MILTON LUTHERAN CHURCH / NOVEMBER 2026

NEWSLETTER

Fostering community through faith, love, and service

A Letter from the Pastor

Free Indeed

“So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” — John 8:36

We hear a lot about freedom in our world. We value the freedom to make our own choices, speak our minds, and live life on our own terms. We often think of freedom as the ability to do whatever we want without anyone telling us what to do. But when Jesus speaks about freedom in John 8, he is talking about something much deeper.

Jesus tells those who believe in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” His listeners are confused. They insist that they have never been slaves to anyone. How can Jesus say they need to be set free?

Jesus explains that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. He is talking about the ways sin holds us captive: our pride, our resentment, our fear, our desire for approval, and our tendency to measure our worth by what we accomplish. We can become trapped in the exhausting belief that we must prove ourselves worthy, even before God.

But Jesus offers a different kind of freedom. Through him, we are forgiven and welcomed into God's family. We do not have to earn God's love through our good behavior, religious devotion, or accomplishments. God's love is a gift, given to us through the grace of Jesus Christ.

Martin Luther understood this as one of the great truths of the Christian faith. In his writing *The Freedom of a Christian*, Luther explains that we are made right with God through faith, not through our good works. We cannot earn our salvation. We receive it as a gift. And when we trust that God's love is already ours, something remarkable happens, we are freed from the need to spend our lives proving ourselves to God and others.

But Christian freedom is not simply freedom *from* something. It is also freedom *for* something.

Luther famously wrote that a Christian is both a “perfectly free lord of all” and a “perfectly dutiful servant of all.” At first, these statements seem contradictory. How can we be free and yet be servants? Luther's point is that when we no longer have to earn God's love, we are free to turn our attention toward our neighbors. We can love without expecting something in return, forgive without keeping score, give without needing recognition, and serve without wondering what we will get out of it.

This is the freedom Jesus gives us. We are freed from the burden of earning God's favor so that we can live in the joy of sharing God's love with others. Our good works do not earn God's grace; they are the fruit of the grace we have already received.

What might this freedom look like in our daily lives? Perhaps it means letting go of a resentment we have carried for too long. Perhaps it means offering kindness to someone who cannot repay us. Perhaps it means serving our congregation or community, not out of guilt or obligation, but out of gratitude for all God has done for us.

The world often tells us that freedom means being able to do whatever we want. Jesus reminds us that true freedom comes from knowing who we are and whose we are. We belong to God, and nothing we accomplish—or fail to accomplish—can replace the love God has shown us in Christ.

As we continue in Jesus' word, may we grow in the freedom he promises freedom from sin, freedom from the need to prove our worth, and freedom to love and serve our neighbors. For when the Son sets us free, we are truly free indeed.

An Update from MLC Church Council

From Council President Connie Stover

The Church Council is working on the preparations for a Congregational meeting in December.

To prepare for the congregational meeting, Council has been reviewing job descriptions and the timeline for the Building Stewardship team. Council is also working on the proposed 2027 budget.

The Nominating Committee is working to identify members to serve on the Church Council, to attend the Synod Assembly, and to serve on the Building Stewardship Team. These members will be voted on at the congregational meeting. We are grateful to all who are willing to share their time and gifts in service to our congregation.

Council continues to discuss the 11 areas of focus and develop a plan for moving forward. We look forward to sharing updates with the congregation over the coming months as we continue to discern God's direction for our church.

Ministry Team and Small Group Monthly Report

Outreach Team

Self-care Sanctuary is collecting Dish Soap for the month of November.

Thank you to everyone that participated in the Trunk or Treat Event! We had 540 join us for a great day of fun! We hosted 29 trunks this year.

Empty Bowl Dinner & Basket Raffle is on Saturday, November 7th. Please invite family and friends to join us for this all-you-can-eat dinner! All proceeds are being donated to fight food insecurity in our hometown.

We are continuing with our tradition of hosting the Christmas Angel Tree! Tags will be available on Sunday, November 8th. Please consider taking a tag to help give a gift to a child in need.
All presents should be wrapped and returned to the church by Sunday, December 6th.

