



# Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors Laurel Area Faith in Action



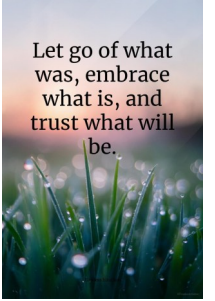
2025



Newsletter

Welcome to the time when it seems like the “start over” button gets activated. Nature comes alive again with beautiful flowers, birds carefully tending their nests, the grass awakens from it’s long winter nap and becomes a brilliant shade of green. Spring is our chance for a new beginning as well.

Starting over can feel scary, but it is also full of possibilities. I have learned that every fresh start is a chance to grow, reset, and create the life I truly want. A fresh start can motivate you to drop unhelpful habits, form new ones, and take those all important steps to achieving your goal. By focusing on incremental improvements, most find it easier to sustain the change and also report that it feels less overwhelming than trying to overhaul everything all at once.



Let go of what was, embrace what is, and trust what will be.

Every  
day  
is a  
Fresh  
Start

Words have energy, and the right words at the right time can give you the push you need to take action. When you are facing a big life change, it is easy to get stuck in fear or doubt. Reading powerful words reminds you that fresh starts are possible.

Quotes about lifestyle change can shift your thinking and help you see the opportunities that lie ahead. They act as gentle reminders that you are capable of shaping your present and your future. It is not just about motivation, it is about rewiring your thoughts. When you repeat positive messages, your brain starts to believe them. If life can change in a year, imagine what you can do with a new beginning today. Let these words inspire you to take the first step toward something amazing.

You cannot start the next chapter of life without first taking a step. Starting fresh does not mean forgetting the past, it means learning from it. Every new beginning offers a chance to make the best of life. Whether you are navigating something that has changed in your life or simply looking for motivation, sometimes the right words can guide you on your journey.

A “fresh start” does not require grand gestures; even small, intentional changes can significantly impact your life and create a positive, lasting shift. Making even a small change in one area of your life can bring clarity and focus to other areas. People often view new beginnings as opportunities to distance themselves from past failures and shortcomings, leading to a renewed sense of optimism and motivation.

No matter your age or your circumstances, it is never too late to start anew and create the life you want. It is never too late!

To see some examples of small changes, turn to page 2 and take the first step in your journey....





How to take steps toward a “fresh start”:

- **Reflect and Forgive:** Take time to reflect on past experiences and forgive yourself and others. Carrying resentment and grudges creates a heavy burden that make true happiness and peace much more difficult to achieve.
- **Set Realistic Goals:** Identify your values and set achievable goals. We all want to make the world a better place, but what if we would all start in our own backyard?
- **Build Support:** Surround yourself with supportive friends or even consider a life coach.
- **Practice Self-Care:** Prioritize your well-being and engage in activities that bring you joy. Enjoy a good belly laugh. Remember laughter reduces stress, strengthens social bonds, increases oxygen to your body, and improves heart health (increased blood flow, less stress hormones, increases HDL the “good” cholesterol.)
- **Tune into Your Body:** Pay attention to your body’s signals and schedule time for you to move and exercise. A short walk is all it takes.
- **Reframe Language:** Reframe your language around resolutions to focus on positive outcomes. See the glass as half full instead of half empty. Choose to look for the good in situations.
- **Focus on Helping Others:** When we place our focus outside of our own selves, our spirit is lifted through sharing kindness and compassion. Volunteer to help others will make you feel better about yourself. Contact Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors, LAIVC if you would like to sign up to become a volunteer.
- **Focus on the Future:** Focus on how you want to feel in the future and work towards that vision. Do not allow yourself to get stuck in the sea of “what is,” set your sails for the beautiful waters of “what could be.”

Now I know that we cannot always have a fresh start, even when it is what we want, but it is important that we take stock of the things in our lives that we do have control and influence over. It is most likely more than you realize. You are allowed to change your mind. You are allowed to turn around and walk, or even run the other way.

