

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 3, 2023

9:00 AM



Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church
Reinholds, Pennsylvania

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT SWAMP LUTHERAN CHURCH

Face masks are **optional** inside Church building. If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask, please do so.

Offering plates are passed. Additionally, there is an offering drop box in the narthex. Online giving via cell phone is easy and secure. Just use this QR code from your phone's camera app.



Visitors are welcome and invited to make themselves at home. If you're interested in learning more about Swamp Lutheran, have questions, or are looking for a church home, speak with Pastor Scott or church members. Please complete a visitor card and place in an offering drop box or sign guest register in narthex.

Restrooms are located off the narthex (lobby) by the coat rack.

The worship service is printed in this bulletin. **Hymns** are found in the red hymnal Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

Our worship is rooted in the ancient pattern of the church—gathering, word, meal, sending. The shape of this liturgy and much of the actual words/prayers come directly from scripture. Though we make seasonal shifts, the constancy of our worship reflects God's constant love and promises through forgiveness, scripture, and the sacraments of baptism and communion. Following this liturgical pattern, as well as the Revised Common Lectionary, a three-year cycle of scripture readings, connects us through our worship with Christians around the world and throughout time.

Children's active presence is welcomed in our worship. There are special kids bulletins available in the narthex.

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive **Holy Communion**. We believe "Holy Communion is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and drink." (Small Catechism, Martin Luther) Children who do not yet receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE THE KING OF GLORY ISRAELI FOLK SONG/ARR. JOHN FERGUSON
CHANCEL CHOIR
DOUG KULP, PERCUSSION

*congregational responses are in **bold type**.*

stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.
Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness

**that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.
Amen.**

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.
In the tender compassion of ✠ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN FLING WIDE THE DOOR

ELW 259

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

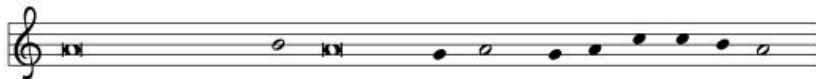
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



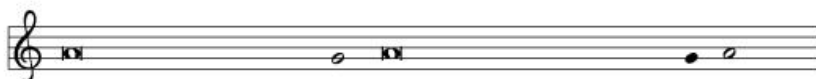
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sit

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the first candle on this wreath,
rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord
when he comes with all the saints and angels.
Enlighten us with your grace,
and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

ANTHEM O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL ARR. LIEBERGEN

WORD

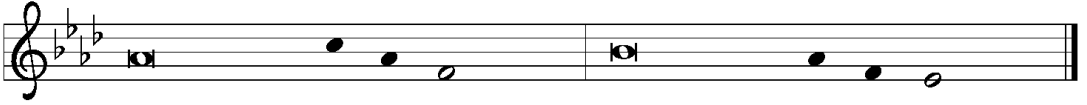
God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING **ISAIAH 64:1-9**

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
²as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
⁴From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
⁵You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
⁶We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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- ¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph [|] like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- [|] on the cherubim.
- ²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, [|] and Manasseh,**
stir up your strength and [|] come to help us.
- ³Restore [|] us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we [|] shall be saved.
- ⁴**O LORD[|] God of hosts,**
how long will your anger fume when your [|] people pray?
- ⁵You have fed them with the [|] bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of [|] tears to drink.
- ⁶**You have made us the derision [|] of our neighbors,**
and our enemies laugh [|] us to scorn.
- ⁷Restore us, O [|] God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we [|] shall be saved.
- ¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at [|] your right hand,**
the one you have made so strong [|] for yourself.
- ¹⁸And so will we never turn a- [|] way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- [|] on your name.
- ¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD[|] God of hosts;**
let your face shine upon us, and we [|] shall be saved.

SECOND READING 1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY GOSPEL **MARK 13: 24-37**

The Holy Gospel according to Mark

Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,
²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ

SIT

SERMON

SEMINARIAN GABRIELLA HARRIS

CHILDREN’S SERMON

REV. SCOTT V. BRUBAKER

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY MY LORD, WHAT A MORNING

ELW 438

CREED

We confess the faith of the church, the faith into which we were baptized:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

After each petition:

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

*You may share the peace safely. A simple nod to those next to you, with the words
"peace be with you" exchanged is always sufficient.*

Sit

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERTORY LO! HE COMES WITH CLOUDS DESCENDING

ROBERT LAU

OFFERING *In addition to the plate, online giving via cell phone is safe and secure. See QR code on the inside cover of this bulletin.*

As the offering is brought to the table, the congregation stands and sings.

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT

ELW 715



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.



Refrain
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the
dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your
church gath - ered to - day.

