



ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
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St. Luke Online: www.stlukeweb.com



2025 NEWSLETTER

From the Pastor's Desk

*Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let
them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

- Isaiah 55:6-7

I'm not the same person I was twenty-five years ago. For one thing, I look a lot different. Back then my face was the reverse of what it is now; I was clean-shaven with a full head of hair. People who haven't seen me since then might not even recognize me. But my physical appearance isn't the only thing that has changed. I'm older, (hopefully) wiser, and more experienced than I was then. Even a few parts of my very identity are different. In the past quarter-century, I became a citizen of Williamsport, a Lutheran, and an uncle, none of which was true of me in the year 2000.

The Israel that the prophet Isaiah knew was one that no longer rooted its identity in God. Rather than committing themselves to God's law and to justice, love of neighbor, and righteousness, they had sought to fulfill their own needs, desires and purposes, often at the expense of the weak and marginalized. Then, in exile, under the influence of Babylonian culture and religion, they continued to look less and less like the people God had originally called to be a blessing to the world. So, Isaiah implored them to "Seek the Lord while he may be found", to return to the covenant they had made with God. Theologian Walter Brueggemann refers to this as a "summons to come back to an original identity."

The season of Lent is about reconnecting with our identity in Christ in the midst of all of the things that compete for our attention and our very identities. There are many avenues for us to do this. Some refrain from a type of food or practice to remind them of their dependence on God. Some increase their time in worship (you are reminded of our midweek Lenten services). And others still establish or increase their devotional time, taking time to pray and/or reflect on scripture daily. I encourage any or all of these practices during the coming season.

Whatever our practices, however, Lent is a time for Christ to call out our name and remind us of our identity as people of the Gospel who seek to love God and love our neighbor without limit.

Peace,



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

Serving in March at the 10:30 am worship service

Altar Care: Cindy Belles

Greeters: 2nd Patty & Doug Durand; 9th Jan Matz; 16th Deb Smith; 23rd Peggy & Chuck Yohn; 30th Nancy & Keith Wood

Ushers: 2nd Bill Merkel; 5th (Ash Wed.) Jere Eshleman; 9th Ruth Croyle; 16th Bob Borch; 23rd Hanne Schuman; 30th Brad Nason

Acolyte: 2nd Lily Judge; 9th Wyatt Judge 16th Luke Edmonds; 23rd Daniel Taormina; 30th Jacob Edmonds

Live Stream Assistant: 2nd Daniel Taormina; 9th Brad Nason; 16th Brad Nason; 23rd Daniel Taormina; 30th Charles Mahler

March 2nd *Transfiguration*

10:30 am Lector – Sue Beidler

Assisting Minister – Melanie Taormina

Communion Assistant – Karen Baldys

March 5th *Ash Wednesday 7:00PM*

Lector – Cheryl Newburg

Assisting Minister – Deb Smith

Communion Assistant –Becky Lewis

March 9th *First Sunday in Lent – *Daylight saving time begins*

10:30 am Lector – Jay Nau

Assisting Minister – Allan Husband

Communion Assistant – Patty Durand



March 16th Second Sunday in Lent

10:30 am Lector – Deb Smith

Assisting Minister - Marilyn Eshleman

Communion Assistant – Nancy Wood

March 23rd Third Sunday in Lent

10:30 am Lector – Melanie Taormina

Assisting Minister – Mark Bergren

Communion Assistant – Sandy Strother

March 30th Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:30 am Lector – Ray Schreckengast

Assisting Minister – Allen Husband

Communion Assistant - Marilyn Eshleman

Offering Counters

2nd Terry Belles & Jannine Monness (*training)

9th Nancy McCarty & Sondra Fisher

16th Sondra Fisher & Janice Ogurcak

23rd Ray Schreckengast & Marilyn Eshleman

30th Terry Belles & TBA



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

March 5th at 7pm in the Nave

St. Luke Lutheran Church



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. Sign-up sheets are located in the West Hall.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Once again, St. Mark's invites the St. Luke congregation to join us for our **Shrove Tuesday celebration on Tuesday, March 4**. We will **begin in Fellowship Hall at 6 pm** with donuts, snacks, beverages and of course traditional fastnachts. Our time together will include the burning of palm branches for ashes and the traditional "burying of the alleluia" for Lent. All are welcome!



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)

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**. **A sign-up sheet is located in the West Hall.** If you have any questions, please contact Deb Smith at mdtmom4@gmail.com or 570-762-3308.



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

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, March 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, March 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, March 18th from 9:30 am -12 noon** in the Lounge. All are welcome!