We are simply gathering life experience, knowledge and perspective and a few good stories along the way. So, although it is hard, try to detach yourself from the worry about what others may think. As we navigate the newness of Spring, each of us must ask ourselves a few questions in order to know if it is truly time for a “fresh start” or perhaps just a little pruning. These question are, “Am I on the right path for me? Am I happy? Do I feel fulfilled? Am I striving to fulfill my goals/dreams?”

So as we enjoy the renewed song of the Robins, see the beautiful hues of flower emerge through the ground, and see the landscapes turn a beautiful shade of green; we are reminded that we also have a chance to start fresh and renew ourselves body, mind, and spirit.

Grace and Peace,

Amy



# HAPPY

# Spring





Scams are getting smarter, but so are we. In 2025, fraudsters are using more sophisticated tools to trick people into giving away money or personal information—and no one is immune. Whether you're a seasoned internet user or just starting to navigate digital communication, it's more important than ever to stay informed, stay alert, and stay connected.

At Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors, we believe in looking out for one another. That includes helping our neighbors of all ages protect themselves from common scams. Sadly, many scams are designed to prey on trust, fear, and urgency — older adults are often targeted the most. But with a little knowledge and a strong support network, we can all reduce our risk.

Here are **five common scams to watch out for in 2025—and how to protect yourself and your loved ones:**

### **1. Phishing Scams (Text & Email)**

Scammers send messages that look like they're from your bank, Medicare, or a delivery service. They often include a link asking you to “confirm your account,” “review a charge,” or “claim a refund.” Don't click! Instead, contact the company directly using a verified phone number or website.

### **2. Fake Tech Support**

You get a pop-up warning that your computer or phone has been hacked—or someone calls pretending to be from Microsoft or Apple. They'll offer to “fix” the issue remotely for a fee, or worse, try to access your device. Hang up. No legitimate company will reach out to you this way.

### **3. AI-Generated Impersonation Scams**

Thanks to advances in artificial intelligence, scammers can now use realistic voice cloning to mimic family members in distress. You might get a call or voicemail that sounds like a loved one asking for emergency money. Always verify. Call the person directly or check with other family members before taking action.

### **4. Investment or “Quick Money” Scams**

These scams often appear online as too-good-to-be-true offers—cryptocurrency, real estate, or “guaranteed” returns. If you're being pressured to act fast, that's a red flag. Always consult a trusted financial advisor or loved one before sending money or sharing account details.

### **5. Package and Delivery Scams**

An unexpected message says your package couldn't be delivered, and you need to pay a fee or update your address. While it may look like it's from a real company, these scams are designed to capture your personal or banking information. When in doubt, go directly to the delivery service's website to check.

### **How to Protect Yourself & Each Other:**

- Don't rush. Scammers often create a sense of urgency to cloud your judgment.
- Never give out personal or financial information unless you initiated the contact.
- Talk about scams with your family, neighbors, and community.
- Use strong passwords and update them regularly.
- Report suspicious messages or calls to local authorities or the Federal Trade Commission.

At **Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors**, we're more than just a service—we're a community. By sharing information, checking in on one another, and raising awareness, we can stop scams before they happen. Because staying safe isn't just about what we do for ourselves—it's about what we do for each other. Let's keep our community strong, supported, and scam-smart in 2025 and beyond.

**P.S.** A scam currently making the rounds in Pennsylvania involves a fake **E-Z Pass text message** claiming you owe a toll. These messages often include a link to pay online—don't click it! The Pennsylvania Turnpike will never ask for payment via text. If you're unsure, call the Turnpike Commission directly or check your account at the official E-ZPass website.