Any questions, please reach out to Stephanie Byers or anyone on the outreach team!

Thanks,
Stephanie

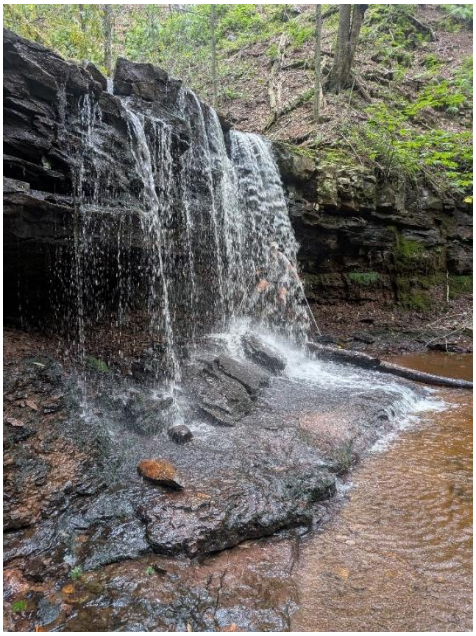
Hiking Group
Here is the report for MLC Hiking Group:

Due to two Sunday hikes being totally washed-out and one cancelled due to a death in a family, there were no hikes in October. Our next hike will be (God willing!) on Sunday, November 8th. Jim O'Connell will be leading a hike to the Cherry Run Loop at Lake Jean.

The hike is an easy, 5.5 miles with only 505' of elevation. We will carpool from the church at NOON. If you prefer, you can meet us at the trailhead at about 1pm. Directions: turn off Rt 118 at Red Rock onto 487 N. Turn R at the main Rickett's Glen Park entrance onto Lake Leigh Drive. Follow the road until it enters Beach Lot #2 and park there. On the way home we will stop at the Rickets Glenn Hotel for refreshments.

Jeff
R. Jeffrey Coup

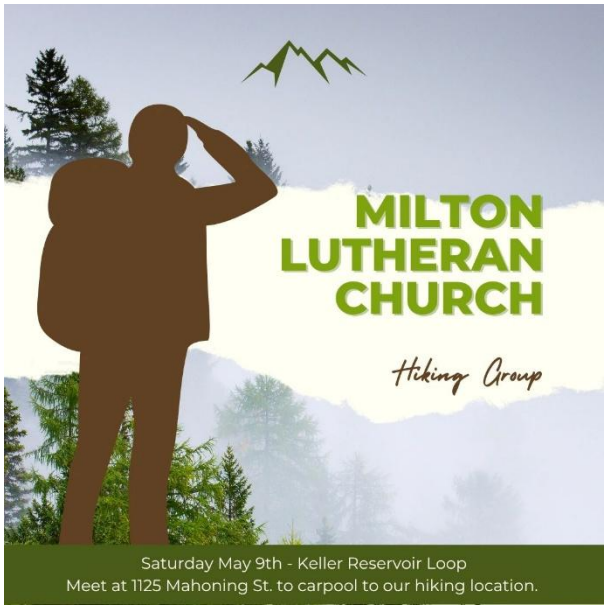




Announcements

Our capital campaign is still going strong for Camp Mount Luther! Any financial gift you make will be matched for 2026! You can make a contribution through a weekly/monthly donation in your offering to the church, noting the contribution is for the Camp Mount Luther Capital Campaign; a one-time donation to the campaign through your giving envelope to the church, or by going to the website: https://www.campmountluther.org/capital-campaign/ and making a donation either by check to the camp or by credit card. It's as easy as that! By giving through MLC's campaign, you basically double your giving as we match the gifts that come in! Camp is a respite for so many. A place that spreads love and joy and the Word of God! Your donation will help improve Camp to be the best it can be for all who attend!