YOUTH GROUP

On Saturday, Feb. 1, our youth and their families helped serve a “Saturday Dinner Church” meal at Sojourner Truth!



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.

PACK & TROOP 12

CHICKEN & WAFFLES DINNER

Saturday, March 1st from 4:30pm – 6:30pm

Eat in or take out

Chicken & Waffles, Mash Potatoes, Corn and Apple Crisp

Adults \$12 | Children (age 3-10) \$7



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.

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.



To our members celebrating a birthday in March

Robert Larson	March 03
Alexandra Seyler	March 04
Hailey Beck	March 10
Janet Yoas	March 10
James Martin, Jr.	March 15
Mac Harris	March 16
John McNassor	March 21
Cameron Sims	March 26
Samuel Mahler	March 29
Daniel Lamade	March 31
Daniel Wolfe	March 31

*Happy Wedding
Anniversary.*

May God bless you.



Happy Wedding Anniversary.....

Charles & Susan Duchman	March 03
Scott & Alexandra	March 04
Chris & Carol Metzger	March 28

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



CAMP MONT LUTHER



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!**

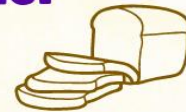
Camp Mount Luther is thrilled to announce that construction has started on a new bathhouse for Maple Village at the camp. The new bathhouse will replace aging bathroom and shower facilities. It will include increased capacity, privacy, and accessibility for users. Martin's Construction of Mifflinburg is the

general contractor for the project. The new bathhouse is expected to be ready for Summer 2025.

On the fundraising side of the project, over \$1.25 million has been pledged toward a \$2 million dollar challenge goal. Chad Hershberger, executive director, says the new year has gotten off to an exciting start. "To be able to watch the progress we are seeing the first few weeks of 2025 toward our dream of this new facility has been so rewarding. Even more rewarding has been the outpouring of support we've seen in our fundraising efforts as we work to provide more inclusive and accessible facilities, Hershberger said. **If you are interested in supporting upgrades at Camp Mount Luther, visit www.campmountluther.org/f4f.**

~~GROW in the Snow~~
RENEW
March 28-30, 2025
at Camp Mount Luther

JOIN THE
FAITHFUL FEAST!



Join us for a weekend of faith, food,
fun, and fellowship!

WHEN: March 28-30 (Friday at 6:30pm to Sunday at 1pm)

WHO: open to youth confirmation-age and up (roughly 6-12 grade)

THEME: JOIN THE FAITHFUL FEAST! Genesis 18:1-8 is our theme passage. We are excited to welcome a number of special guests: Rev. Lisa Barnes will share her expertise on the intersections of faith and food; Rev. Gary Schaeffer will lead a group in making a traditional barbacoa; a representative from LAMPa will lead conversations about food insecurity.

COST: \$160

REGISTRATION: campmountluther.campbrainregistration.com

If you have questions, reach out to us at cml@campmountluther.org!

an ELCA Upper Susquehanna Synod and Camp Mount Luther collaborative ministry





The Gift Of Relationships

FEBRUARY 12, 2025

The Gift Of Relationships

Relationships are special to all of us.

As an only child, I had to work harder than my friends with siblings to build relationships. But I had the gift of being in a four-generational family. My relatives often included me in their friendships. Perhaps this was because my grandfather and mother were only children too. They knew how important it was to develop friendships.