# RIDDLE ME THIS?



1. What falls but never gets hurt?  
Rain
2. What has flowers but no leaves?  
A tree in springtime
3. What blossoms in spring, has a sweet scent, and is much of the time given as a gift?  
A bunch of roses
4. What has a green jacket but no sleeves?  
A pea pod
5. What has keys but cannot open locks?  
A piano
6. What is a time of rebirth that is bright and warm?  
Spring
7. What has four legs and can fly?  
A butterfly
8. From flower to flower, I flit and roam, collecting nectar, making honeycomb.  
With stripes of gold, I buzz and hum, a busy worker when spring has come.  
What am I?  
A bee
9. What has cities but no houses, forests, but no trees, and rivers but no water?  
A map
10. What has a head, a tail, yet has no body?  
A coin
11. Consistently expanding, never diminishing, a proportion of time, with no stopping?  
Your age
12. I am a sign of God's promise, in various hues. I am not just one color, but a blend you can choose.  
A rainbow



# Donor Bill of Rights

We all receive so many requests for donations each year. It is difficult to decide which organization to support. We want to ensure that you have full confidence when donating to Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors—Laurel Area Faith in Action. We want to share with you the Donor Bill of Rights we live by when making decisions for our organization.

1. To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to utilize donated resources, and of its capacity to use donated resources for their intended purposes.
2. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.
3. To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements.
4. To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.
5. To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition.
6. To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
7. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.
8. To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers or employees of the organization.
9. To be ensured that their name and information included in mailing list will not be shared.
10. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

**In short: be scrupulous!**



## Are you facing a **REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTION (RMD)** from your retirement accounts? Do you want to leave a legacy?

If you have ever wanted to make a significant difference in the life of an aging neighbor, there is no better time than now. Support the mission of LAIVC and save money! Talk with your financial advisor about the possibility of **saving on taxes, avoiding capital gains**, or even building a legacy through giving your **annual required minimum distribution** or setting up **planned legacy giving from your estate to LAIVC**.

These planned Gifts are donations made through donors' estate or financial plans. They are deferred gifts that are received once the donor's will has been executed. These gifts help secure the future of the nonprofit and often provide tax benefits to the donor's estate.

Take steps today to **make a difference** now and for the future. Talk with your financial planner or estate attorney today. Feel free to give us a call with any questions.

LAIVC is an independent 501 C 3 nonprofit corporation. Our Tax Exempt number is 20-438-0836. The official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free within PA 1-800-732-9999.



LAIVC is a United Way Partner Agency and has received a grant from the Non-designated Community Impact Fund. **LAIVC designation #1462314.**

# LESSONS FROM A DAFFODIL

She doesn't rush.

Even when the world feels frantic—when the frost still lingers on the edge of morning—  
the daffodil waits.

Buried beneath layers of cold and quiet,  
she trusts the thaw will come.

And when it does, she rises.

Not loudly.

Not all at once.

But with steady grace, she pierces the soil  
and reaches for the sun.

She doesn't compare her bloom to the tulip's flair  
or the rose's romance.

She simply shines in her own golden glow,  
content to be the bright spot someone needed today.

She teaches us that growth happens in the dark,  
that rest is part of the rhythm,  
and that beauty isn't in how long you last,  
but in how deeply you show up when it's your time.

She reminds us that softness is strength,  
that standing tall doesn't mean standing alone,  
and that sometimes, the smallest joys—  
a breeze, a bee, a bit of sunlight—  
are more than enough.

So, when the days feel heavy,  
when you wonder if it's your season yet,  
remember the daffodil.

She came back.

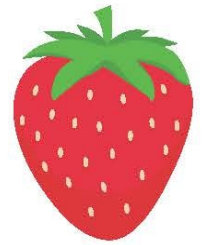
She bloomed again.

And so will you.





## BLOOM & BERRY BOWL



### INGREDIENTS:

- Plain or vanilla yogurt (Greek or regular)
- Fresh or frozen berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, or whatever's on hand)
- A drizzle of honey or maple syrup (optional)
- A sprinkle of granola, chopped nuts, or oats for crunch (optional)
- Fresh mint (optional but lovely for spring)

### INSTRUCTIONS: LAYER IT UP

- In a small cup or bowl, layer a few spoonfuls of yogurt, then a handful of berries. Repeat as desired.

