

March 8, 2026

Third Sunday in Lent

10:15 AM

Theme: The good news is...together, the impossible is possible.

Paragraph for bulletin cover:

As Jesus and his disciples head to a deserted place, perhaps seeking peace and quiet, many from the surrounding towns follow them. Instead of turning them away, Jesus expresses compassion and begins an impromptu teaching session. As the day goes on, the disciples have logistics in mind and urge Jesus to send the people back into the villages so they can feed themselves. Instead, Jesus presents them with an impossible task: "You give them something to eat." Dumbfounded, the disciples can only fathom the limitations and financial constraints of Jesus' suggestion. Yet when they "go and see," their meager provisions multiply so that thousands are fed. This week we focus on building networks of collective care in order to meet people's needs. Jesus models a way to be in community by coming together and sharing what we have, dispelling perceived impossibilities. The good news empowers us to believe in the miracles that can become possible through the power of community.

+ GATHERING +

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

WELCOME AND GREETING

PRELUDE When in the Hour of Utmost Need - J.S. Bach

CALL TO WORSHIP

If you need good news,  
**settle into this space.**

**We have good news to share.**

If you need a word of hope,  
**then trust us when we say,**  
**there is hope enough to go around.**

If you need a glimmer of joy,  
**then you're in luck!**  
**We have resilient joy abounding.**

If you need to feel God's presence in your midst,  
**then know that this is God's house.**  
**This is the good news of the gospel.**

God is here. Love is real. Joy is on the move.  
**Let us worship the God who is with us always.**

GATHERING HYMN ELW 607 Come, Ye Disconsolate

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Friends, we are like the disciples. The day that Jesus fed 5,000, his disciples could not imagine a solution to the crowd's hunger. They told Jesus to send the crowds away. We often do the same. Like the disciples, we try to follow Jesus around, but when we run into issues, we often cannot imagine how we could play a part. That is why we come before you in prayer - so that we remember that we can make a difference. Let us pray:

**Holy God, with you the impossible is possible. 5,000 can be fed. The blind can see. The hopeless can find hope. With you the impossible is possible, but we are quick to forget that. We look at our hurting world and tell ourselves that nothing can be done. We forget that you empowered the disciples to feed the crowd. We forget that you are always with us. Forgive our small-minded ways. Forgive us for doubting that change could ever come. But even more so, forgive us when we refuse to be a part of it. With hope for a better tomorrow we pray to you, O God. Amen.**

Family of faith, no matter how many mistakes the disciples made, Jesus still washed their feet. Jesus still fed them. Jesus still called them beloved. The same is true for you and me, so hear and believe this good news:

**today is a new day, and once again, we belong to God.  
We are forgiven. We are called. We are not alone.  
What good, good news. Amen!**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, we could press our ear to the page, hoping to hear you more clearly. We could silence all the alarms and notifications, hoping to catch a murmur of your voice. We could still our beating hearts, and still we might miss your voice. So today we pray, open up space in our hearts, in our spirits, in our minds, to feel your presence among us. With you, anything is possible. We believe. Help our unbelief. **In the Your name we pray. Amen.**

+ WORD +

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

FIRST READING: Ephesians 3:20-21

*At the conclusion of the reading:*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Mark 6:32-44

*At the conclusion of the reading:*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY Human Minds Just Can't Imagine



Hu - man minds just can't i - ma - gine all that God can bring  
 God, ex - pand our dreams and vi - sion when we think our gifts  
 Like the grains of wheat are ga - thered from the vast and roll -



to bear Through our small and sep - arate be - ings, e - ven  
 too small Help us trust your great pro - vis - ion and to  
 -ing fields Like the grapes from vi - ny bran - ches whose small



when we join to share Still we fol - low where Christ leads us,  
 an - swer when you call You who gave us time and ta - lents  
 fruit the wine will yield We re - mem - ber as one bo - dy,



ma - ny pie - ces of one whole That we might al - low  
 will up - hold and see us through As we join to - geth -  
 each of us a cru - cial part In the glo - bal church



our dream - ing to trans - form our bro - ken world  
 -er in the work you've gi - ven us to do  
 pro - fess - ing: we be - long to God's own heart

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

**It sounds like welcome  
 and feels like home.**

**It sounds like laughter  
and feels like mercy.  
It sounds like love  
and feels like a seat at the table,  
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.  
I have seen it alive in the world.  
And even when my heart aches,  
even when wars rage,  
even when mercy feels out of reach,  
I remember the one who  
welcomed the children  
and led with nonviolence.  
I remember the one who  
cared for the vulnerable  
and inspired those around him.  
I remember that the good news really is good news,  
for I have seen it alive in the world.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

Handbell Choir

OFFERTORY - same as last week

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation and your good news is for all people. May the gifts we offer be used to spread the good news into the world, in the name of One who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

+ SENDING +

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

## BLESSING

As you leave this place,  
when you meet anger, speak with love.  
When you meet fear, speak with hope.  
When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.  
But no matter what, speak this good news.

