



ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
1400 MARKET ST., WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701
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St. Luke Online: www.stlukeweb.com

FEBRUARY

2025 NEWSLETTER

February 2025

"...my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

- Luke 2:30-32

I have never really paid much attention to Groundhog Day. I casually note the headlines that tell us whether Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow, but the answer to that question really doesn't affect my daily life. It's a fun tradition, but I don't actually believe that the visibility of a rodent's shadow has any effect on meteorological phenomenon. In fact, there have been actual scientific studies that demonstrate that it does not.

As it turns out, Groundhog Day actually has its roots in an old Christian practice: Candlemas. Observed on February 2 in pre-electricity days, Candlemas was a festival in which people brought their candles to the church so that the clergy could bless them for use in the rest of the winter. European Christians expanded on the concept of enduring the winter by selecting an animal (usually a badger, sometimes a hedgehog or a bear) that would serve a very similar role as Punxsutawney Phil does for us. Over the years, this practice evolved into the holiday we know today.

Both of these traditions stem out of the Christian feast of the Presentation of the Lord, which is – you guessed it – on February 2. Depending on when you read this, we may have already observed that feast in church, as February 2 is a Sunday this

year. It is a commemoration of Jesus' being dedicated as an infant at the Temple, a moment which, like both Groundhog Day and Candlemas, anticipates light that will end a season of darkness, in this case, the light of the resurrection.

Learning all of this helped me to have a greater appreciation for Groundhog Day. But unfortunately, many people feel the same way about the Christian faith as they do about Groundhog Day: that it has some fun traditions, and maybe even some valuable teachings, but ultimately, they think that the existence of God is as likely as a small creature's ability to predict weather.

But regardless of how effective the groundhog, or any other animal, is at predicting **when** spring will come, spring inevitably **will** come. The days **will** get longer, and the air **will** grow warmer. The same can be said of our hope in the restoration of the world that God promises through Jesus. And we see glimpses of that restoration everywhere we see God's love breaking into the world.

This February, when we hear of the exploits of Punxsutawney Phil, let us also remember the child dedicated at the temple and the promise he holds for bringing light and warmth to a world that is often cold and dark. And let us share that hope with the world.



INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENT may be found by checking the church website (stlukeweb.com), and our FACEBOOK page.

Serving in February at the 10:30 am worship service

Altar Care: Sondra Fisher

Greeters: 2nd & 16th Sue Beidler; 9th Cindy & Terry Belles; 23rd Linda Updegraff

Ushers: 2nd Boy Scouts; 9th Terry Belles; 16th & 23rd Jere Eshleman

Acolyte: 2nd Lily Judge; 9th Luke Edmonds; 16th Daniel Taormina; 23rd Jacob Edmonds

Live Stream Assistant: 2nd & 16th Brad Nason; 9th & 23rd Charles Mahler

Feb. 2nd *Presentation of Our Lord & Scouts Sunday*

9:30 am Lector - Mary Lou Byerly

Assisting Minister – Mark Bergren

Communion Assistant – Patty Durand

Feb. 9th *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*

10:30 am Lector - Wilma Reeder

Assisting Minister – Allan Husband

Communion Assistant - Susan Horn

Feb. 16th Sixth Sunday after Epiphany & S.O.S

10:30 am Lector - Melanie Taormina

Assisting Minister - Deb Smith

Communion Assistant – Dan Lamade

Feb. 23rd Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

10:30 am Lector – Peggy Yohn

Assisting Minister – Marilyn Eshleman

Communion Assistant - Janice Ogurcak

Offering Counters in February

2nd Nancy McCarty & Marilyn Eshleman

9th Terry Belles & TBA

16th Ray Schreckengast & Janice Ogurcak

23rd Sue Beidler & Marilyn Eshleman



FROM THE OFFICE

- **Office Manager, Sarah Young** will be out of the office from Feb. 24th – 28th. During office work hours Pastor Jeff and a volunteer will be available to assist you.
- **AFTER hours:** If you are in need of emergency pastoral care, please call Pastor LeCrone directly at 570-220-3631.

The Adult Sunday School class at St. Luke Lutheran Church meets in the church library at 9:15 AM on Sunday mornings. We will look at the lessons from the ELCA, based on the Year B lectionary. I hope to see you there!



If you want to look at our course materials, all of the Lessons are available here (we are in Lectionary Year B, Sundays after Epiphany):

<https://elca.org/Resources/Bible-Studies>

If you would like to receive weekly lesson emails, please let me know and I will add you to the list. Please contact the church office or Charles Mahler at

Mahler@lycoming.edu .