OFFERING PRAYER

God our provider,
**by your merciful hand
abundance springs up from the earth.
Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.
Let them be a sign of your steadfast love
and faithfulness for all people,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Father, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord. To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table.
Come, eat and live.
Thanks be to God.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on

us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the

sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

HYMN DURING COMMUNION (CONGREGATION ENCOURAGED TO SING)

ELW 252

After all have communed, stand

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Let us pray.

Generous God,
in bread and cup you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.
Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you
now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN THE KING SHALL COME

ELW 260

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SLEEPERS, WAKE!

ROBERT LAU

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CIRCLE OF PRAYER - Hunter Leisey, John Frantz, Ed Miller, John Wesner,
Michael Wargo, Jan Lorah, Sandi Clemens, Nettie Kriener, Clair Sweigart, Faith
Moyer, Michael A. Crowther, Reba Ranck, Grace Ranck, Ray Fox, Gene Miller,

Kelly Martin, , Jean Wolf, Bruce Wagner, Honey Notobartolo, Charles Moyer, Anna Habecker, Doreen McGonnell, Bobby Hershey, Anna Hershey, Marilyn Gelsinger, Caitlin DePaul, Edith Snyder, Jackson Sensenig, Sharon Levan, JJ Johnson, Robert Bachman, Russ Herbein, Teresa Sweigart, Mel and Troy Ulrich. Janey Malafarina-West, Brandon Bailey, Josh Garrison, Earl Myers, Shirley Hoppman, family of Edgar Gress, Elmer Gockley

ALTAR FLOWERS are in memory of loved ones by the congregation.

SANCTUARY CANDLE is given in memory of loved ones by the congregation.

TAKE NOTE – Please contact Joyce Stoner (717) 336-7077 or mark Flower Calendar in Narthex if you would like flowers or the candle to be given in honor or memory of someone. Upcoming Sundays open.

WE WELCOME TODAY Minister Gabriella C. Harris, MBA, who is a second year, ordination track student at United Lutheran Seminary. She is currently serving as Associate Minister of Greater Faith Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA. Thank you, Gabriella!

OFFERING ENVELOPES – If you give via the online option, let us know by email (secretary@swamplutheran.org) or by phone to the office so that you will no longer receive offering envelopes for 2023.

MOST CURRENT INFORMATION – Be sure and check our website regularly for updates and schedules of ongoing activities of the church. Full prayer list is in the newsletter each month.

ACTION FUND – Donations are sought for Swamp Action Fund to help the needy in our community. Write “Action Fund” in the comment line of your check payable to Swamp Lutheran Church.

ATTENTION THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBERS. The Thrivent “Action Teams” program is an opportunity for Thrivent members to lead projects that provide service and outreach to the community. Thrivent Financial will provide funds of \$250 for each project to get started and pay for associated expenses. You may request two grants per year. Swamp Lutheran has many needs that qualify

under this program. If you wish to direct your grant request to help with Swamp Lutheran's activities, please reach out to Lori Gockley who will assist you with the process. Email: lgockley2@gmail.com or call 717-203-8551



Gently Used Sneakers Needed. Cub Pack 95 is collecting sneakers as a fundraiser. Used sneakers (pairs only; athletic shoes only) may be deposited in the bins located in the Narthex and the social hall lobby. The Cubs are **not** able to accept any non-athletic footwear including but not limited to dress shoes, heels, rain boots, sandals, slip-ons, water socks, wedges, and work boots of any kind. Questions may be addressed to Cubmaster Travis Leed at 717-381-1608 or email at pack95reinholds@gmail.com

FOOD BANK – Needs of the food bank are ongoing and need replenished monthly. Currently, there is an *urgent shortage* of canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned soup, canned meat and tuna, pasta, rice, mac & cheese, cereal, and toilet paper. Thank you for helping as you are able. We distribute on the 2nd Wednesday each month. Please check for a current expiration date.



To our knitters and crocheters, our prayer shawls are completely gone. We need Prayer Shawls! We have generously shared with many different organizations, and we have several Nursing Homes waiting for them. The VA Hospital has advised that they have no storage available for any more lap robes now. Any that have not yet been brought to the church will be distributed when we receive them. Please switch your focus to prayer shawls. When you finish, please bring it to church and leave in library. **THANK YOU!**

GIFT CARDS – Gift cards are available through December 3. The order forms are on the Narthex table. Contact Missy Ragan with any questions at 717-314-5658.

SWAMP'S NIGHT OF MUSIC will be held on Sunday, December 10 at 7:00 PM. **Donations of cookies for refreshments after the program are always appreciated. Thank you!**

LUTHERAN CAMPING CORPORATION FALL EVENTS

Go to Lutherancamping.org to register and for more information/events or call 717-677-8211.