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE
CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

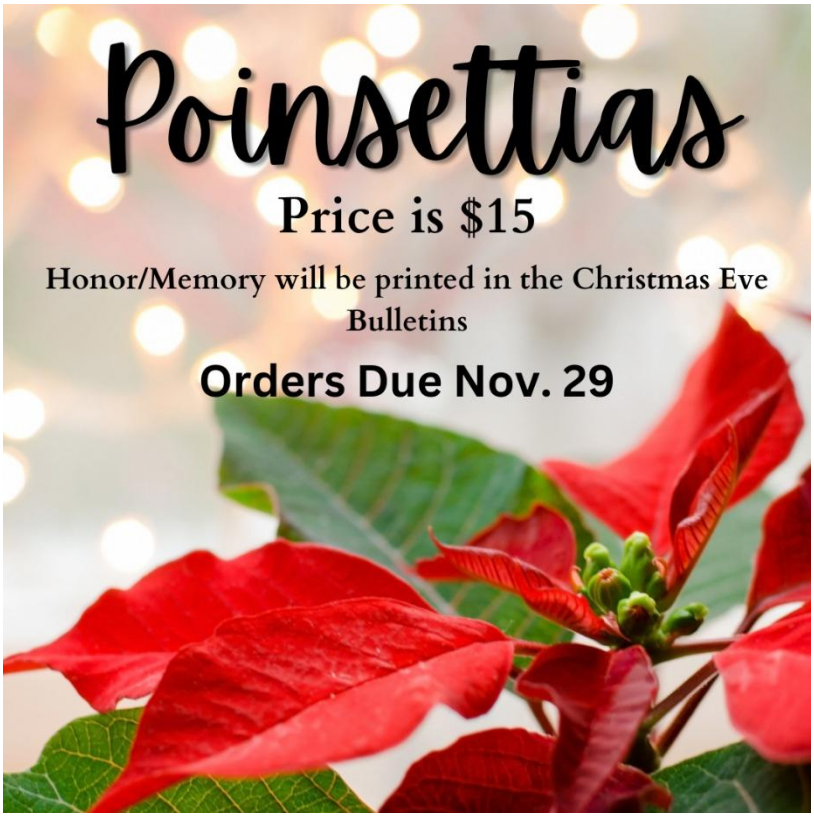


Sunday, November 8, 2026 Cherry Run Loop at Lake Jean
Easy 5.5 miles 505' elevation

We will carpool from the church at NOON. If you want to meet us at the trailhead about 1 pm, turn off Rt 118 at Red Rock onto 487 N. Turn right at the main Rickett's Glen Park entrance onto Lake Leigh Drive. Follow the road until it enters Beach Lot #2 and park there. On the way home we will stop at the Rickets Glen Hotel for refreshments.

On Sunday Nov. 1st, we will recognize the members of MLC that have died this past year. A special time will be given during the service to pray for all the saints who have passed away. You are invited to bring pictures of loved ones who have died to be placed on the alter during worship.





Our pet pantry is the first Sunday of the month from 11:30am-12:30pm held in conjunction with our Self-Care Sanctuary. Our next one is Nov.1st .



For the month of Nov., we are requesting donations of dish soap.
We appreciate anything you can give to this ministry!

