



**Trinity Messenger**  
February 2025 Issue 4

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*Alleluia. Love your enemies, and you will be children of the Most High; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Alleluia. Luke 6: 35, 37*

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**Lutheran Social Ministries Baselessly Attacked Amid Defunding**

With the flood of news coming out of Washington DC and the change in the political landscape since the end of January, it is difficult to take in, weed through, and determine what is of value and what is not for our day-to-day lives. Unfortunately, this chaotic atmosphere can result in overlooking the news that is relevant to us as Christians and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

On Sunday, February 2, 2025, false allegations were made by Elon Musk on X (formerly Twitter), questioning the legitimacy of Lutheran social ministries and inferring that illegal federal grant payments have been made to Lutheran organizations without transparency in how these funds are utilized. Musk's tweet was an amplifying response to earlier comments tweeted by General Mike Flynn that baselessly suggested that such funding is mismanaged by Lutheran organizations such as Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services) and Lutheran Services in America, among others.

Similar attacks, amid swift governmental defunding, have also targeted other Christian denominations and organizations as they strive, as we do, to faithfully follow Jesus' command to unconditionally love and care for our neighbor, and see the needs of all God's beloved children in a manner that aligns our lives with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and related scripture that compels us to defend and see to the well-being of widows and orphans, show hospitality to the stranger, free the oppressed, feed and clothe the hungry and poor, and do no wrong or violence to the alien in our land.

Lutheran Services in America and the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, rightly denounced Flynn and Musk's unfounded claims and shared concerns about these attacks in a video statement.

"Despite misinformation and baseless doubt cast today on funding that supports Lutheran organizations across our country, the ELCA remains steadfast in our commitment and work with our many Lutheran partners and expressions of our church. The ELCA is also concerned for other faith-based communities and organizations who have similarly come under attack."

The entirety of Bishop Eaton's statement can be viewed by following this link:

[www.elca.org/news-and-events/elca-presiding-bishop-responds-to-false-allegations](http://www.elca.org/news-and-events/elca-presiding-bishop-responds-to-false-allegations).

As God's church, let us remain faithful and steadfast to the calling given to us through baptism by thoughtfully identifying the needs of our neighbor and boldly serving in God's name on their behalf in Christ-centered ways. Our faith calls us to do so with mercy, responding undeterred to this call despite the irreligious powers that seek to obstruct the

mission Jesus has faithfully given us. My siblings in Christ, be of good cheer, for we serve confidently in the reassurance of Jesus' words, "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man" (Luke 6:22).

Faithfully in Christ,

**Pastor Mark**

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### **Congregation Council Update**

At the February 13 meeting, the Congregation Council:

- Conducted the required annual review of the Child Protection Policy. Several slight revisions and definitions were approved. Anyone desiring a copy of the updated policy should contact the church office.
  - As requested by Ephrata Area Social Services, a letter was sent to the family using the garage on the Trinity House property explaining the sale of the house and asking them to vacate the garage. We're waiting for the EASS attorney to finalize the sales agreement.
  - Set the Spring Congregational Meeting for Sunday, May 4, following the worship service.
  - Approved the Fellowship Committee request for a BYOB event to be held at as an upcoming monthly potluck.
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### **Treasurer's Report: February, 2025**

#### **January Financial Report:**

	<b>Actual</b>
Unified Budget Income	\$34,941.59
Unified Budget Expense	\$40,131.86
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>\$ 5,190.27</b>

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#### **Stewardship Special Giving for February:**

##### **The Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania**

The Church, in a place and time apart...Where God's presence is experienced, Faith is renewed, Christ's love is felt, and the Church is strengthened for the service and proclamation of the Gospel! Our mission is to be a gracious expression of God's love for all people.

The Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania operates three facilities: Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, and the Wittel Farm; with a variety of outdoor experiences in a uniquely Lutheran tradition.

Each summer, hundreds of young people, adults, and families come to camp to grow in faith through adventure, nature, and creative arts experiences.

Retreat programs are offered for all ages throughout the year. Plus, all facilities are available for rent by retreat groups, church groups, and families.

The Growing Project at the Wittel Farm is a volunteer-supported working farm that grows fresh fruits and vegetables, which are donated to address food insecurity in Lancaster County.