### ADD SWEETNESS:

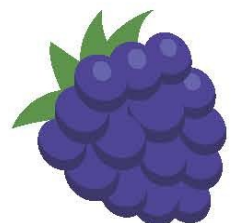
- Drizzle with a little honey or maple syrup if the berries or yogurt are tart.

### TOP IT OFF:

- Sprinkle with granola or chopped nuts for texture. Add a mint leaf if you have one.

### TIPS:

- You can thaw frozen berries slightly and use the juice as a natural syrup.
- No granola? Try a crushed graham cracker or just go without —still tasty!





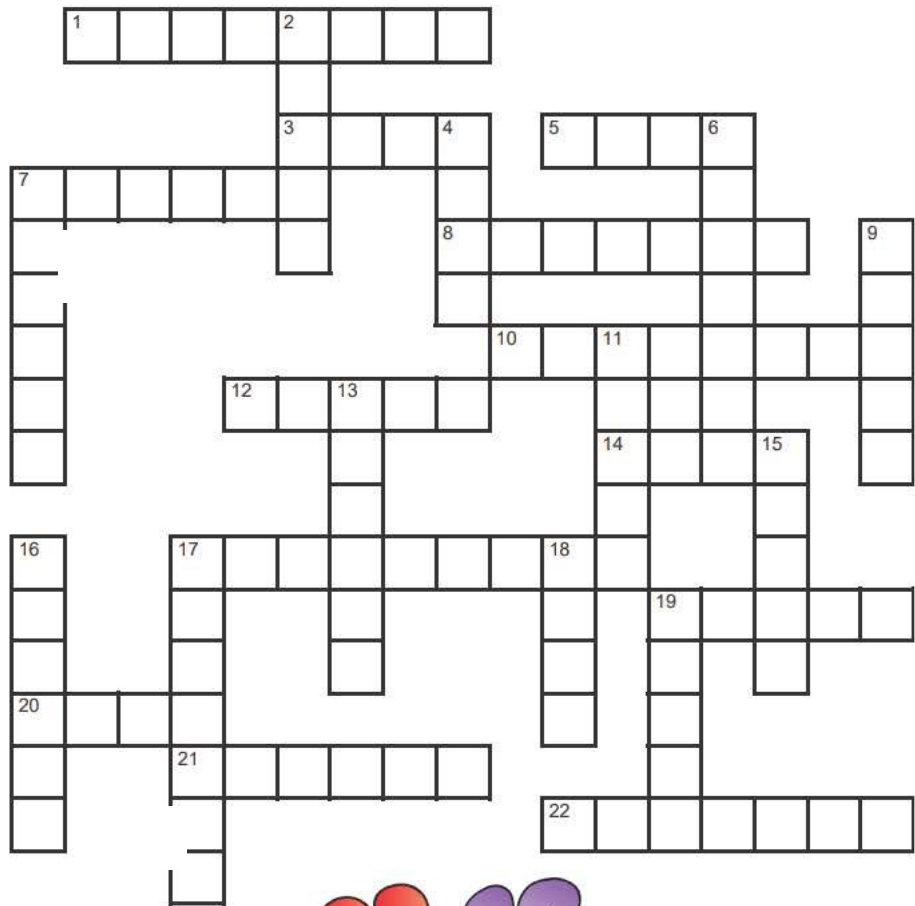
# Spring is Here!

## Across

1. It warms and brightens everything.
3. Warm up from a freeze.
5. They make honey.
7. Meal in the park.
8. Colorful arc in the sky.
10. It keeps the rain off you.
12. The color of spring grass.
14. Where a bird lives.
17. An adult caterpillar.
19. A baby chicken.
20. What chicks hatch from.
21. It comes after winter.
22. Red insect with black spots.

