u>
29 5th Sunday of Lent <i>Combined Service 9:30am At Christ</i>	30 <i>ARC 6-8pm</i>	31 <u>Bible Study- 9:30am</u>	April 1 <i>Lenten Service 6:00pm-meal 7:00pm-meal</i>			

At Trinity Lutheran Building-Underlined At Christ Lutheran Building-Italics

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