

Messiah Lutheran Church

3 South Third Street
Mifflintown, PA 17059
Church Office / 436-6213 Dial-A-Prayer / 436-2100

The Reverend William N. Esborn
Andrea Cameron
Brent Snyder
Cynthia Smith
Michelle Stoner

Pastor
Choir Director
Organist
Lector
Altar Guild

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT March 18, 2012 – 10:30 a.m.

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER TODAY

Marian G., Reba S., Sue C., Flo B., Ethel B., Virginia F., Cathryn R., Goldie K., Jean M., Cassie S., Ruth C., Ray B., Anna Mary Z., Ryan K., Norm and Mary E., Al S., Gary B., Eddie Kay G., Fay M., Dorothy S., Emery K., Dave P., Harry A., Mary W., George, Jamie and Luke D. and Ed and Ann B.

PREPARATION

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE

[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith, for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who brings us out of captivity into freedom, out of the wilderness into the promised land, out of death into life.

C Amen

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection

P Gracious God,

C we confess that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. Forgive us and give us strength to turn from sin and to serve you in newness of life. Amen

P By water and the Holy Spirit, God gives us new birth, and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, + God forgives us all our sins. Almighty God strengthen us in all goodness and keep us in eternal life.

C Amen

* SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

Congregational sharing: **"Peace be with you."**

GATHERING

* ENTRANCE HYMN "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"

* GREETING

P The immeasurable grace of Christ Jesus, the rich mercy of God, and the unity of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

* KYRIE (**C - spoken**)

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C Amen

* PRAYER OF THE DAY (**spoken in unison**)

P Let us pray...

C O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

WORD

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

The First Reading is from the 21st chapter of Numbers.

THE LESSON READS:

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (responsively)

L *You deliver your people from their distress. (Ps. 107:19)*

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good, for God's mercy endures forever.

²Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,

³gathering them in from the lands; from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

¹⁷Some were fools and took rebellious paths; through their sins they were afflicted.

¹⁸They loathed all manner of food and drew near to death's door.

¹⁹Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD and you delivered them from their distress.

²⁰You sent forth your word and healed them and rescued them from the grave.

²¹Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love and your wonderful works for all people.

²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

ALL You deliver your people from their distress.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1-10

The Second Reading is from the 2nd chapter of Ephesians.

THE LESSON READS:

You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you

have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — ⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: Thanks be to God.

* LENTEN VERSE **(sung)**

Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

* GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

P The Holy Gospel according to John, the 3rd chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord. (sung)

THE GOSPEL READS:

¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ. (sung)

SERMON

Pastor Esborn

* HYMN OF THE DAY

"Just As I Am, without One Plea"

* APOSTLES' CREED **(all)**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P We cry to you for help, O God, praying for the church, the world, and all those who are in need.

A brief silence.

P We pray for the whole church; for bishops, pastors, and lay leaders; for those preparing for baptism, their families, and sponsors. Save us by your grace. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We pray for wilderness lands, national parks, and forests; for creatures that may frighten us: grizzly bears, wolves, and serpents. Teach us compassion for the whole earth. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We pray for nations in conflict; for governments in transition; for children who have only known war. Put an end to our childish wrath, and lead us to good works. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We pray for refugees and displaced persons; for those without food or water; for all who are judged and condemned. Shine your light into our darkness. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We pray for this congregation; for ushers and communion assistants; for council members and acolytes; for visitors among us, those who cannot be here today, and those who are ill (especially all of our shut-ins [both at home and in nursing homes], also Ryan Keresey, Norm and Mary Esborn, Al Smith, Gary Beward, Eddie Kay Gill, Fay McCormick, Dorothy Smith, Emery Kirk, Dave Phelan, Harry Aurand, Mary Weiland, George, and Jamie (Beaver) Davis and son Luke and Ed and Ann Beaver). Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P Keep us in communion with all who have died: our loved ones and our enemies; the very young and the very old; centuries ago and today. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Now is the acceptable time to offer our prayers to you, God of grace and truth. Receive them in your mercy, and grant us all that we need, in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

[Please pass the Friendship Pad down your pew for all to sign and then back to the center aisle so everyone has the opportunity to read the names. We request that our guests also give us their home address. Thank you].

ANTHEM

* SUNG OFFERTORY (**sung**)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

* OFFERING PRAYER

P God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

MEAL

* THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P With his Body and Blood, Jesus Christ delivers us from the power of darkness.

C and leads us into the Kingdom of God.

P Christ has humbled himself and become obedient unto death,

C even to death on a cross.

P He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities,

C and on him was the chastisement that made us whole.

P Here at his holy table he feeds us now with his Body and Blood.

C Glory to you, our Lord and Savior; with your Body and Blood you redeem the World.

* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

C We praise you, O God.

P Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

C We bless you, O God.

P We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

C We thank you, O God.

P In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world. Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end.

C Amen

* THE LORD'S PRAYER ['trespasses'] **(all)**

**C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive
those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver
us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to Christ, broken and poured out for you.

DISTRIBUTION

["INTINCTION" – dip your wafer in the wine. Come forward by the center aisle and return by the side aisle. All who wish to stand at the chancel rail after partaking for a time of silent meditation are invited to do so].