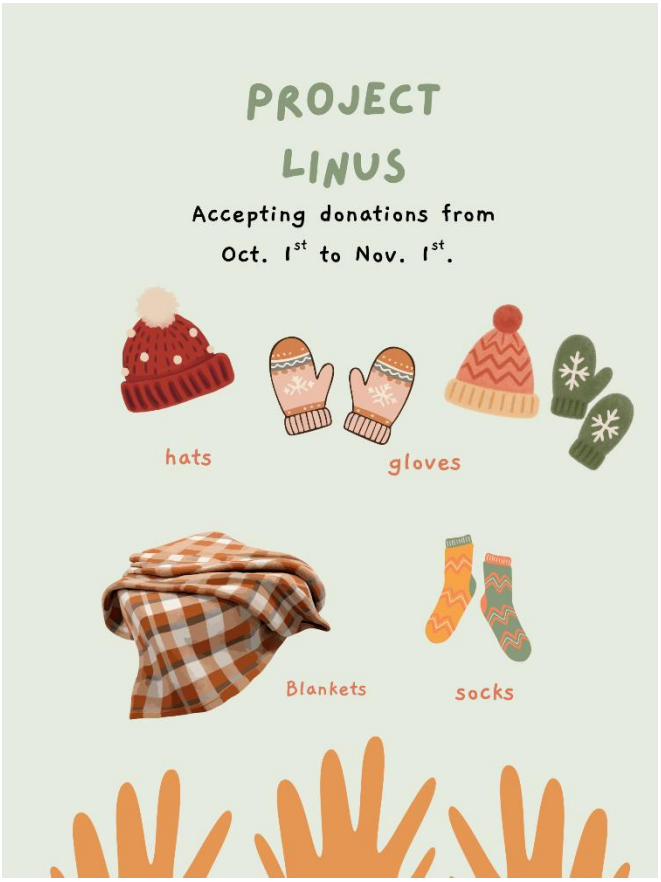




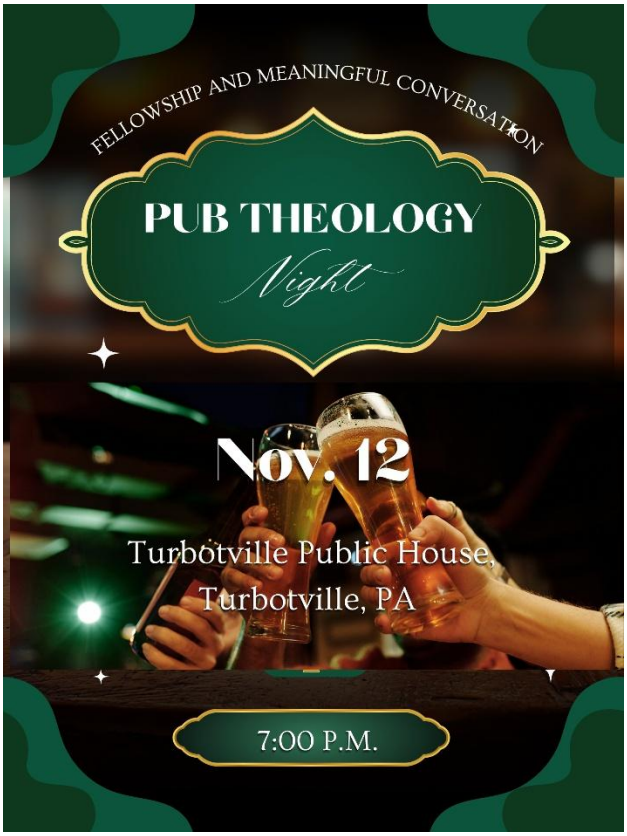
The purpose of the Milton Lutheran Church Endowment fund is to further the Mission of MLC by supporting projects, programs, and events sponsored by our members. Endowments will be granted for areas dealing with children and youth, matching funds for existing fundraisers, service projects, local, national, and international initiatives, and existing church partnerships. Applications will be reviewed by the endowment team and granted upon their approval. Deadlines for requests are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1. Applications can be found on the website on the documents & videos page, under Milton Lutheran Church Documents, and at the church office. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact the office and your questions will be directed to whoever can best answer the query.



Our Fidget Quilters next meeting: Dec 2nd. If you have any questions, contact Connie Stover.