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL for elementary school-aged kids is held during the 10:30 AM worship service. Each Sunday, Cheryl Newburg will lead the kids out of the service at the beginning of the readings and bring them back at the beginning of the choir anthem.

The kids will study the Bible and do story-related activities that follow the lectionary, learning the same stories that are being covered in the service.

We are looking for substitutes who can cover Sunday School when Cheryl is out of town. If you would like to substitute, please contact the church office. *(clearances are needed for this program)*

SERVING

(Lectors, Assistant Minister, or Communion Helper) If you would like to help serve in our 8:00AM or 10:30AM worship service(s), please contact Diane Kohler at 570-419-7085 or email kohlerdede@gmail.com or Pastor Jeff at 570-323-7309.

USHERS

Anyone interested in serving as an usher, please contact the office or email or call Nancy McCarty at: nmac7149@gmail.com; (570) 419-7827).

GREETERS

Anyone interested in serving as a greeter, please contact the church office or Debra Smith at 570-762-3308 or email at: mdtmom4@gmail.com

LIVE STREAM OPERATORS NEEDED!

The livestream of our 10:30 Sunday service has been a great resource for many of our homebound members, friends of the congregation living far away from Williamsport, and as a low-stakes way of visitors to check out worship at St. Luke. We are currently in need of a few more people to facilitate the broadcast. It is a relatively simple operation; if you know how to point and click on a computer, you can learn how to run the livestream! Training will be provided. Please contact Pastor Jeff if interested.

SEW FINE QUILTERS

Please join us on **Monday, February 3rd from 9:00AM to 3:00PM in Bell Hall.** Come and go as your time permits. If possible join us for lunch at noon, lunch will be provided. No quilting experience is needed, join the FUN!

PVC meets next on **Tuesday, February 4th at 2:00pm** in the Library.

SHAWL MINISTRY

When members or friends of the congregation experience trying times or milestones of great joy, we present them with a prayer shawl as a visible sign of our prayers for them. Shawls can be knitted at monthly meetings held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (Sept.- May) or any time at home. We meet next on **Tuesday, Feb. 18th from 9:30 am -12 noon** in the Lounge. All are welcome!

UPCOMING SR. HIGH YOUTH EVENT

Sojourner Truth Saturday Dinner Church

Youth will be serving “Church Dinner” on Saturday, Feb. 1st at Sojourner Truth.

- 7:30 am food prep – St. Luke Church
 - 11:00 am – 1:15 pm - Worship and serve at Sojourner Truth, Williamsport
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SEAFARERS

It is time to think about the 2025 Seafarers Christmas collection. We ask for your response in January, in hopes you will take advantage of the after-Christmas sales to purchase sweatshirts, t-shirts, and socks. There will be a table or box in the West Hall to place your donations. Items needed: **sweatshirts with or without a hood in sizes M-L-XL, T-shirts in sizes M-L-XL and three pairs of heavy socks (no ankle socks)**. Thanks for your support and have a blessed 2025!

FROM THE FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY



Please consider volunteering for Coffee Hour! All coffee, tea, paper products, etc. are in the kitchen. Volunteers are asked to provide snacks, such as muffins, donuts, cookies, etc. Please contact a member of the Fellowship Ministry if you would like us to help you set up for Coffee Hour or if you have any questions. Ruth Croyle at 570-433-3873 or Jeanne Yaggi at 570-329-6980.

Pancake Breakfast Benefits Pre-School at St Luke

Feb 8, 2025*, 8:00- 11:00 am

\$10 Adults, \$5 children, Under 3 free

Take out is available

Come join us for delicious pancakes, fresh sausage, and scrambled eggs.
Also includes fruit, juices, coffee, tea, and hot cocoa



*Snow day Feb 15, 2025

1400 Market St, Williamsport

Bell Hall

SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS

S.O.S SUNDAY will be held on **Sunday, Feb. 16th** with Pastor Mark Brumbach preaching at both services. It's also time to open our hearts and show our love to those less fortunate in our community who are helped by the Shepherd of the Streets. Our economy and budget cuts in health services have increased the financial need for medical services. The Shepherd ministry also provides hygiene items, bedding, and baby needs.

Items needed are of regular sizes: Deodorant, Baby Diapers, Wipes, Shampoo, Powder, Oil, Q-tips, Soap, Shaving Cream and Razor, Tissues, Shampoo and Conditioner, Toilet Paper, Women's Hygiene Products, Combs, Blankets, Sheets, Pillowcases, Nail Clippers, Towels, and Wash Cloths. **These hygiene items are collected in the West entryway.**





Bulletin Announcement Deadline - Wednesday at 9:00 am
All article information and materials for the bulletin or newsletter must be submitted using WORD or PDF format. Please email to info@stlukeweb.com.

