

The **Newsletter**

February 2026 Edition



From The Pastor's Desk

Shadows, Spaghetti, and Stepping Forward

Is it just me, or does February always feel like it's trying to do a year's worth of work in the shortest month? Here in our neck of the woods, we kick things off with *Grundsadaag* (Groundhog Day), squinting at the ground to see if we're stuck in winter or headed for spring. But in the church, we have our own way of looking for the light.

On February 2nd, we celebrate the *Presentation of our Lord*. This is the day we remember Jesus being presented to the Temple (for the whole story read Luke 2:22-40). It's a day about recognizing the Light of the World right in our midst. Whether the groundhog sees his shadow or not, we know the "Light" has already arrived, and it's a light that no darkness – or shadow -- can overcome.

The Mountain and the Valley

This month is a bit of a spiritual journey. We'll experience the high point of the *Transfiguration*, where everything is bright and glorious, only to head straight into the quiet, reflective season of Lent starting on *Ash Wednesday* (Feb 18th). It's a big shift—moving from the "mountain top" back down to the "dust" of everyday life.

Honoring a Legacy

As we navigate these changes, our hearts are especially heavy with the sudden death of our former pastor, Bruce Potteiger. Thank you to everyone who made that day possible. It was truly a day where the entire community poured itself out in thanksgiving and gratitude for Bruce and the ministry he shared. It's never easy to say goodbye, especially when it happens so unexpectedly. Bruce served this community and everywhere he was with such heart, and while we feel the sting of his absence, we also feel the warmth of the legacy they left behind.

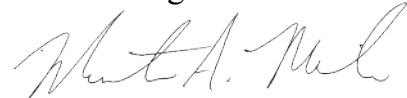
In honor of his memory and his love for our neighbors, we are dedicating our *Shrove Tuesday Spaghetti Dinner* (see more info in this month's newsletter) to a cause close to his and our hearts. All contributions from the dinner will go directly to the **Brandywine Food Pantry**. It's a beautiful way to turn our grief into a gift for others.

Let's Talk Shop (and Hope)

Amidst all this, we have our Annual Meeting on February 15th following our Sunday morning worship service. I know, "annual meeting" might not sound as exciting as a mountaintop experience, but it's actually a vital part of our life together. It's our chance to look at where we've been and decide where God is calling us next. It's about more than just reports; it's about stewardship and hope. The Bulletin of Reports will be available on Sunday, February 8, 2026 in both electronic form (PDF) and in print form.

One Day at a Time

From shadows and groundhogs to ashes and meetings, February is going to be a full month. But through the grief and the planning, we've got each other—and we've got a God who walks through every transition right beside us.



February at a Glance

- ❖ Sunday, Feb 15: Annual Congregational Meeting
(Immediately following the morning service)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb 17: Shrove Tuesday Spaghetti Dinner**
(5:00^{PM} – 7:00^{PM} in the Fellowship Hall).
Benefits the Brandywine Food Pantry!
All kind of help is needed for this event.
Call the church office if you can lend a hand.
- ❖ Wednesday, Feb 18: Ash Wednesday Service
(7:00^{PM} – Imposition of Ashes)

BECOME A *Member*

We welcome your participation in Christ Mertz's active and loving community of faith.

If you have questions about membership or joining church, contact Pastor Milne @ mamilne@gmail.com or 484.505.0987 (call or text) or christ@christmertz.org or call 610.682.7664.



**ANNUAL
MEETING**
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

All Services at 9:00 ^{AM} ✘ Sunday School follows Children's Sermon



CAN'T MAKE IT SUNDAY MORNING IN PERSON?

Worship with us LIVE or later — Sunday through Saturday — on YouTube!



February 1 - Service of Holy Communion

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Micah 6.1-8; Psalm 15;
1 Corinthians 1.18-31; Matthew 5.1-12

Serving:

Reader: Nadine Hoffman

Acolyte: Cali Peifer

Usher: Debbie Reitenauer

Altar Guild: Laurie Hullinger, Heidi Poticher

Communion: Sue Smith, Margie Miller

Greeter: Grace Bohn, Deb Adam

February 8 - Service of the Word

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 58.1-9a[9b-12]; Psalm 112.1-9[10];
1 Corinthian 2.1-12[13-16]; Matthew 5.13-20

Serving:

Reader: Kristin Haring

Acolyte: Calvin Wicke

Usher: Megan Gangawere

Greeter: Megan Gangawere, Denise Williams

Council: Tom Trupp, Margie Miller

February 15 - Service of Holy Communion

Transfiguration of Our Lord

Exodus 24.12-18; Psalm 2;
2 Peter 1.16-21; Matthew 17.1-9

Serving:

Reader: Lauren Mills

Acolyte: Emma Reitenauer

Usher: Bonny Mensch

Altar Guild: Bill and Marianne Carey

Communion: Art Kayhart, Bill Koch

Greeter: Tracey DeLong, Kathy Greiss

February 22 - Service of Holy Communion

1st Sunday in Lent

Readings: Genesis 2.15-17;3.1-7; Psalm 32:
Romans 5.12-19; Matthew 4.1-11

Serving:

Reader: Sherry Rogers

Acolyte: Rylan Hartman

Usher: Kathy Greiss

Altar Guild: Mike and Joan Richards

Communion: Bonny Mensch, Brittani Powers

Greeter: Craig and Jody Kemp

Council: Tom Trupp, Margie Miller

Recent Worship Attendance

January 2026

Date	In-Person	Online
01/04/26	99	69
01/11/26	130	
01/18/26	<i>worship cancelled - inclement weather</i>	
01/25/26	<i>worship cancelled - inclement weather</i>	

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

February 2025

Feb 12	Diane & Daniel Manmiller
Feb 16	Susan & Mark Smith
Feb 22	Diane & Neil Behm
	Amanda & Andrew Potteiger
Feb 26	Joanne & Edgar Ewing
Feb 29	LaRue & Nevin Behm

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Feb 1	Cheryl Day
Feb 2	Janet Swoyer Deane Smith Neil Behm Nicole Winegardner
Feb 3	Nicole Frederick Kelly Womack
Feb 6	Olivia Rautzhan
Feb 7	Lucas Sholedice
Feb 10	Joyce Hohl
Feb 11	Doris Williams
Feb 14	Elizabeth Rohde Janet Keller
Feb 17	Jill Krajewski
Feb 18	Lori Zuber
Feb 19	Doreen Houptley
Feb 20	Kenny Schittler Kevin Winegardner
Feb 21	Grayson Ronco
Feb 22	Reece Davis
Feb 23	Melissa Houptley David Houptley
Feb 24	Cathy Pengelly
Feb 26	Ronald Heffner
Feb 28	Marla Jo Frederick Cali Peifer Brayden Oswald



LEHIGH VALLEY PHANTOMS
SUNDAY, MARCH 15

SIGN UP BY FEBRUARY 22

Tickets \$20

GAME START @ 3:05PM

FAITH NIGHT



OPERATION EASTER HUGS & LOVE
February 15

**GIVE A SQUEEZE
 SHARE CHRIST'S
 HOPE & LOVE**



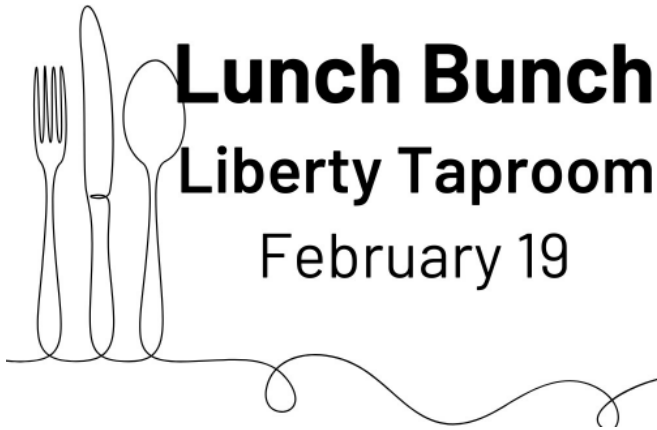
40 COINS FOR DAYS

Eat the chocolate. Fill for your Almsgiving

Pick up your M&M tubes February 15 to fill during Lent

GIVING *at a glance*

	Dec 2025	Dec 2024
Income	\$88,192	\$38,472
Expense	\$34,105	\$38,837
Difference	\$54,087	\$1,364



From Eleanor Dreibelbis:

Thank you so much to Care of Members for the goodies and cards I received for Christmas. Thank you all for thinking of me during the holidays.

From the Potteiger Family:

We would like to sincerely thank the church for your tremendous kindness, love, and support during this difficult time. It was incredibly moving to see so many people come out to show their love for my Dad, and it meant more to our family than words can express.

The generosity shown through the food and drinks, the thoughtful planning, and the incredible army of volunteers who cared for and supported everyone in line was truly amazing. I received countless comments from those in attendance expressing how appreciative and impressed they were by all that you did.

We cannot thank you enough or fully express our gratitude for the way you supported our family behind the scenes and throughout this challenging time. Your compassion and care will always be remembered.