ADVENT DAY APART DECEMBER 9/THE WITTEL FARM

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

We don't like to wait for anything, especially Christmas. With all its secular attraction, this holiday is often a focus on over-indulgence, and too often neglected is the best gift of all...one worth our waiting. You are invited to The Wittel Farm for a day apart from the busyness of life for prayer and contemplation as we journey toward the celebration of Christmas. Registration \$15.00



REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Service committee would like to help EASS stock their shelves this upcoming holiday season by doing a reverse advent calendar.

Start with an empty basket, box, or bag and every day between Friday, December 1 and Sunday, December 24 add a non-expired, non-perishable item to the container. Ideas are canned meats, fruits or vegetables, cereal, rice, pasta, hamburger helper, mac and cheese, peanut butter, jelly, etc.

On Sunday, December 24 bring the filled container to the church and we will donate the items to EASS or place in our food pantry which supports EASS. We can all help to make someone else's Christmas brighter. Thank you!

By reading a chapter of the Gospel of Luke each day during Advent we can read the entire book of Luke. A way to stay connected with God's story for us on a daily basis.

Another opportunity is through ELCA.org/good gifts or phone 1-800-638-3522. Many ways exist to assist the ministry of ELCA throughout the world. These gifts grow the church, fight hunger, and transform lives.

If you have any questions please contact Jodi Showalter at 717-413-7149.

This Week in the Parish (December 4 – December 10)

December 4	7:00PM	Handbell Choir
December 5	9:30AM 6:30PM	Worship Committee EASS Shopping Christmas Gifts
December 6	7:00PM	Choir
December 9	2:00PM	Handbell Concert, Reinholds Chapel
December 10	8:30AM 9:30AM 7:00PM	One Service Congregational Meeting Night of Music

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 16	12:00PM-1:00PM	Fairview Cemetery, Denver Wreath's Across America
December 17	10:15AM 7:00PM	Sunday School Christmas Program Handbell Concert, Coleman Chapel
December 24	8:30AM 4:00PM 7:00PM	Worship Service Christmas Eve Service Christmas Eve Service

DAILY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK

Monday, December 4 Psalm 79; Micah 4:1-5; Revelation 15:1-8
Tuesday, December 5 Psalm 79; Micah 4:6-13; Revelation 18:1-10
Wednesday, December 6 Psalm 79; Micah 5:1-5a; Luke 21:34-38
Thursday, December 7 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Hosea 6:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10
Friday, December 8 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Acts 11:19-26
Saturday, December 9 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Ezekiel 36:24-28; Mark 11:27-33

UPCOMING SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, December 10, (Lectionary 36) Second Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

*Please join us for a free
Afternoon Concert in the Chapel
The Swamp Lutheran Church
Handbell Choir*



*Under the direction of Mr. Doug Kulp
Saturday, December 9, 2023*

2:00 P.M.



**Reinholds Station
Trinity Chapel**

**114 E. Main St.
Reinholds, PA 17569
717 336-6846**



GOSPEL MESSAGE

December 3, 2023

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Winds of Grace

Have you ever experienced a powerful storm in which the sky grew increasingly dark and winds swirled the clouds or broke branches off trees? Our modern technology often allows us to prepare for storms like blizzards and hurricanes that develop slowly as they move toward us. Perhaps you've taken part in hastily boarding up windows, securing pets or farm animals, and gathering groceries and supplies in anticipation of being shut in or without power for a time.

The coming of the Son of Man will apparently not include advance warnings like those of meteorologists and weather apps, for Jesus says, "About that day or hour no one knows." It may be more like a tornado or thunderstorm, where we see that the conditions are right but can't be sure precisely when or where it will materialize. Our preparations for that type of storm are different, primarily focused on where and how we'll take shelter should lightning or a funnel cloud be spotted nearby. Many of us practiced tornado drills in school as kids; such practices, as well as storm watches and warnings, keep us aware of how to respond and alert about when to do so.

It is easy to hear Jesus' words and sound an alert for the end times. We might even spend time and energy worrying about the end and what it means for us. At the same time, the urgency of this proclamation is focused on the present, on what we can do here and now to be open to God's rule in our lives. This is a different kind of preparation, focused on loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

In the sacraments of baptism and communion we are invited into regular practices of anticipating the presence of God with us. In Advent we bring a particular focus to this expectation. We are invited to think about the ways the winds of grace gather us in, and then send us out for the sake of the world.

Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church

717-336-2849

www.swamplutheran.org

secretary@swamplutheran.org

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 12:00 noon

The Rev. Scott V. Brubaker, Pastor

Cell: 717-598-4663 Email: pastor@swamplutheran.org

Brenda Johnston, Church Secretary – 717-336-2849

Jonathan Gyorke, Sexton – 717-435-3091

Sue Kreitz, Organist/Choir Director – 717-336-3272

Grady Daub, Assistant Organist – 717-917-2430

Doug Kulp, Bell Choir Director – 717-336-7798

Lori Gockley, Council President – 717-733-1095

SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00AM & 9:00AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15AM