**For the good news of the gospel is  
love and justice for all.**

**It is joy that surprises,  
and nonviolence that transforms.**

The good news of the gospel is alive in the world,  
so go forth speaking it,  
in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit.

For if you won't, then who will?

Thanks be to God  
for this good, good news.

**Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ELW 338 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news!

**Thanks be to God.**

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## PRAYER LIST

Please continue to keep the following people connected to our congregation in your prayers: Bob Moran, Leonard Gibeon, David Mounts, Ed & Billie Schanely, Steve Keyser, Andrew Breuninger, Renee Fels, Rebecca Jellen, Richard Ditzler, Joy Miller, Alyson Harvey, Audrey Sell, Marie Wolfe, Erik Ockenlaender, Mary Eberle, Brandon Blanchard, Gladys Kazalonis, Elizabeth Brossett and family, Paige Seasock, Tanner Antalosky, Will Morgan, Richard Mitchell, David Wargo, Kate Umstead, Barry Long and Jim Martin.

## Mark Your Calendar

Monday, March 9	5:30 Lenten Soup and Study 7pm Great Songs of Faith Choir rehearsal 7:30pm Council Meeting
Wednesday, March 11	7pm Mid Week Worship at Pennsburg UCC, Pennsburg
Saturday, March 14	9am-4pm Confirmation Retreat
Sunday, March 15	9am Sunday School 10:15 Worship After worship The Great Showdown

**Soup & Study for Lent** is Mondays from 5:30-7:00 pm. We'll share a simple meal, meaningful conversation and time to reflect together using Coloring Lent. The books are available in the church office for \$10 and all are welcome.

**Easter Flower Order Forms** are available in the narthex and in the parlor. The order forms will be due Wednesday, March 18th.

### **First Communion Workshop Saturday, March 21 9:30-11:30 AM**

Any 2nd-5th grade student who has not received communion is welcome to attend this spring's first communion workshop. A parent/grandparent must attend the workshop with each student. Students who attend will receive their first communion on Sunday, March 29 at the 10:15 AM service - a luncheon with cake will be held after worship to celebrate with our first communion recipients. Sign up link on Monday's weekly email or contact Pastor Becky.

**RISE Against Hunger Event** is March 22nd. The new sign up is available outside of Pastor Becky's office.

**Family Bathroom** We are adding a family bathroom to meet the needs of some of our members. It's a big job. I believe the job itself has been blessed. The architect provided our plan pro bono. The supplier of most of the fixtures for the bathroom has discounted their products in exchange for some advertising opportunities. They even donated the sink! It's still an expensive project. We are in search of grants. Grants aren't easy. But, we're doing our best. If you know of one that might help us please let the office or a Church Council member know. In the mean time, if you feel it in your heart, we have a designated fund for donations. As you know, many hands make the lift easier! Just write "Family Bathroom" on an envelope. Thank You!

## **Mid-Week Lent Worship 2026**

Mid-week Lenten worship will be held on Wednesdays at 7 PM followed by a time of fellowship and food. We hope you'll join us!

### **March 11 – Who will you love?**

Worship at Pennsburg UCC, Pennsburg; preacher Pastor Kevin Compton

### **March 18 – What are you looking for?**

Worship at St. John's Lutheran Church, Sumneytown; preacher Pastor Serena Sellers

### **March 25 – Who do you say that I am?**

Worship at Palm Schwenkfelder Church, Palm; preacher Pastor Becky Schanely

**Sunday Morning Coffee Bar is BACK!** Join us at the coffee bar at the back entrance for coffee, hot tea, breakfast treats and conversation starting at 8:30AM.

Volunteers are needed to cover the coffee bar each week - which means set up, bring treats to share and clean up. The sign up sheet is available outside Pastor Becky's office - please sign up to help!

**Readers Needed for Palm/Passion Sunday** Palm/Passion Sunday is March 29, 2026 - we will worship at one service at 10:15 AM. The service will include the reading of the passion interspersed throughout worship. Readers are needed to participate in the reader's theater-style presentation of the passion.

There will be a rehearsal the day before, Sat. March 28, at 10 AM to run through lines and the movement of readers (when to read, where to stand, when to sit, etc.).

**Tax Time news** - At the end of January this year the 2025 Tax Giving Statements were emailed to members who have an email on record at the church. The members without email addresses statements were mailed. There have been several calls looking for them, so I emailed them out again on March 2nd. If you can't find your email or need me to resend it to you for any reason, please feel free to reach out to the church office [stj.stown@verizon.net](mailto:stj.stown@verizon.net) or call 215-234-4888.



# EASTER EGGstravaganza

Saturday,  
April 4 at 10 AM

**Candy donations needed** by Sunday, March 29  
for the Soup, Salad & Egg Stuffing event