Rediscover the Foundations of Faith

Simple Christianity: Five Weeks of Approachable Theology

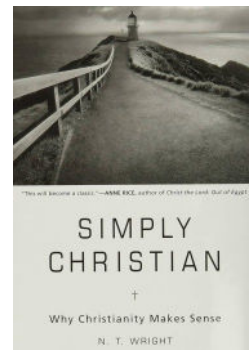
This Lent, we invite you to go deeper into the essentials of Christian faith with "*Simple Christianity*," a five-week adult education series meeting Sunday evenings from February 22 through March 22 at 7:00^{PM}; in-person and/or via ZOOM.

Whether you're new to the faith, returning after time away, or wanting to strengthen your foundation, this class offers an accessible exploration of Christianity's core beliefs using N.T. Wright's *Simply Christian*—a book that presents faith not as abstract doctrines, but as a response to our deepest longings for justice, spirituality, relationships, and beauty.

Each week, we'll combine video content with group discussion as we focus on one fundamental aspect of our faith:

- **God** – Who is God, and how do we understand the Divine?
- **Jesus** – Why does Christ matter to our faith and lives?
- **Holy Spirit** – How does the Spirit work in the world and in us?
- **Church** – What does it mean to be the body of Christ?
- **Scripture** – How do we read and understand the Bible?

No theological background needed—just bring your questions and curiosity. Join us in person or via Zoom for meaningful conversation as we deepen our understanding of Christian faith this Lenten season.

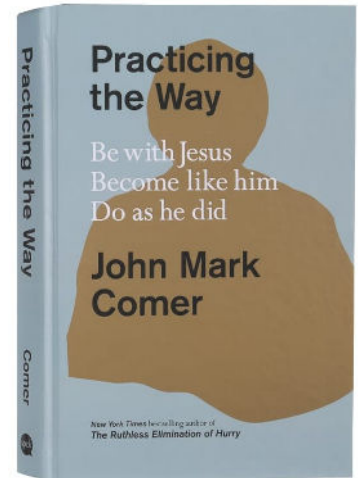


Lenten Wednesdays: Practicing the Way of Jesus

Midweek Lenten Service Offered by the Brandywine Area Churches

We hope you'll join us for our midweek ecumenical worship services, beginning February 25 and continuing each Wednesday evening through Holy Week. Services begin at 7:00^{PM}, and each week we'll gather at a different church in our community -- a wonderful opportunity to experience worship in different traditions and spaces.

This year's theme draws from *John Mark Comer's book, Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus. Become like him. Do as he did.* Comer invites us to rediscover the way of Jesus — not merely as beliefs to affirm, but as a life to be lived. He challenges us to embrace the ancient practices that shaped Jesus' own life: solitude, prayer, Sabbath, simplicity, and community. Becoming like Christ isn't about trying harder—it's about positioning ourselves where transformation happens naturally through these rhythms.



Over these six weeks, we'll explore together what it means to practice the way of Jesus in our daily lives, encouraging one another as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Schedule of Services:

- ❖ **February 25** Christ Mertz Lutheran Church, Dryville
preaching, Pastor Dan Hoffstetter ✕ Chapter 1: Apprentice to Jesus
- ❖ **March 4** Hope Lutheran Church, Bowers
preaching, Pastor Jeremiah Sassaman ✕ Chapter 2: Goal #1: Be with Jesus
- ❖ **March 11** Christ Delong UCC, Bowers
preaching, Pastor Marty Milne ✕ Chapter 3: Goal #2: Become Like Him
- ❖ **March 18** Trinity Lutheran Church, Topton
preaching, Pastor Nelson Quinones ✕ Chapter 4: Goal #3: Do as He Did
- ❖ **March 25** Grace Lutheran Church, Topton (*on the campus of the Lutheran Home*)
preaching, Pastor Jim Maurer ✕ Chapter 5: How?: A Rule of Life
- ❖ **April 1** St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mertztown
preaching, Pastor Crystal Angstadt ✕ Chapter 6: Take Up Your Cross

We'd love to see you there for these meaningful evenings of worship, reflection, and fellowship!