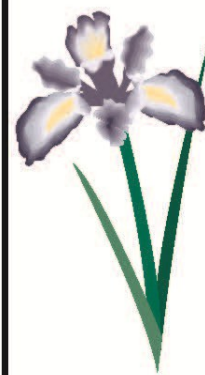
## Down

2. Come out of an egg.
4. Wiggly creature that lives in the ground.
6. Short rainfalls.
7. Small pool of rain.
9. What the lawn is made of.
11. Another name for a rabbit.
13. A spring holiday.
15. Holland is famous for this flower.
16. Just a little wind.
17. Flower on a tree.
18. It is green and on a plant.
19. It might hide the sun.



Word Bank: Bees, Blossom, Breeze, Bunny, Butterfly, Chick, Cloud, Easter, Eggs, Grass, Green, Hatch, Ladybug, Leaf, Nest, Picnic, Puddle, Rainbow, Showers, Spring, Sunshine, Thaw, Tulip, Umbrella, Worm

# Flower Word Search



M	C	A	R	N	A	T	I	O	N	N	T	S	T	L	W	E	S
B	U	L	A	A	E	B	N	S	A	I	S	E	E	R	F	U	A
O	A	R	F	S	B	L	L	W	H	I	R	R	L	E	T	I	J
W	B	U	T	T	E	R	C	U	P	O	R	D	W	O	N	S	O
O	A	C	L	U	E	N	O	M	E	N	A	E	L	U	I	S	N
R	A	M	A	R	Y	L	L	I	S	B	L	A	T	I	R	V	Q
R	E	W	V	T	Z	E	U	O	G	E	E	E	O	S	H	J	U
A	T	L	E	I	O	O	M	S	C	E	P	L	S	A	I	A	I
Y	N	L	N	U	C	S	B	P	E	Q	R	I	L	S	B	W	L
S	N	N	D	M	O	L	I	D	O	F	F	A	D	O	I	A	O
N	I	J	E	C	H	I	N	A	C	E	A	I	N	A	S	R	T
A	A	A	R	V	S	N	E	I	T	A	P	M	I	I	C	I	I
P	I	S	S	I	O	U	H	Y	A	C	I	N	T	H	U	A	E
E	L	M	L	C	N	L	C	D	I	I	E	N	I	U	S	M	R
S	L	I	M	A	R	I	G	O	L	D	L	D	O	T	L	O	R
S	L	N	N	A	R	O	B	X	R	U	I	H	E	G	I	I	I
Y	I	E	B	L	I	T	S	A	O	C	A	R	A	A	E	E	P
U	E	C	E	E	L	L	G	E	I	F	R	N	G	D	T	B	N



Amaryllis  
 Anemone  
 Aster  
 Astilbe  
 Begonia  
 Bluebell  
 Buttercup  
 Carnation  
 Columbine  
 Cosmos  
 Crocus  
 Daffodil  
 Dahlia

Echinacea  
 Foxglove  
 Freesia  
 Gardenia  
 Geranium  
 Hibiscus  
 Hyacinth  
 Impatiens  
 Iris  
 Jasmine  
 Jonquil  
 Lavender  
 Lily

Lotus  
 Marigold  
 Nasturtium  
 Orchid  
 Pansy  
 Petunia  
 Rose  
 Snowdrop  
 Tulip  
 Violet  
 Wisteria  
 Yarrow  
 Zinnia



# PRESSED FLOWER BOOKMARK CRAFT

A keepsake for you or a gift for a friend



**Time:** 30 minutes (plus drying time for flowers)

## Supplies Needed:

- Fresh flowers or leaves (small and flat work best—like violets, clover, or ferns)
- Paper (cardstock, old greeting cards, or cereal boxes work great)
- Scissors
- Glue stick or white glue
- Clear tape or contact paper (optional)
- Heavy books (for pressing flowers)
- Hole punch & ribbon or string (optional)

## Instructions:

### • Collect & Press Flowers:

- Go for a short nature walk or use flowers/leaves from your yard or nearby.
- Place flowers between two sheets of paper and tuck them inside a heavy book. Let them press for 2–3 days.

