

**First Sunday in Lent
February 26, 2023**



Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

GATHERING HYMN

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

ELW 504

- 1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

- 4 God's Word forever shall abide,
no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side
with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
goods, honor, child, or spouse,
though life be wrenched away,
they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!

The Apostolic Greeting and Prayer of the Day

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.

Let us pray:

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Human beings were formed with great care, to be in relationship with the creator, creation, and one another. The serpent's promise to the first couple that their eyes would be opened led, ironically, to the discovery only that they were naked.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

^{3:1}Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" ²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Through Adam's disobedience, humanity came under bondage to sin and death, from which we cannot free ourselves. In Christ's obedient death, God graciously showers on us the free gift of liberation and life. ¹²Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned—¹³sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:1-11

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus experiences anew the temptations that Israel faced in the wilderness. As the Son of God, he endures the testing of the evil one.

¹Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. ³The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴But he answered, “It is written,

‘One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’
and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

⁷Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; ⁹and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’”

¹¹Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon

Prayers of Intercession

Each petition ends “Lord, in your mercy,” and the response is “**Hear our prayer.**”

Lord’s Prayer

Let us pray together

Our Father in heaven,

**hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as is 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.**

BLESSING

God, the giver of love,
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN **BLESS NOW, O GOD, THE JOURNEY**

ELW 326

- 1 Bless now, O God, the journey
that all your people make,
the path through noise and silence,
the way of give and take.
The trail is found in desert
and winds the mountain round,
then leads beside still waters,
the road where faith is found.

- 3 Divine eternal lover,
you meet us on the road.
We wait for land of promise
where milk and honey flow,
but waiting not for places,
you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written
on roads, as faith is found.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS

ROBERT LAU

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CIRCLE OF PRAYER - Hunter Leisey, John Frantz, Nancy Kulp, Ed Miller, Charles Hoppman, Melissa Gress Swift, John Wesner, John Bergman, Michael Wargo, Nancy Leffler, Jan Lorah, Sandi Clemens, Nettie Kriener, Clair Sweigart, Faith Moyer, Michael A. Crowther, Eileen Leid, Reba Ranck, Grace Ranck, Dennis Goshert, Ray Fox, Deb Lorah, Jean Wolf, Karen Gardner, Kent Weinhold, Muffy Reinecker, Gene Miller, Kelly Martin, Pastor Jim Miller, Melody Ulrich, Jean Wolf, Kenny Rauch, Diane Crills, Casey and Connor.

ALTAR FLOWERS are wishing a Happy Birthday to Pastor Scott, John Frantz and Sue Kreitz.

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.

MOST CURRENT INFORMATION – Be sure and check our website regularly for updates and schedules of ongoing activities of the church. www.swamplutheran.org. Church office is open from 8:30AM-12PM daily.

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

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 2022.

FOOD BANK – Needs of the EASS food bank supported by the church are ongoing and need replenished monthly. Currently, there is a shortage of canned fruit, ketchup and mustard.. Thank you for helping as you are able. We distribute on the 2nd Wednesday each month.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need. Please write your check to Swamp Lutheran and place it in the Disaster Response box in the Narthex. Thank you for giving generously.

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.

US FLAGS – When a US flag becomes worn, faded, torn or soiled, it should be retired and replaced with a new flag. For those of you interested in retiring your worn US flags, please bring them to the church. We will collect them in the church library and deliver them to the Reinholds VFW who will arrange for them to be retired in proper fashion. Thank you.

LAP ROBES – Thank you to those who are knitting and/or crocheting lap robes for the ongoing need of the VA Hospital. Please be aware that the church has received a donation of yarn that is available for your use. Please contact Brenda in the office.



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 sneakers will be purchased from the Cubs by an organization that resells or recycles them, saving landfill space and natural resources while helping the Scouts raise money to fund their activities. Time to clean out your closets! The Cubs are **not** able to accept any non-

athletic footwear including but not limited to dress shoes, heels, rain boots, sandals, slippers, 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



Visioning Project for Swamp's Future Stories Matter!

Stories are how we make sense of our lives. Our personal and communal stories help us see how we are part of God's story. As living variations of scripture, together we will look at our future as Swamp Lutheran Church. This is a season for us to celebrate our sacred stories, especially as we look forward with hope toward the future.

We need *your* stories to be included in a two-part visioning workshop called *Story Matters*. Please plan to attend. Pastor Richard Jorgensen and Deacon Marsha Roscoe of our Synod staff will lead us in this project.

In part one, we will reflect on the stories of our lives and our congregation. In part two, we will name how we are part of God's story. We are inviting members of every age and stage, regardless of how long you have been a member here. What matters most is that God has a story to tell through you! In this highly interactive workshop series, you are invited to come with openness to notice how God is working through our lives. We are working to secure childcare for those who need it.

Part two will be on Saturday, March 4, 2023, from 9:00 am to noon followed by lunch.



HOMEWORK for Part 2: Write down the name of a biblical story or text that reminds you of the congregation, explain briefly why you selected that story, and give it to Pastor Scott. The facilitators will use your stories to help us discern where God is calling us going forward. If you have any questions or need help, please ask Pastor Scott.

Orders are being taken for **Easter Lilies and Tulips**. Price will not be known until the time of actual purchase. The final day for orders will be February 26. Please give the following information to the church office or to Jodi Showalter (717)413-7149.



Name _____

Phone Number _____

Lily _____ Tulip _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____



We are currently accepting donations dedicated to the Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kit Project. We will be collecting items through the end of April. Donations may be given to ***Jane Lesher, Denise Null, Connie Taylor and Debbie Carvell.*** Questions to Debbie Carvell 717-336-5638.