Newsletter Deadline - The 15th of each month at 9:00 am

Ministry Meeting Minutes for Church Council - Thursday at 9:00 am before Mtg. *Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month.*

*If you would like to receive the newsletter (in color!) via email, please contact the church office at 570-323-7309 or by email at info@stlukeweb.com. Thank you.

ONGOING COLLECTIONS AT ST. LUKE



DANIEL'S CLOSET needs **winter seasonal clothing** (*NO hangers*) for infants, children, and adults, as well as accessories (belts, ties, shoes, purses, backpacks/bags, suitcases, etc.). All clothing must be bagged, no loose clothing, please. A collection box is located in our West Hall

THE FOOD PANTRY Below is a list of items the UCLC Food Pantry is in need of. *Updated 01/20 - These items are collected in our West entryway.* After office hours' drop-offs: Office foyer entrance.

Peanut Butter
Boxed Macaroni and Cheese
Canned Beef Stew
Canned Chicken Noodle Soup
Canned Chicken Breast
Canned Mandarin Oranges
Large (shelf-stable) Fruit Juices

Food Pantry Donation: drop-offs are Monday from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Lessons from Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a House Divided and a World on Fire

Join us starting **Tuesday, March 4 at 7pm for 6 weeks** as we explore the life and theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and the lessons we can use as we live at the intersection of faith and civic life today. Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor and theologian living in Nazi Germany, who eventually joined the resistance and was arrested and killed before the end of WWII. This curriculum was compiled by Dr. Lori Brandt Hale, an internationally renowned Bonhoeffer scholar and president of the International Bonhoeffer Society – English Language Section. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania or LAMPa is a partner in distributing to congregations to inspire deeper conversation and discernment about how we live as disciples. As we delve into Bonhoeffer's theology, we will look at Scripture, too, and see what Jesus says about living as disciples today. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Smith at mdtmom4@gmail.com or 570-762-3308.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

March 5th at 7pm in the Nave

St. Luke Lutheran Church, 1400 Market St., Williamsport, PA 17701

MIDWEEK LENTEN SUPPER & SERVICE

Wednesdays during Lent (March 12th, 19th, 26th and April 2nd, 9th)

Join us at 6:00 PM for a simple supper of salad, soup, and bread; followed by a 7:00PM service in the nave.

Volunteer to provide food by signing up on one of the weekly sign-up sheets, located in the West Hall. (starting on 2/19)



THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, II (2024 Annual Report) will be held immediately following the 10:30am service in the Nave on **Sunday, March 9, 2025.**

This a reminder that the deadline is February 23rd for all Annual Reports. For report submission guidelines, please check your ministry mailbox. Thank you.

COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The Richard E. Swartz Memorial Scholarship Fund applications are available for pickup. The applications are located outside the office, on the wall rack.

Order Your Easter Plants

We are now taking orders for Easter plants. Flowers can be presented in honor of or in memory of friends or loved ones and will be used to decorate the Sanctuary for Easter Sunday. Payment is due with the order of \$10.00 each. Please make checks payable to St. Luke Church with "flowers" on the memo line. **Deadline is February 23rd**. Thank you!



Order Form for Easter Plants - Please PRINT Clearly

Name

(Print the name of the person from whom the flowers are from as you would like it to appear in the bulletin.)

I would like to purchase Easter flowers:

In Honor of:

In Honor of:

In Memory of:

In Memory of:

TULIPES: RED ____

PINK ____

PURPLE ____

YELLOW ____

ORANGE ____

WHITE EASTER LILY ____

Number of tulips: _____ @ \$10.00 each = _____ Total

Number of lilies: _____ @ \$10.00 each = _____ Total

Please make checks payable to St. Luke with flowers on the memo line.