### • Cut Bookmark Base:

- Cut a rectangle (roughly 2" x 6") from cardstock, old greeting cards, or even a cereal box.

### • Design & Decorate:

- Once the flowers are dry and flat, glue them to the bookmark in a simple design.

### • Optional: Add a quote, your name, or a date for a personal touch.

- "Bloom where you are planted."
- "Take time to make your soul happy."
- "Each day is a new page."
- "Nature is the art of God."
- "Let your joy burst forth like flowers in the spring."
- "Small things bring the greatest peace."

### • Protect (Optional):

- Cover both sides of the bookmark with clear tape or contact paper to preserve the flowers.
- Punch a hole in the top and thread with ribbon or string.







## Bee Kind: What a Difference it Makes! BY Ranhan Vee



Bee Kind: What a difference it makes! Here is a lovely teaching story I read on the internet and had to share because I find it so inspiring.

My dad has bees. Today I went to his house and he showed me all of the honey he had gotten from the hives. He took the lid off of a 5 gallon bucket full of honey and on top of the honey there were 3 little bees, struggling. They were covered in sticky honey and drowning. I asked him if we could help them and he said he was sure they wouldn't survive. Casualties of honey collection I suppose.

I asked him again if we could at least get them out and kill them quickly, after all he was the one who taught me to put a suffering animal (or bug) out of its misery. He finally conceded and scooped the bees out of the bucket. He put them in an empty Chobani yogurt container and put the plastic container outside.

Because he had disrupted the hive with the earlier honey collection, there were bees flying all over outside. We put the 3 little bees in the container on a bench and left them to their fate. My dad called me out a little while later to show me what was happening. These three little bees were surrounded by all of their sisters (all of the bees are females) and they were cleaning the sticky nearly dead bees, helping them to get all the honey off of their bodies. We came back a short time later and there was only one little bee left in the container. She was still being tended to by her sisters.

When it was time for me to leave, we checked one last time and all three of the bees had been cleaned off enough to fly away and the container was empty. Those 3 little bees lived because they were surrounded by family and friends who would not give up on them, family and friends who refused to let them drown in their own stickiness and resolved to help until the last little bee could be set free.

BEE SISTERS. BEE PEERS. BEE TEAMMATES, BEE NEIGHBORS.

**We could all learn a thing or two (or three) from these bees.....BEE KIND ALWAYS!!!**



### A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO YELLOW STRIPEY THINGS



#### CARPENTER BEE

- ACTS LIKE IT'S TOUGH, BUT CAN'T ACTUALLY HURT YOU
- HAS NO CONCEPT OF WHAT GLASS IS
- LIVES IN YOUR FENCE
- FLIES AGGRESSIVELY TO TRY AND SCARE YOU AWAY



#### HONEYBEE

- IS THE BEE THAT NEEDS HELP THE MOST
- EXCELLENT POLLINATOR
- VERY FRIENDLY
- CAN ONLY STING ONCE



#### PAPER WASP

- LOOKS SCARY, BUT WILL ONLY ATTACK IF PROVOKED
- STING HURTS LIKE THE DEVIL
- WILL CHASE YOU IF YOU SWAT AT IT
- HAS NO CONCEPT OF PERSONAL SPACE



#### YELLOW JACKET

- WANTS YOUR FOOD AND WILL FIGHT YOU FOR IT
- NEVER LEAVES YOU ALONE
- WILL STING YOU JUST FOR THE HECK OF IT
- IS JUST A JERK