As a Reconciling in Christ organization, all people are invited and welcome to enjoy the goodness of God's creation through the community at camp.

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### **Jim Hooper - Memorial Service**

A time of visitation and memorial service will be held for Joyce Hooper's husband, Jim, on February 22 at the Olewiler & Heffner Funeral Chapel, located at 35 Gotham Place, Red Lion, PA. Visitation will be from 1:00-2:00 PM with the service following. Condolence cards may be sent to Joyce and her family at 309 Bank Hill Rd., Wrightsville, PA 17368.

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Notice of worship/meeting cancellations can be found on our website, Facebook & Instagram page as well as ABC27 [snowwatch@abc27.com](mailto:snowwatch@abc27.com) and WGAL8 [www.WGAL.com](http://www.WGAL.com)



### **POTLUCK DINNERS RESUME**

The Fellowship Committee will host a potluck dinner on Friday, February 21, at 6:00 PM. Further information will be provided closer to the date. Look for a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Area.

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### **Celebration Choir Schedule**

Wednesday, February 26 – 7:00 PM – Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 12 – 6:30 PM – Rehearsal

Sunday, March 16 – sing "Teach Me Thy Way"

Wednesday, April 2 – 6:30 PM – Rehearsal

Wednesday, April 9 – 6:30 PM – Rehearsal

Sunday, April 13 (Palm Sunday) – sing "The King of Glory"

Wednesday, April 16 – 6:30 PM – Rehearsal

Thursday, April 17 (Maundy Thursday) – sing "A New Commandment"

Sunday, April 20 (Easter) – sing "We Know that Christ Is Raised"

Please consider joining us and sharing your musical talents! All are welcome!!

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## Why Camp?

### A place for Christ-centered community

Daniel comes from a family that is all about baseball. Their vacations and their summer plans all revolve around coaching, playing, and refereeing games and visiting famous ballparks and baseball history museums. But every summer, Daniel makes sure that he has one week set aside to go to camp – even if it means missing a game or two.

“A week at camp is like nothing else I do,” Daniel says. “It’s different

than being on a team playing a game. Our cabin group – and the whole camp community – is like a family. The counselors are fun, and you can tell they really care about us, and nobody has to be the best at anything – we just have fun together! And I like talking about God with the staff and other people my age.”

Camp provides daily opportunities for prayer, faithful conversation with other Christians, stewardship of God’s Creation, elements of service to God and others, and daily devotions. We hear and experience God’s Word, and have opportunities to put it immediately into practice. We live out our baptismal promises, reminded that we are named, claimed, and sent. It’s an immersion in a loving, grace-filled community of Christ that offers us the a glimpse of the promised Kingdom - a fully immersive experience of the loving presence of Jesus, thanks to the gift of the Holy Spirit - and, as Daniel reminds us, we also have a lot of fun.

Maybe it’s time we rethink the value we place on church camp. It really does reinforce everything we teach about being a beloved child of God and allows us to encounter the living Christ in powerful ways.



### Register Now for Summer Camp at [LutheranCamping.org](http://LutheranCamping.org)

The Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania  
Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, & The Wittel Farm [LutheranCamping.org](http://LutheranCamping.org)



### Phillies' season is upon us again

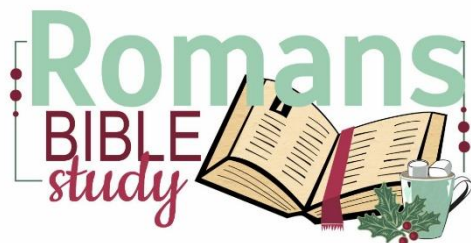
If anyone is interested in traveling on down to see a game, please place your name, phone number and amount of tickets you would like for a specific game on the sheet in the gathering area. Most names on a date wins!!

I will secure tickets and keep you informed. ⚾!

Thank you, Kathrin Baltz

### Sunday Church School on the Move!

Children and Parents are invited to attend Sunday School in the gymnasium on February 2nd and 16th at 10:20-10:50 AM. Snacks can be gotten in the cafe right after church until 10:20 when Sunday School will start in the gym. Parents are asked to remain. Any questions or concerns can be directed to Darryl or Kathy Kuhns.



