

The **Newsletter**

March 2026 Edition



From The Pastor's Desk

March: A Month Worth Paying Attention To

Well, if February went out with a bang, March is coming in with a full plate — and I mean that in more ways than one.

Let's start with the **spaghetti**. Our Mardi Gras Spaghetti Dinner in honor and memory of Pastor Bruce Potteiger was, by any measure, a tremendous success. After reimbursements, we were able to donate **\$2,642.00** to the Brandywine Food Pantry. That number matters.

But honestly, what mattered just as much was the room itself — the congregation showing up, the community showing up, people who loved Bruce showing up. It was a night to remember, and a night that remembered him well. Thank you everyone who donated time, talent, treasure, and their empty stomachs. Matthew 25 asks us what we did for the hungry, the stranger, the forgotten. That night, we had a pretty good answer.

Now, mark your calendars and go get a birthday card, because Ruth Hertzog is turning **100 years old on March 25th**. One hundred. Psalm 90 tells us that a long life is seventy years, perhaps eighty if we are strong — and then there's Ruth, blowing right past all of that. A card shower has been requested by friends and family, and we'd love for our whole congregation to send Ruth some love. Cards and birthday greetings can be mailed to:

**Ruth Hertzog c/o Evertrue Lutheran Home at Topton, 1 S. Home Ave.,
Room 107, Topton, PA 19562**

Don't let this one slip by. A hundred years deserves a full mailbox.

Meanwhile, Lent is in full swing, and March brings us three Sundays that sit at the very heart of the season. In the ancient Church, these Sundays were called the Scrutinies — and before you raise an eyebrow at that word, hear it out. To scrutinize something doesn't mean to condemn it. It simply means to see it clearly, to inspect it closely. That's a different thing entirely.

Each of these three Sundays gives us a story from the Gospel of John that does exactly that. On March 8, we meet the **Samaritan Woman at the Well** (John 4:4-42) — a woman who came looking for water and left knowing she'd found something else altogether. On the March 15, we encounter the **Man Born Blind** (John 9:1-41) — a story about what it means to truly see, and who, in the end, is really blind. On the March 22, we witness the **Raising of Lazarus** (John 11:1-45) — death itself confronted, and found wanting. For these three Sunday, the Gospel readings will be set to music.

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These stories aren't just vivid narratives. They are mirrors. The Scrutinies invite us to look honestly at sin: not to be crushed or overwhelmed by it, but to see it for what it is, to understand where we are personally and communally vulnerable to it, and to recognize the disordered patterns we keep falling back into. That's the "inspect closely" part. And it would be a heavy exercise if it stopped there. But it doesn't.

Because alongside that honest reckoning, Jesus shows up — offering Himself. The Scrutinies are just as much about the transformative healing He makes possible as they are about naming what needs to be healed. With God's grace, we can turn away from the darkness, reject what pulls us down, and step into the light. Not because we've earned it. Because we've trusted the One who offers it.

All of this — the Samaritan Woman, the Man Born Blind, the Raising of Lazarus — is building toward something. Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and the morning that changes everything. March has a destination. We're on our way.

Keep walking



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.

February 2026 Worship Attendance

Date	In-Person	Online
02/01/26	109	29
02/08/26	85	83
02/15/26	131	53
02/18/26 <small>Ash Wednesday</small>	81	71
02/22/26	92	116

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES *March 2026*

March 10	Maggie & Ken Schittler
March 18	Nadine & Tim Hoffman
March 24	Paulette & David Ream
March 26	Margie & Gene Miller Christine & Brighton Reinert
March 27	Christine & Keith Pensinger

Our Online Worship Ministry

Our online worship presence ensures that everyone — whether homebound, traveling, or unable to join us in person — can still experience the joy of worship and community.

Delivering a quality experience requires reliable, up-to-date equipment, and we are committed to making the necessary upgrades to serve our online congregation well.

If you'd like to support this ministry, we welcome your generosity. Please designate any special gifts as **AV Upgrades**.

WORSHIP IN MARCH

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!



March 1 - Service of Holy Communion

2nd Sunday in Lent

Readings: Genesis 12.1-4a; Psalm 121;
Romans 4.1-5,13-17; John 3.1-17

Serving:

Reader: Lori Stoudt

Acolyte: Elise Eisenhart

Usher: Linda Hilbert

Altar Guild: Bob and Ramona Wolf

Communion: Sue Smith, Sherry Rogers

Greeter: Tom and Sue Trupp

Council: Bobby Eisenhart, Art Kayhart

March 8 - Service of the Word

3rd Sunday in Lent

Readings: Exodus 17.1-7; Psalm 95;
Romans 5.1-11; John 4.5-42

Serving:

Reader: Kristin Haring

Acolyte: Wyatt Nace

Usher: Tom and Sue Trupp

Altar Guild: Bonny Mensch, Margie Miller

Communion: Pete Flemming, Bill Koch

Greeter: Tomasi Family

Council: Bobby Eisenhart, Art Kayhart

March 15 - Service of Holy Communion

4th Sunday in Lent

Readings: 1 Samuel 16.1-13; Psalm 23;
Ephesians 5.8-14; John 9.1-41

Serving:

Reader: Ramona Wolf

Acolyte: Lincoln Herman

Usher: Megan Gangawere

Altar Guild: Brittani Powers, Denise Williams

Communion: Nadine Hoffman, Lori Stoudt

Greeter: Megan Gangawere, Kathy Greiss

Council: Bobby Eisenhart, Art Kayhart

March 22 - Service of Holy Communion

5th Sunday in Lent

Readings: Ezekiel 37.1-14; Psalm 130;
Romans 8.6-11; John 11.1-45

Serving:

Reader: Margie Miller

Acolyte: Grayson Ronco

Usher: Kathy Greiss

Altar Guild: Laurie Hullinger, Heidi Poticher

Communion: John and Jeanette Tomasi

Greeter: Mike Richards, Pat Roth

Council: Bobby Eisenhart, Art Kayhart

March 29 - Service of Holy Communion

Sunday of the Passion + Palm Sunday

Readings: Isaiah 50.4-9a; Psalm 31.9-16;
Philippians 2.5-11; Matthew 26.14--27.66

Serving:

Reader: Joan Richards

Acolyte: Cali Peifer

Usher: Bonnie Lombardi

Altar Guild: Gene and Patsy Greenawalt

Communion: Bonny Mensch, Brittani Powers

Greeter: Craig and Jody Kemp

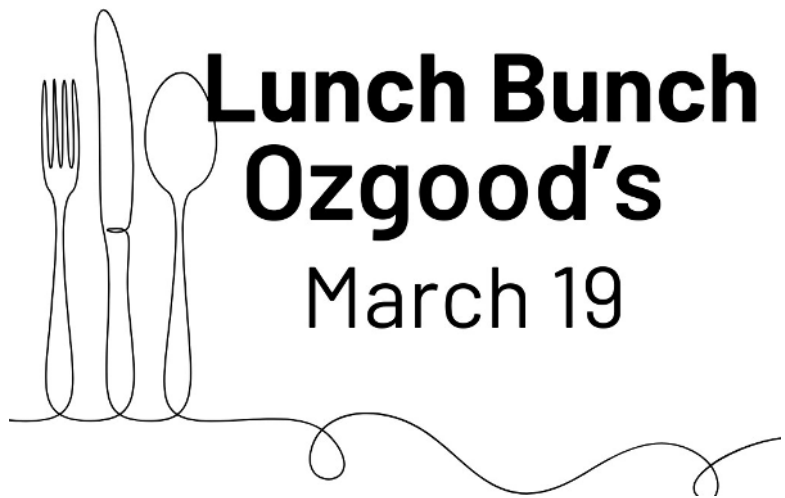
Council: Bobby Eisenhart, Art Kayhart

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

March 1	Todd DeLong
March 2	Shelby Greiss
March 4	Amy Richard Nicole Frederick Kaz Kramer
March 5	Karen Winegardner Owen Tomasi
March 6	Blake Adams
March 7	Joanne Ewing Susan Smith Lincoln Herman Anne Milne
March 8	Roberta Wagner
March 9	Megan Gangawere
March 14	Gary Poticher
March 15	Aidan Dietrich Jeanette Tomasi
March 17	Marlene Heffner Joy Adams
March 21	Laura Turner Katie Zuber
March 22	Margie Miller
March 23	Hayden Ronco
March 24	Ruth Hertzog Sara Schwalm Braden Welsh Richard Baker
March 26	Phyllis Himmelreich Michelle Readinger
March 27	Elizabeth Coffin Randay Turner Jeremy Guldin Jeremiah Schwalm
March 29	Kristy Heffner Mackenzie Wicke
March 31	Heidi Poticher

TIME TO SPRING FORWARD

MARCH 8



Lunch Bunch Ozgood's March 19

GIVING

at a glance

	Jan 2026	Jan 2025
Income	\$34,168	\$33,338
Expense	\$24,843	\$24,032
Difference	(\$9,325)	(\$9,306)

Rediscover the Foundations of Faith

Simple Christianity: Five Weeks of Approachable Theology

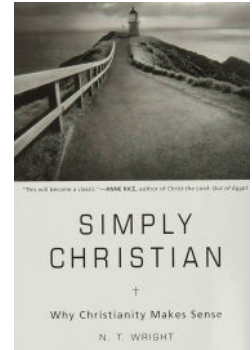
This Lent, we invite you to go deeper into the essentials of Christian faith with "*Simple Christianity*," a five-week adult education series meeting Sunday evenings through March 22 at 7:00^{PM}; in-person and/or via ZOOM.

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.



A Note from Our Branding Initiative

CMLC Branding Survey – We Want to Hear from You!

Your perspective matters — because *you* are part of the answer to the question: "Who do you say we are?"