#### BUMBLEBEE

- ALSO POLLINATES STUFF VERY WELL
- SO FAT IT SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FLY
- WILL LET YOU PET IT WITHOUT GETTING AGITATED
- ACTUALLY A FLYING PANDA



#### HOVERFLY

- WEARS YELLOW STRIPEY UNIFORM TO SCARE YOU
- ACTUALLY CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU
- HANGS OUT IN FIELDS
- FOLLOWS YOU IF IT LIKES YOU



#### CICADA KILLER

- LOOKS LIKE SATAN'S NIGHTMARES
- EXCLUSIVELY EATS CICADAS
- CAN STING YOU, BUT USUALLY WON'T
- STILL PRETTY TERRIFYING



#### DIRT DAUBER

- ALMOST NEVER STINGS ANYTHING EXCEPT SPIDERS
- BUILDS NEST IN THE GROUND
- HOARDS SPIDERS IN SAID NEST
- COOLEST LOOKING OF THE WASPS



## Help us spread the news!!!!

If you are a member of an organization, club, church, or business and would like for Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors, Laurel FIA to come and speak to your group, please reach out to us at 724-539-4357 or email us at [faithinaction@msn.com](mailto:faithinaction@msn.com).

We would be delighted to come and share opportunities for volunteerism, services provided for our recipients, and other ways to support the much needed missions and work of Laurel Area Faith in Action. We look forward to hearing from you soon.



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

In our winter newsletter, we welcomed our 2025 Board of Directors. However, two names were left off the list. Paula Maloney and Jody Marsh are also members of our esteemed board. Please accept my apologies for this oversight.

## How do I qualify to be a recipient?

- ♦ Be ages 60 or older
- ♦ Live in Latrobe, Unity Township, Derry, Derry Township, Ligonier and Ligonier Township areas
- ♦ Certain restrictions apply for transportation. Please ask for details.
- ♦ Fill out, sign, and submit application. Application can be printed from our website [Laurelfia.org](http://Laurelfia.org) or call and request one from our office at 724-539-4357.

## 2025 Calendar of Opportunity

May 1, 2025 Spring Appeal Begins  
Fall Fundraiser:  
September 1, 2025 Raffle Ticket sale begins  
September 1, 2025 Event Sponsorship mailed  
November 7, 2025 Fall Event  
October, 2025 Required Minimum Dist. Mailing  
End of year appeal begins  
December, 2025 Distribution of Holiday Project

\*Please feel free to contact the office if you have any questions.



Visit our website for more information at [www.Laurelfia.org](http://www.Laurelfia.org) or scan the QR code

## 2025 Newsletter Schedule

Spring Newsletter—Current Mailing  
Summer Newsletter—End of July  
Fall Newsletter—End of October  
Winter Newsletter—End of January 2026

Anyone interested in sponsoring the mailing of the newsletter please reach out to us at 724-539-4357.

## Spring into Service with Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors (LAIVC)!

Spring is a season of new beginnings—and the perfect time to make a meaningful difference. At LAIVC, our volunteers provide **free, essential services** that help **local seniors** to live confidently, age well, and stay connected to the heart of their community.

We offer **transportation** to medical appointments, **grocery shopping**, **telephone reassurance calls**, and **special projects** like yard work, light painting, and seasonal clean-ups. These special projects are a great way for teams, businesses, churches, or community organizations to give back.

This spring, we invite you to join us:

- **Become a volunteer**
- **Refer a senior in need**
- **Organize a team project**
- **Make a donation to support our mission**



**Call 724-539-4357 or email [faithinaction@msn.com](mailto:faithinaction@msn.com) to get involved.**

Together, we can make this season brighter for seniors in our community!

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Latrobe, PA  
Permit No. 59

Hearts and Hands Helping Seniors  
Laurel Area Faith in Action  
428 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
P.O. Box 854  
Latrobe, PA 15650  
(724) 539-4357  
[faithinaction@msn.com](mailto:faithinaction@msn.com)