* COMMUNION BLESSING

*P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his
grace.*

C Amen

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*P Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in
the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those
in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure
in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.*

C Amen

SENDING

* BLESSING

*P The blessing of God Almighty, the wisdom of power of + Christ Jesus, and the
light of the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.*

C A-men, A-men, A-men (sung)

* DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God!

CLOSING CHIMES

NEXT WEEK'S LECTOR – Linda Bahorik

NEXT WEEK'S ALTAR GUILD – Michelle Stoner

WELCOME

IF YOU WISH TO USE OR FOLLOW THE LITURGY MUSIC as we proceed through the service today, please use the purple portfolios placed on top of the sound control system. In addition, headsets are available in the narthex for our sound enhancement system for the hearing impaired.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME to worship at Messiah. We invite you to register your visit not only in the Friendship Pads, but also in the guest book provided in the narthex. If you are seeking a church home, please speak to the pastor. Our fellowship in Jesus Christ is open and extended to all persons who confess His Lordship over all life. Thank you for worshiping with us. We invite you to return. Visitors are invited to commune with us if they are baptized and, if with us in our faith, they trust Jesus' promise of the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ.

WE INVITE EVERYONE (members and visitors) worshiping with us today to sign the Friendship Pads during the Organ Offertory. If you are a visitor, please be sure to include your address when signing. Please also place a check mark in the box (beside your name) if you are communing today and have not as yet given us a record of your participation in the sacrament during this quarter. (A new quarter begins in January, April, July, and October). The pads are found on the aisle seat of each pew in the nave, and in each section of the Adult Sunday School Room.

PRAYER REQUESTS will be placed in the weekly bulletin for one month. If you wish to have someone included in the prayer list for more than one month, please call the church office.

THE DEADLINE FOR ALL ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN IS THURSDAY NOON.

DIAL-A-PRAYER (436-2100) IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS DAILY!

JUST A THOUGHT – John Calvin, French Reformer and Father of the Presbyterian Church (1509 – 1564): The world invents its own good works and persuades itself that they are good.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

PROPERTY MEETING – The Property Committee will meet on Monday evening, March 26, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the choir room. Please let the chair person know if you can't attend.

AVERAGE WEEKLY OFFERING needed to fund 2012 expenses is \$3,250. Offering received on 3/11/12 was \$2,488.

RECEIVED IN STAINED GLASS FUND on Sunday, March 11, 2012: \$420. This brings the total received to \$66,688 of the total \$85,890 needed for the project.

THE 2012 CAMPING BROCHURES and registration forms for Camp Mt. Luther are available in the church office. Any young people planning to attend one of the church camps this summer are asked to get their registrations in before April 1st to avoid a late fee.

EASTER LILIES to decorate the church on Easter Sunday, may be placed in memory or in honor of someone or to the Glory of God. Cost will be \$10.00 for a plant with 4 to 6 blooms. You may call the church office at 436-6213 to place your order.

THANK YOU to Doyle Kint for bringing a television for the video games and to Sam and Linda Leister for making 3 flavors of ice cream for our game day. Thanks also to Tina Hazard for her help in planning the event and to all who attended. We hope to repeat this event next year in February and look for more people to join in the fun and games.

Parish Fellowship Committee

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

MESSIAH WOMEN OF THE ELCA continuously collect new bath-size bars of soap (4 oz. to 5 oz., preferably Ivory or unscented Dove) as an on-going project for Lutheran World Relief. Please place soap in the basket on the blue table in the Sunday School Room.

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE in the first 2012 project for Lutheran World Relief by the Messiah Women of the ELCA – FABRIC KITS – Sewing is a valuable skill, one that leads to a reliable income for many women and men. Fabric Kits supply vocational training programs with fabric for teaching sewing, and for newly trained tailors to launch their sewing businesses. Include the following items in each Fabric Kit:

--Two pieces of cotton or cotton-blend fabric (no knits or 100% polyester); fabric should have no stains or holes and should be cut into pieces measuring 2¼ yards of 60" wide fabric, or 3 yards of 44" wide fabric, or 4 yards of 36" wide fabric.

--Two spools of matching or neutral-colored general purpose thread, 250-300 yards each.

The following is an example of how the Fabric Kits are used by Lutheran World Relief – BUNDLES OF HOPE – Young women in West Africa face many challenges as they enter early adulthood. Learning marketable skills to support themselves and contribute to their families can often keep them from being married off at a young age. At the House of Hope for Disadvantaged Girls in Bamako, Mali, Fabric Kits are distributed to the 40 young women who live at the school and learn a number of skills—including tailoring—as a means of earning an income.

When choosing fabrics, consider bright colors and colorful prints. If you are not a shopper and want to participate in the project, we will be glad to do your shopping. Just give your donation to Cynthia Smith or Linda Leister.

Matthew 25:40; And the King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."

COMMUNITY

THE NEXT COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICE, sponsored by the Twin-Boro Ministerium, will be on Wednesday, March 21, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Pastor Chris Mathiason will be preaching on the theme "The Cross in Easter."