The survey takes less than 10 minutes, and you can complete it three easy ways:

- **On paper** — Forms are available in the Narthex on Sundays through March 15th. Drop your completed survey in the basket by the Coat Rack.
- **By phone** — Scan the QR code to access the survey instantly.
- **Online** — Visit christmertz.org, navigate to **FORMS**, and select the **Branding Survey**.



This is more than a survey — it's an invitation. CMLC is shaped by the people who call it home, and your voice is one we truly cannot afford to miss. Whether you've been here for decades or just found your way through our doors, your experience and your heart matter deeply to us.

The deadline is coming soon. Please take a few minutes this week — your words will help guide where we go from here, together.

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-



EASTER EGG HUNT

10AM - APRIL 4 - RAIN OR SHINE

All Ages welcome!
Bring your own Easter Basket
Get your picture with the Easter Bunny

BIBLE TRIVIA

YOUTH AGES 5TH - 12TH GRADE

MARCH 8 AT 10:30 AM

HOW MANY QUESTIONS CAN YOU GET RIGHT?

**SAVE THE DATE
VBS IS COMING
July 13 - 17**

We will be exploring the Nature of God this summer. Stay tuned for details. You won't want to miss our next adventure!



MOVIE DAY

JOIN US AFTER CHURCH ON MARCH 22 FOR A FUN EASTER MOVIE AND A SPECIAL SNACK!

Easter Egg Stuffing

We will be stuffing Easter Eggs for our Easter Egg Hunt after Good Friday worship, **April 3rd**. If you would like to help, please let Carla know. All help is appreciated.

DONATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED **CANDY** FOR EASTER EGG HUNT NEEDED BY MARCH 29

EASTER EGG HUNT
APRIL 12, 2026 @ 10:30AM
Youth Ages 5th - 12th Grade

Chocolate Egg Sale

Homemade Peanut Butter or Coconut Eggs dipped in milk or dark chocolate.
All proceeds will benefit Christ Church Children's Center.

\$7.00 for 1/2 pound

\$12.00 per pound

Orders can be placed by picking up a form from the Church Bulletin Board and returning it with payment to Margie Miller or Sherry Rogers, placing it in the Tuition Box on the stairs, or ordering online at www.christchurchchildrenscenter.com.



ORDERS DUE BY WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18



THURSDAY, MARCH 26
AT 6 PM

GAME ON!
SUMMER CAMP
REGISTRATION NIGHT

GET READY TO SCORE YOUR SPOT
FOR THE BEST SUMMER YET

EMAIL: [MIKEARNDT@AOL.COM](mailto:mikearndt@aol.com)
FOR MORE INFORMATION



WELCOME

CCCC would like to welcome
Ty Menet to our Infant Room and
Gracie Strzempek to our Staff Team.
Welcome to our CCCC Family
Ty and Gracie!



Summer Camp

Christ Church Children's Center is hiring for our 2026 Summer Day Camp Program!

- Are you over 18?
- Are you responsible and reliable?
- Do you want to work in a rewarding and fun summer job?

Join Our Team!

Email mikearndt@aol.com

www.christchurchchildrenscenter.com



March 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
1 CHANGE FOR CHANGE Holy Communion 2nd Sunday of Lent 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation 7 ^{PM} Simple Christianity	2	3	4	Midweek Lenten Service 7:00 ^{PM} @ Hope, Bowers	10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	6	7
8 Holy Communion 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation 10:30 ^{AM} Bible Trivia 7 ^{PM} Simple Christianity	9 6:00 ^{PM} Finance	10	Midweek Lenten Service 7:00 ^{PM} @ Christ DeLong UCC	12 10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 5:30 ^{PM} Worship & Music 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	13	14 9 ^{AM} Spring Craft Fair	
15 Holy Communion 4th Sunday in Lent 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation 7 ^{PM} Simple Christianity	16 6:00 ^{PM} Girl Scouts 7:00 ^{PM} Council	17	Midweek Lenten Service 7:00 ^{PM} @ Trinity, Topton 6:00 ^{PM} Stewardship	19 10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 12:30 ^{PM} Lunch Bunch 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 6:30 ^{PM} Choir	20	21	
22 Holy Communion 5th Sunday in Lent 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation 10:30 ^{AM} Movie Day 7 ^{PM} Simple Christianity	23	24	Midweek Lenten Service 7:00 ^{PM} @ Grace Lutheran, Top-	26 10:00 ^{AM} Bible Study 7:00 ^{PM} Bible Study 6:30 ^{PM} Choir 6 ^{PM} CCCC Camp Registration	27	28	
29 Holy Communion Palm Sunday 9:00 ^{AM} Worship Service 9:15 ^{AM} Sunday School 10:15 ^{AM} Confirmation	30 5:30 ^{PM} CCCC First Aid Training	31	Christ Mertz Lutheran Church 16 Fleetwood Road ✳ Fleetwood PA ✳ 19522 office: 610.682.7664 ✳ email: christ@christmertz.org The Rev. Martin A. Milne				