Ash Wednesday Liturgy

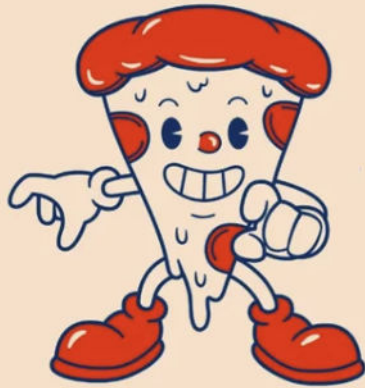
February 18, 2026 @ 7PM

*“remember, you are dust,
and to dust you shall return”*



PIZZA

For Breakfast



**Make
Pizza**

**Eat
Pizza**

***Burn
Stuff**



February 1 after church

* burning stuff in reference to preparing ashes for Ash Wednesday

SUPER BOWL COMBINE

FEBRUARY 8

11:00^{AM} - 1:00^{PM}

ALL AGES WELCOME

WEAR YOUR FAVORITE JERSEY

CHRIST MERTZ SPRING CRAFT SHOW

Saturday, March 14

9:00^{AM} - 1:00^{PM}



Pictures with the Easter Bunny 10:30 - NOON

**JEWELRY, ART,
HOMEMADE CANDLES,
HOME DECOR AND MORE!**

Most vendors will only be accepting cash

**HOMEMADE CHICKEN
NOODLE SOUP, BBQ,
HOT DOGS & BAKED GOODS**

-Eat In or take out-





MARDI GRAS
SPAGHETTE
DINNER

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 17, 2026
4:00PM - 7:00PM

\$10 PER ADULT
\$5 CHILDREN 10 & UNDER

**PROCEEDS OF THE DINNER WILL GO TO THE BRANDYWINE FOOD PANTRY
IN HONOR AND MEMORY OF THE REV. BRUCE POTTEIGER**

February 2026

SUNDAY		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	CHANGE FOR CHANGE Holy Communion 4th Sunday after Epiphany 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:30 ^{AM} Burn Stuff, Make Stuff	2	3	4	10:00 ^{AM} Staff Support 10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	6	7
8	Service of the Word 5th Sunday after Epiphany 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation 11 ^{AM} Super Bowl Combine	9	10	11	10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 5:30 ^{PM} Worship & Music 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	13	14
15	Holy Communion ANNUAL MEETING Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation	16	17	18	Ash Wednesday 7:00 ^{PM} @ Christ Mertz 10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 12:30 ^{PM} Lunch Bunch 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	20	21
22	Holy Communion 1st Sunday of Lent 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation 7 ^{PM} Simple Christianity	23	24	25	Midweek Lenten Service 7:00 ^{PM} @ Christ Mertz 10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	27	28

Easter Flower Order

Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, February 22nd

Orders can be placed with June Heller at 610.781.4456, the church office 610.682.7664 or place the info in the collection plate.

FLOWER	COST/EACH	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Easter Lilies	\$10.50		\$
Hybrid Lilies	\$10.50		\$
Daffodils – 4 ½” pot	\$4.25		\$
Daffodils – 6 ½” pot	\$8.50		\$
Tulips – 6 ½” pot	\$8.50		\$
Chrysanthemums – 6”pot	\$8.50		\$
Total			\$

Name & Phone number:

In memory of or in honor of:



Christ Church Children's Center
WWW.CHRISTCHURCHCHILDRENSCENTER.COM
@CCCCchildcare

Tired of the Snow?
Get Ready for
SUMMER DAY CAMP

**2026 CAMP
REGISTRATION NIGHT**
Thursday, March 26 at 6 PM

CCCC
The First Step to
a Bright Future

www.christchurchchildrenscenter.com
16 Fleetwood Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

A poster for a 2026 Summer Day Camp registration night. The top half features a blue sky with snowflakes and a large white moon. The text "Tired of the Snow? Get Ready for" is written in a playful, bubbly font. Below this, "SUMMER DAY CAMP" is written in large, colorful, block letters. The middle section shows three children jumping joyfully in a sunny outdoor setting with palm trees and a beach umbrella. The bottom section is a red banner with white text announcing the "2026 CAMP REGISTRATION NIGHT" on Thursday, March 26 at 6 PM. A QR code is provided for registration. The CCCC logo and tagline "The First Step to a Bright Future" are also present.

Christ Church Children's Center annual
CHOCOLATE EGG SALE
Order Yours Today!

Milk Chocolate Peanut Butter
Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter
Milk Chocolate Coconut
Dark Chocolate Coconut

Orders due
3/18

ORDER NOW

CCCC

<https://www.christchurchchildrenscenter.com/basic-06>

16 Fleetwood Road; Fleetwood, PA 19522

A brown-themed poster for a chocolate egg sale. The text "Christ Church Children's Center annual CHOCOLATE EGG SALE" is prominently displayed. Below it, the phrase "Order Yours Today!" is written. A list of four chocolate egg flavors is provided: Milk Chocolate Peanut Butter, Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter, Milk Chocolate Coconut, and Dark Chocolate Coconut. A purple circular badge indicates that orders are due on 3/18. An "ORDER NOW" button is placed above a QR code. Two chocolate eggs are shown in the center. The CCCC logo is at the bottom right. The website URL and address are at the bottom.

**JOIN OUR
LOVING TEAM!**

Reach out to Mike at
mikearndt@aol.com

CCCC
CHRIST CHURCH
CHILDREN'S CENTER

A photograph of two women and four children sitting around a round wooden table in a bright, colorful playroom. They are all smiling and engaged in an activity with red heart-shaped trays and small toys. The CCCC logo and name are in the top right corner.