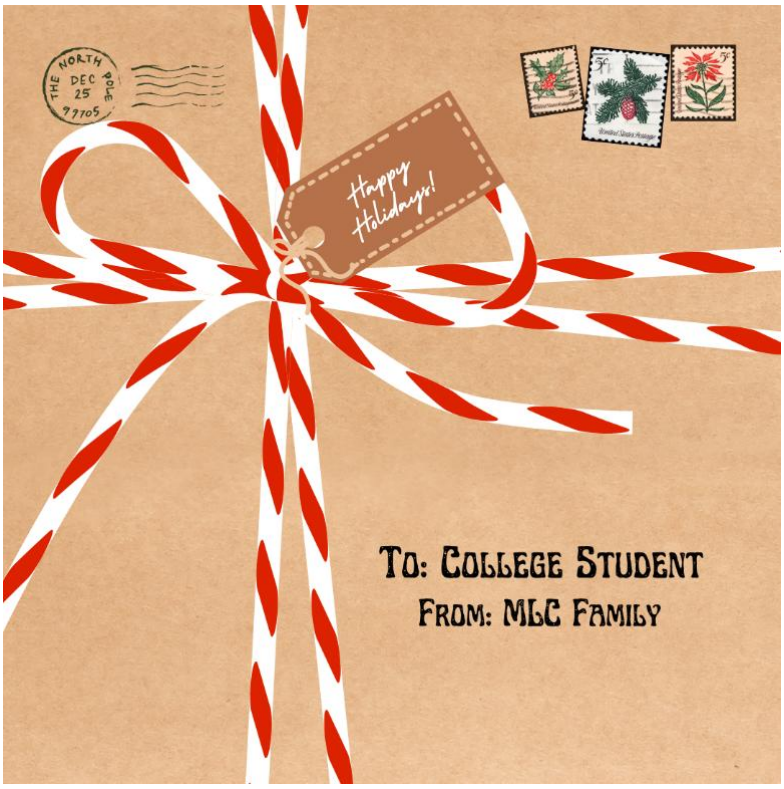






Breakfast club is cancelled for Nov. 3rd and will resume on Nov. 10th.

We will be collecting items for college students (snacks/ ChapStick/tissues/etc.) to be donated by Sunday, November 15th. Congregational members can sign up their college students and family members to receive one as well by November 15th. The packages will be blessed at service on the 22nd. Sign Ups will be placed in the binder.





Please bring a dessert to share. Also, please bring something that shows what you are thankful for.

Sign-up is in the binder.



If you would like to sit with other MLC members, please sign up in the binder by Sunday Nov. 22nd. Walk ins are welcome day of the event, but seating is limited.



Announcements from Our Friends

Join us at Camp Mount Luther on Nov. 6th for time of fellowship and to support the ministry of Camp Mount Luther. While refreshments and a glass of wine are included, everyone is encouraged to donate to Camp Mount Luther. Any wine purchase benefits the Camp Mount Luther ministry. Please email cml@campmountluther.org to make your reservation.







SAVE THE DATE

SUN, NOV 1
9:30am Worship
11am Choir practice
11:30 Self Care Sanctuary/ Pet Pantry

MON, NOV 2
6pm Boy Scouts
6pm Girl Scouts

TUE, NOV 3
9am Breakfast club
10am TOPS

WED, NOV 4
6pm Boy Scouts
6pm Bell Choir

THU, NOV 5
7pm Outreach Team meeting

SAT, NOV 7
4pm Empty Bowl Dinner

SUN, NOV 8
9:30am Worship
11am Fellowship hour
11am Choir practice

MON, NOV 9
6pm Exec meeting
6pm Boy Scouts

TUE, NOV 10
9am Breakfast club
10am TOPS

WED, NOV 11
6pm Boy Scouts
6pm bell choir

THU, NOV 12
1pm Worship Team meeting
7pm Pub theology

SUN, NOV 15
9:30am Worship
2pm Getting Ahead Graduation
5pm Friendsgiving Dinner

MON, NOV 16
6pm Boy Scouts
6pm Girl Scouts
7pm Council Meeting

TUE, NOV 17
9am Breakfast club
10am TOPS 10:30 Movers and Shakers

WED, NOV 18
6pm Boy Scouts
Blood Drive

SUN, NOV 22
9:30am Worship
11am Choir Practice
11am Fellowship Hour

MON, NOV 23
6PM Boy Scouts

TUE, NOV 24
9am Breakfast Club
10am TOPS

WED, NOV 25
6pm Boy Scouts

SUN, NOV 29
9:30am Worship
11am Choir Practice

MON, NOV 30
6pm Boy Scouts
6pm Girl Scouts

Donations Made in the Names of Loved Ones to the Abiding Memorial Fund

For the Month of October

Kevin Metzger by Rick and Judy Coup

Kevin Metzger by Carol and Nevin Yost

Joyce Stahl by Carol and Nevin Yost

Ken Gaugler by Chris, Bridgette, Madison, & Evan Coup