### **Bible Study**

The weekly study of Paul's letter to the Romans will be on Tuesdays, at 11:00 AM. All are welcome to come and explore this relationship-defining epistle with much to teach us about God's grace and the depth of God's relationship with us through the gift of His Son. See you soon!

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### ***Bergstrasse Community Closet***

Thank you to all of our donors, and the many of you who support us in so many ways!

2025 Hours:

March: 1&2, 15&16 from 12 to 2.

Starting 2025, we have made both Saturday and Sundays, 12 to 2 so our volunteers can enjoy Bergstrasse Lutheran Church worship service on Sundays 10am.

Donations for the clothing closet may be left in the box in the narthex of Holy Trinity church. Please contact the Clothing Closet on Facebook if you are interested in volunteering.

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### **Sharing Upcoming Events and Information**

Congregational committees and other ministries of Holy Trinity are invited and encouraged to share the details of upcoming happenings with the congregation and beyond via our recently updated Facebook page and our webpage. If you have anything that will be occurring between now and Christmas and needs sharing, please contact Theresa Mull ([theresakmull@gmail.com](mailto:theresakmull@gmail.com)), our Facebook page administrator, and Adam Doughty ([adamc.doughty@gmail.com](mailto:adamc.doughty@gmail.com) or 717-445-0007), our webpage administrator if you would like your group's activities shared. They are waiting to hear from you to help share your information with a broader audience.

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Salem Lutheran Preschool, 1331 W. Main St., Ephrata, is now taking registrations for Fall 2025. Classes for 3 and 4 year olds are available. Call the Church office for more information, 717-733-6646.

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### **HOLY TRINITY HAS A NEW FACEBOOK PAGE!!**

**Please follow this link to the new page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61563831542098&mibextid=LQQJ4d>

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23 FEB, SUN

- 9am Worship
- 10am Coffee Hour After Worship

24 FEB, MON

- 10am Women's prayer group
- 6:30pm Yoga

25 FEB, TUE

- 9am Coffee Klatch
- 11am Bible Study
- 3:30pm Trini Mini
- 6pm Pickleball

27 FEB, THU

- 3:30pm Trini Mini
- 7pm Thursday Worship

1 MAR, SAT

- 7:30am Walking Group

[View This Month's Interactive Calendar Here](#)

**February 23rd Servers:**

**Council Team:** Lisa Garrett, John Weiss

**Assisting Minister:** John Fuehrer

**Lector:** Lori Spitzer

**Acolytes:** CH: Natalie Mull

**Ushers:** Steve Sweigart, Sue Watts,  
Carl Rentschler, Andy Sweigart

**Altar Guild:** Denise Shirker, Kelly Homan,  
Bob & Ann Snader

**Linens:** Lori Spitzer

**Flowers:** Winnie Gerlach



**Office Hours February 24-28, 2025**

We recommend you call the office prior to stopping in to ensure hours have not changed.

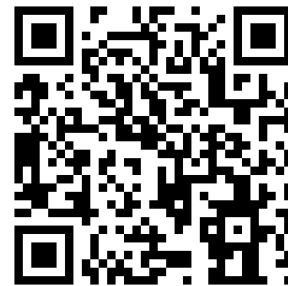
**Office Phone: 717-733-4134 Pastor's Cell: 315-317-8517**

Office email: [officeholytrinity@ephratalutheran.org](mailto:officeholytrinity@ephratalutheran.org)

Day	Sue	Pastor
Monday	8:00 AM- 4:00 PM	9:00 AM-12:30 PM
Tuesday	8:00 AM- 12:00 Noon	9:00 AM-12:30 PM
Wednesday	8:00 AM- 4:00 PM	9:00 AM-12:30 PM
Thursday	8:00 AM- 12:00 Noon	9:00 AM-12:30 PM
Friday	8:00 AM- 12:00 Noon	OFF

**Make Your Regular Offering Electronically**

On the Holy Trinity website ([www.holytrinityephrata.org](http://www.holytrinityephrata.org)), a tab on the menu bar called "Online Giving" will take you to a secure web site for you to give. You can also give your Regular Offering, your Special Appeal donation, your building fund, or your Homes of Hope fund donation by using your Smart Phone and following the QR code.



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*Thanks for reading! Have a great week ahead!*