We appreciate everyone following the guidelines listed below, as Lutheran World Relief will not send anything that doesn't adhere to these guidelines. Each kit will contain:

- One bath-size towel, (approximately 52"x27"), dark color recommended
- Two bath-size bars (4 or 5 oz) of soap, in it's original wrapping
- One adult-size toothbrush in it's original packaging
- One sturdy comb, (wide-toothed preferred), remove packaging
- One metal nail clipper, remove packaging

Wrap all items in the towel and tie with ribbons or yarn. Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed. **If you don't feel comfortable wrapping an entire kit, we will accept donations of any of the items and gladly assemble the kits!** *Hint for buying towels: Big Lots carries really nice towels that are the exact size needed for the kit. We bought some last year for a price of \$5.00 each!*

As always, thank you for making this project a success!

GIFT CARDS FOR EASTER -Gift cards are available for purchase and the list of available gift cards is in the Narthex on the table. Deadline for ordering is March 26, 2023 and the cards will be delivered in time for Easter. If there is a specific place that you are interested in and do not find on the list please speak to Missy Ragan to check availability. (717) 314-5668

Pick Six Lenten Offering

This year, Swamp Lutheran will again offer a special giving opportunity for Lent: Pick Six. For the six weeks of Lent, we are encouraging you to give a special, weekly offering in addition to your regular giving. The benevolence giving options listed below are opportunities to give to ministries benefitting those in need—sharing God’s love outside the walls of Swamp.

Envelopes with these options listed on them are available on the table in the narthex. Please grab a pack of six envelopes (one for each week of Lent). Call the office if you need them mailed to you.



Swamp Action Fund: Help those in dire need of support for rent, bill payment, etc.



Community Meal: Contributions to this ministry support the purchase of food and supplies for the monthly community meal Swamp supports in the community.



Confirmation Camp: Help subsidize the cost of Confirmation Camp held at Camp Kirchenwald in June.



Lutheran Disaster Response
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Help bring God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world.



**EPHRATA AREA
SOCIAL
SERVICES**
EPHRATA • OCCASION

Contributions help provide services to people in our community in the areas of food, clothing, fuel, transportation, and meals on wheels.



Swamp Food Pantry: Contributions support Swamp’s ministry of food to those challenged by food insecurity.



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Contributions to this ministry support the work to eradicate hunger in the United States and throughout the world financially.



**Jan's
CIRCLE of
FRIENDS**

Jan’s Circle of Friends: Contributions to this organization fund efforts to assist children coping with domestic violence and parental loss.



**2024 ELCA
Youth Gathering**
including **MYLE the tAble**
Young Adult Gathering

Contributions help cover the cost to send Swamp Youth and Advisors to the 2024 Youth Gathering in New Orleans, LA.



Contributions support the Cocalico Area Homes of Hope transitional housing home in Adamstown and provides housing, mentoring, and budget coaching to participants.

This Week in the Parish (February 27 – March 5)

February 28	6:00PM 7:00PM	Zoom Bible Study Homes of Hope
March 1	7:00PM	Lenten Series, Faith United Denver
March 2	7:00PM	Choir
March 4	9:00AM-12:00PM	Visioning Project Followed by Lunch

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 8	7:00PM	Lenten Series, St. Paul Adamstown
March 18	9:00AM	New Members Class

DAILY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK

<i>Monday, February 27</i>	Psalm 32; 1 Kings 19:1-8; Hebrews 2:10-18
<i>Tuesday, February 28</i>	Psalm 32; Genesis 4:1-16; Hebrews 4:14—5:10
<i>Wednesday, March 1</i>	Psalm 32; Exodus 34:1-9, 27-28; Matthew 18:10-14
<i>Thursday, March 2</i>	Psalm 121; Isaiah 51:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:3-7
<i>Friday, March 3</i>	Psalm 121; Micah 7:18-20; Romans 3:21-31
<i>Saturday March 4</i>	Psalm 121; Isaiah 51:4-8; Luke 7:1-10

UPCOMING SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, March 5, Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

GOSPEL MESSAGE

February 26, 2023

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

If You . . .

In today's gospel, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. This story recalls that of Job, whose righteousness God also allowed to be tested. Both Job and Jesus are urged to turn away from what they know to be true and faithful. In Job's case, it is his friends who are relentless in making this enticement.

Another commonality in these stories is the phrase "If you." Three times in today's gospel the tempter says to Jesus, "If you . . ." In Job's story, this phrase is hurled back and forth between him and his friends. These two little words are meant to test and are always conditional: If you do or do not meet the condition, some consequence or other will follow.

In a world full of conditions, it can be hard to believe that God's saving work is completely unconditional. Even we who proclaim God's free gift of grace might fall into saying it is free *if you* accept it. We cling to the work we might do to make ourselves right with God.

In his Small Catechism explanation of the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer, Martin Luther suggests that God does not tempt anyone, but that the devil, the world, and we ourselves provide plenty in the way of opportunities to be led astray. God does not need to provide conditions and tests—we excel at this all on our own. When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," Luther says we are praying for God's protection. This is never conditional. We pray for God's protection so we might learn to see it in the world and in ourselves.

When you pray the Lord's Prayer today, regardless of the temptations you face, know that you are a beloved child of God, fearfully and wonderfully made to be an instrument of God's unconditional grace in and for the world.

Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church

275 Swamp Church Road, Reinholds, PA 17569
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

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

Grady Daub, Assistant Organist – 717-917-2430

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

John Frantz, Sexton – 717-606-8994

Lori Gockley, Council President – 717-733-1095

SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:00AM & 9:00AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15AM

SWAMPLUTHERAN CHURCH
275 Swamp Church Road
Reinholds, PA 17569