2012 WOMEN'S LENTEN TEAS – The Women's Community Lenten Teas will be held each Wednesday during Lent. This year's study will be from the book "Words of Life from the Cross." Fellowship time is 9:30 a.m. followed by the program at 10:00 a.m. Locations are listed below:

March 21, Messiah Lutheran Church
March 28, Westminster Presbyterian Church

2012 MIFFLINTOWN MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFASTS will be held each Saturday during Lent at 7:00 a.m. at JP Pancake House. Speakers are listed below:

March 24, Pastor Gary Krabill
March 31, Pastor Edd Carlson
April 7, Harold Oberholtzer

LENTEN FISH DINNERS (all-you-can-eat) will be held every Friday from February 17 until March 30, 2012 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at St. Jude's Catholic Church. Cost is \$10.00 for adults, \$6.00 for kids 6-12 years old, and kids 5 and under FREE. Sponsored by St. Jude's Knights of Columbus.

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS will be holding the following 2012 local blood drives:

- Monday, March 19 – Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Thompsonstown, 1:00-7:00 p.m. Sponsored by the church. Double reds technology.
- Friday, April 6 – Fayette Community Building, McAlisterville, 12:00 noon-6:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Community Building.
- Thursday, April 12 – Tuscarora Grange, East Waterford, 1:00-7:00 p.m. Sponsored by Blairs Mills Lions Club. Double reds technology.
- Saturday, April 14 – Tuscarora Valley Elementary School, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Sponsored by the school. Double reds technology.

The need for all blood types is constant and ongoing. Appointment are encouraged. Visit www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-733-2767 to schedule an appointment.

MEALS-ON-WHEELS needs a head cook and team for the fourth Tuesday of the month (beginning in November). Also needed, at least two people to help assemble the meals for delivery on the second Friday of the month (needed immediately). Drivers are also needed for several routes. If you can help, please call Dottie Heck at 436-6002 or 717-348-1950 (cell).

THE JUNIATA COUNTY FRIENDSHIP CLUB is a non-profit organization located in Mexico. We serve all of Juniata County as a drop-in center for those that have been diagnosed and treated for a mental illness. We have a peer counselor available as well as access to mental health counseling. We provide a family-like place to come and socialize, and share problems. We are open Monday—Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Our members can come every day, all day, or just a few days or a few hours. We provide a free lunch, snacks, crafts, activities and outings. We are in need of donations of stuffed, comfortable chairs in good condition (no recliners please). If anyone is interested in donating furniture, please contact Cheri Peck, Director, at 436-2077.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR MARCH:

ALL NON-PERISHABLE FOODS

PAPER PRODUCTS: TOILET PAPER, FACIAL TISSUES & PAPER TOWELS

SHAMPOO, DEODORANT & FIRST-AID SUPPLIES

*WE ALSO GLADLY ACCEPT DONATIONS OF CASH AND GIFT CARDS

HELP NEEDED! Two volunteers are needed to work Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Food Pantry. Duties would include answering the phone, setting up appointments, interviewing clients, completing forms and helping with other office work as needed. Applicants must be very strong in the following fruits of the spirit: patience, kindness, goodness and self-control – even under pressure. Additional abilities such as peaceful coexistence with computers and speaking Spanish are appreciated, but **NOT REQUIRED**. Pay for this position is not in Money, but in storing up many treasures in heaven!

NOTE: Beginning April 1, 2012 the Food Pantry **new hours** of operation will be: **Monday and Wednesday, 2:00-6:00 p.m. and Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.** The Food Pantry will be closed on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday. Donations may be left anytime in the vestibule on the ramp side of the building.

RELAY FOR LIFE TEAM (GEORGE'S GEE BEES #124) all-you-can-eat Spaghetti Dinner will be held today from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at Messiah Lutheran Church. Dinner will include spaghetti (with plain or meat sauce), salad, bread, beverage and dessert. Monetary donations would be greatly appreciated. Cost is \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for kids (4-12), and kids 3 and under FREE (take-out orders available). Pay at the door. Additional funds will be available from Thrivent. Proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society.

NURSE'S NOTES – Gardening is a great way to burn off 250-300 calories in an hour. Weeding, mowing, hauling mulch – anything that makes you sweat – qualifies as exercise; switch activities every 20 minutes to give your major muscle groups a workout.

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

- Today:** -9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.
-11:30 a.m., Relay For Life Spaghetti Dinner in Fellowship Hall.
-7 p.m., PPC meeting.
- Monday:** -8 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall.
- Tuesday:** -9 a.m., "The Needlers" in Youth Area.
- Wednesday:** -9:30 a.m., Women's Community Lenten Tea at Messiah.
-7 p.m., Community Lenten Service at Westminster Presbyterian Church.
-7 p.m., NA meeting in Youth Area.
-8 p.m., Choir rehearsal.
- Friday:** -7 p.m., Square Dancing group in Fellowship Hall.
- Saturday:** -7 a.m., Mifflintown Men's Prayer Breakfast at JP Pancake House. Speaker, Pastor Gary Krabill.
- Sunday:** -FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.