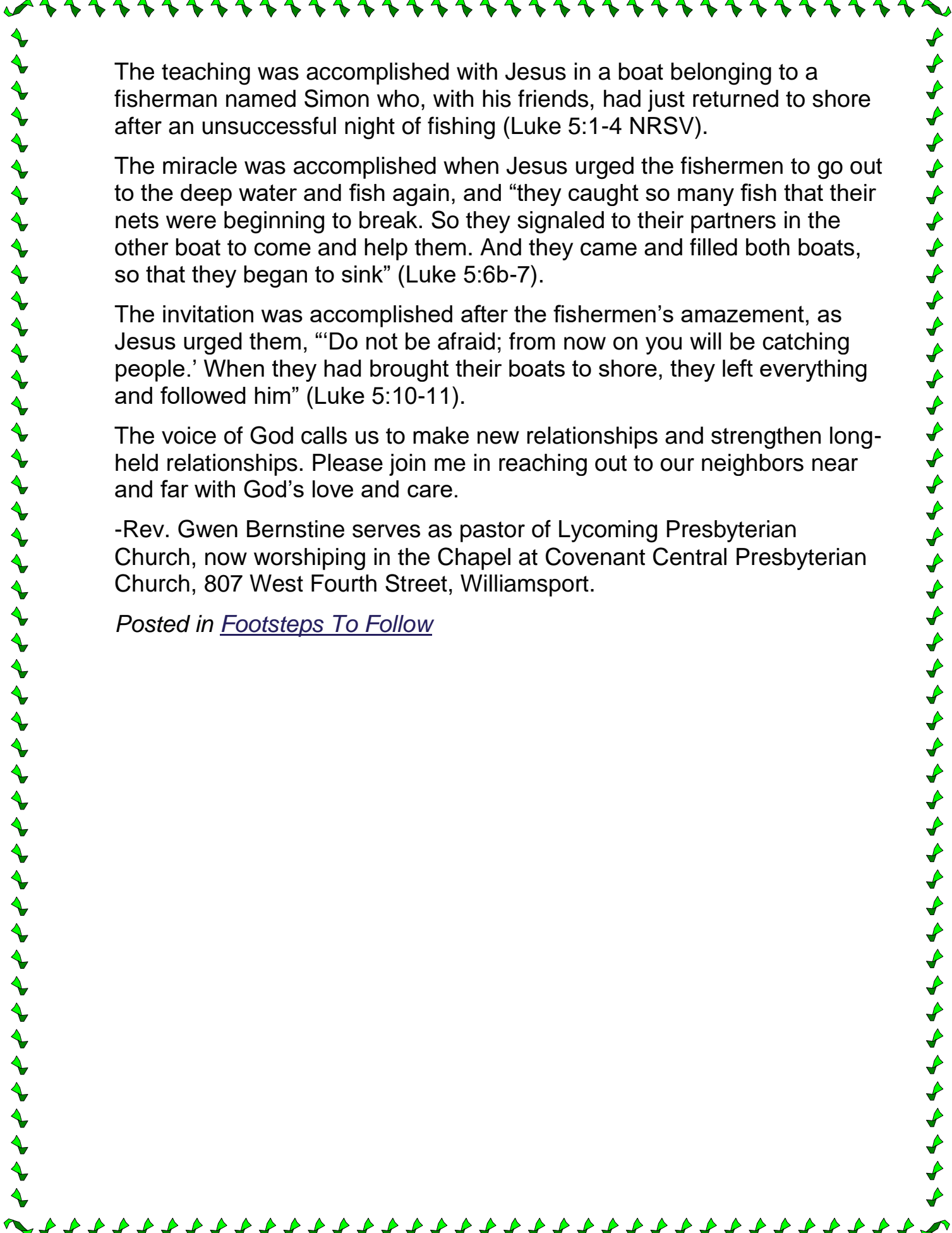
I smile as I think about how much I appreciate developing friendships. How important it is to learn names (I'm name challenged) and something about the people.

The children in our neighborhood played together often. Roller-skating, in those old-fashioned skates that clamped onto our shoes, was one of our favorite pastimes. If the weather didn't allow us to be out on the sidewalks, we often skated in circles on our cement basement floor. We did the same thing in my grandparents' basement, around their coal furnace, remembering to duck for a low lying pipe. My grandfather often skated with us there, until he forgot about that pipe on one of the rotations and ended up flat on his back with us kids worried he might be broken.

As we grew, the older children began developing plays for us all to have a part in. I can remember neighbors, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins from blocks around coming to our shows. Tickets cost a penny for a child and three cents for an adult. If I remember correctly, the audience could buy a snack for a couple cents too. Each year, we chose a different non-profit to receive our donation. I found a clipping recently showing that one year we gave \$47.32 to the School of Hope.

Relationship opportunities come to us wherever we are and in all sorts of ways. They can begin with a wave, a smile, or a "hi." But they don't begin to flourish until you invest some time and a willingness to see someone as important and special.

There is a story about the beginning of Jesus' ministry. People had already begun to follow Jesus. They wanted to hear what he had to teach them about God and to see miracles.



The teaching was accomplished with Jesus in a boat belonging to a fisherman named Simon who, with his friends, had just returned to shore after an unsuccessful night of fishing (Luke 5:1-4 NRSV).

The miracle was accomplished when Jesus urged the fishermen to go out to the deep water and fish again, and “they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink” (Luke 5:6b-7).

The invitation was accomplished after the fishermen’s amazement, as Jesus urged them, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.’ When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him” (Luke 5:10-11).

The voice of God calls us to make new relationships and strengthen long-held relationships. Please join me in reaching out to our neighbors near and far with God’s love and care.

-Rev. Gwen Bernstine serves as pastor of Lycoming Presbyterian Church, now worshiping in the Chapel at Covenant Central Presbyterian Church, 807 West Fourth Street, Williamsport.

Posted in [Footsteps To Follow](#)

STAFF AT ST. LUKE



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