ST. LUKE CHURCH COUNCIL 2025

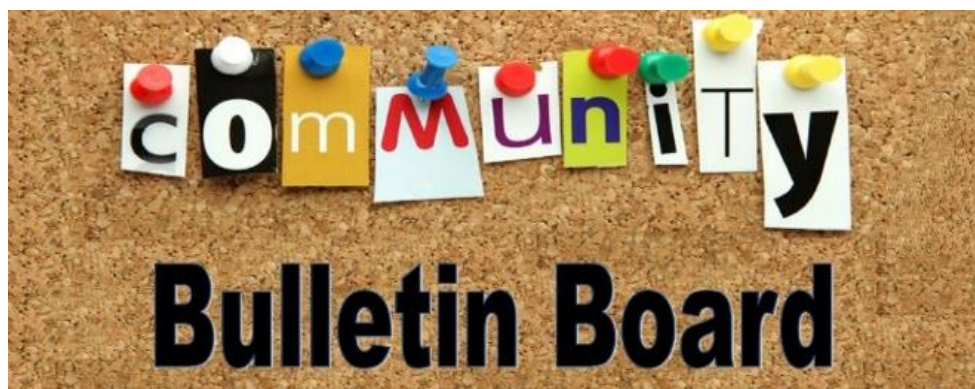
OFFICERS

Rev. Jeffrey LeCrone, Pastor
Nancy Wood, President
Cheryl Newburg, Vice President
Hanne Schuman, Treasurer
Charles Mahler, Secretary
Sarah Young, Recording Secretary



COUNCIL ROSTER

Rev. LeCrone	Pastor	jefflecrone@gmail.com
Ruth Croyle	Liaison/Chair for Fellowship	rcroyle02@gmail.com
Charles Duchman	Liaison for Outreach	cduchman156@comcast.net
Erin Edmonds	Liaison for Personnel	erin.edmonds@gmail.com
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Jeanne Yaggi	Liaison for Fellowship	jyaggi292@comcast.net
Karen Baldys	Liaison for Service	kmbaldys@gmail.com
Sarah Young	Liaison for Youth	Sarahyoung@comcast.net





Then, you can join us on Sunday, February 23, 2025, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Evergreen Center at the camp for a **Fundraising Dinner!** The dinner will be held immediately following the camp's annual Taste of Camp event featuring songs, snacks, games, a campfire program, information on the 2025 program, and more!

The menu will consist of ham, twice-baked potatoes, vegetable, roll, dessert and beverage. A minimum of \$15 per person is suggested as a donation for the meal. Reservations are needed and can be made by contacting the camp office at (570) 922-1587 or cml@campmountluther.org. The deadline for reservations is Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

Come and enjoy some fellowship, fun and good food during the wintertime at Camp Mount Luther! It should be a great afternoon to gather and support our outdoor ministry!

This year's summer camp season will begin on **June 15 and run until August 1**. There are programs for all ages from elementary to senior high, and for adults and families. If you're looking for a place where your child can grow in faith and have fun doing it, Camp Mount Luther is that place. Don't settle for second-rate summer programs. Camp Mount Luther has been giving kids fun, exciting, faith-filled, outdoor experiences for over 60 years. **If you have questions about our summer programs, feel free to reach out to us at cml@campmountluther.org!**

Enrollment Deadlines

Enrollment Type	Deadline	Application Fee
Priority Enrollment	December 1, 2024	\$25
Standard Enrollment	March 1, 2025	\$50
Late Enrollment	May 1, 2025	\$75

Nominate Students: LSMacademy.org/nominate

Youth musicians from across the country are headed to Valparaiso University this year for the **2025 Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival (LSM)**.

Students in grades 8-12 will be immersed in a supportive community that nurtures their musical growth, and invites them to share their musical gifts in performance and in worship. With the Standard Enrollment deadline approaching on March 1, now is the perfect time to nominate students so their families can directly receive information and an invitation to apply.

Do you know young musicians who would thrive at LSM? Nominate them today at LSMacademy.org/nominate.

YOUTH GRADES 6-12

Do you enjoy church but wish there were more kids your own age? Well then we have good news for you! You are invited to the Upper Susquehanna Synod Youth Group's next gathering on Sunday, **February 16, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Milton Lutheran Church, Milton**. The theme is a Trivia Night! All youth in grades 6-12 are invited! We hope to see you there!

TRIVIA NIGHT

FEBRUARY 16 - 2-5 PM

Milton Lutheran Church
1125 Mahoning Street, Milton PA



To our members celebrating a birthday in February

Chip Edmonds	February 02
Donna Martin	February 03
Peggy Yohn	February 06
Bonita Cockley	February 07
Patricia Durand	February 08
Allan Husband	February 09
Lynn Shade	February 09
Erick Fortin	February 12
Domanick Young	February 12
Dylan Rhodes	February 13
Charles Duchman, Jr.	February 19
Mia Clark	February 26
Laura McNassor	February 26
Kathy Borch	February 28

Happy Wedding Anniversary.....

Phil and Susan Harvey	February 26
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(We're sorry if we missed anyone. If we did, please contact the office so we can add you to our records.)

STAFF AT ST. LUKE



Pastor Jeffrey LeCrone, Pastor
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Sarah M. Young, Church Office Manager
Email: info@stlukeweb.com



Rebecca Ciabattari, Organist/Choir Director
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Chris Knaur, Sexton
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Melissa Eshleman, Business Manager
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