

**\*The church doors will be locked when worship begins at 11am\***

**MARCH 2026**

## **THE CHIRPS FOR FORKS FOLLOWERS**

Forks Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church - 253 Forks Church Rd. - Leechburg, PA 15656

Forks Church Office: 724-845-6627

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 10 am - 12pm

email: [churchforks@gmail.net](mailto:churchforks@gmail.net)

Forks Church website: [www.forkschurch.com](http://www.forkschurch.com)

Local Interim Pastor Wayne Gillespie

*Forks Church is where God lifts our spirits through creative worship, as we build God's Kingdom.*

*Come and See.*

*Come and Grow.*

*Come and Serve!*

**COME ONE, COME ALL!!**

**FORKS CHURCH IRISH POTATO BAKE  
AND SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF GLENNA STITT**



**Sunday, March 15, 2026**

Immediately following the 11:00 am morning worship service.

**The luncheon will include a baked potato and a variety of tasty toppings. Meat, dessert and beverage will be provided, as well.**

Please join us for food, fun and fellowship after morning worship on **March 15** as we recognize and thank **Glenna** for her 25 years of music and worship leadership to Forks Zion Lutheran Church.



## A Message from Pastor Wayne

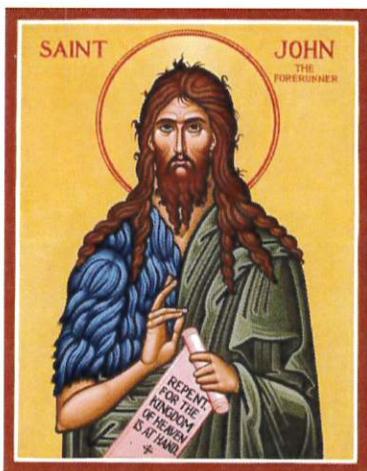
I have collected religious icons for many years. Religious icons are sacred images—what those in the Orthodox Church would call “windows into heaven.” In his book, The Icon: Window on the Kingdom, Michel Quenot says that icons are “theology in pictures”—expressing through color what the Gospel proclaims in words.

My Creation icon reminds me that, as we journey through life, we need to build significant relationships with others because it is not good for any of us to travel through life alone. My Pantocrator icons remind me that Jesus is both all-powerful and almighty—able to accomplish His will in our lives and in our world. When I gaze at my Perpetual Help icons—the ones where Mary comforts a frightened Jesus—I’m remind of Jesus’ humanity and of the fact that Jesus even experienced fear. And then, there’s my icon of John the Baptizer.



John the Baptizer is wearing camel’s hair. John ate locusts and came to prepare the way for Jesus. John also spoke one clear and pointed message: **“The Kingdom of God has come near.”** God has invaded our world! God is as close to us as our own breath. God still comes to us and to

those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, so that we can see and experience God’s presence in our lives and in the world.



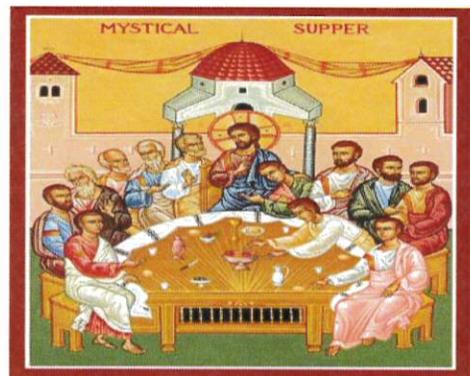
That same God is with us at Forks Zion Lutheran Church. Jesus is personally with us as we break Bread and share the Cup in Holy Communion. Jesus is with us every time we pray by ourselves or with other people. Jesus is with us every time we discuss what we’re doing at Council meetings and in our congregational meetings. The Spirit of Jesus

breaks into the world and **the Kingdom of God is near** every time we greet each other with smiling faces on Sunday morning, every time a struggling family receives something it desperately needs from our Feed My Sheep Pantry, and every time we send or receive a card with an encouraging message in our home or in the hospital.

As we travel through Lent, we're challenged to think about the ways that we can help other people to see that the Kingdom of God has come near through our own words and deeds. We can help other people to see God through our generous support of the Feed My Sheep Pantry and our church budget. We can help people to see God by opening our hands and letting go of past offences, so that relationships can be healed by the power of forgiveness. We can help children see God by inviting them to pray at mealtimes and at bedtime. We can invite our friends and neighbors to join us in worship. We can invite people that we know to join us in fellowship at special events. We can even help people to know what having faith means to us by sharing the story of our own journey in life and by being open about how we see God working in our lives and in the world.

During Lent, we are called to take time to think about what it means to be people who proclaim: **"The Kingdom of God has come near."** And as we journey, once again, to the foot of the Cross and to the doors of the Empty Tomb in the coming weeks, we're called to become more sensitive to people around us who could benefit from that journey, too. God is with us, and we have the chance to share the message of God's continuing presence when we proclaim that **"the Kingdom of God is near"** – a word of Good News for us and a message for everyone who needs to hear of God's love in challenging times.

Pastor Wayne





# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:00 am service <b>Deacon Michelle Kunkle, presiding</b>	2	3 2:00 pm <b>Pantry Team</b>	4	5	6 11:45 am Lunch @ Cross Roads Presbyterian, Lchbg <i>Hebron, hosting</i>	7
8 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:00 am service <b>John Smail, presiding</b> <b>Pantry Open 12:30-2:00</b>	9	10	11	12	13 11:45 am Lunch @ Cross Roads Presbyterian, Lchbg <i>FUMC, hosting</i>	14
15 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:00 am service <b>Christine Weller, presiding</b> <b>Annual Potato Bake and Recognition of Glenna Stitt</b>	16	17	18 6:30 pm <b>Council Meeting</b>	19	20 11:45 am Lunch @ Cross Roads Presbyterian, Lchbg <i>First Lutheran, hosting</i>	21 9-1 <b>Clothing Closet</b> First Lutheran Church Leechburg
22 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent 11:00 am service <b>John Smail, presiding</b>	23	24	25	26 Deadline for April Newsletter submission	27 11:45 am Lunch @ Cross Roads Presbyterian, Lchbg <b>Forks Church will host.</b> <b>Pastor Wayne Gillespie will speak</b>	28
29 Sunday of the Passion <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> 11:00 am service <b>Christine Weller, presiding</b>	30	31				

## MARCH WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ASSISTING MINISTER</u>	<u>GREETER/USHER</u>
Mar 1	Tom Walker	Randy Louden
Mar 8	Tara Malucci	
Mar 15	Patty Newton	<u>ALTAR GUILD</u>
Mar 22	Tom Walker	Fernetta Klingensmith
Mar 29	Tara Malucci	

## MARCH SPONSORSHIPS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>FLOWERS</u>	<u>BULLETINS</u>	<u>CANDLES</u>
Mar 1	Lois Byers	Glenda Paul	Marilyn Smail
Mar 8	Grace Seitam	Patty Newton	
Mar 15	Sandy Bowser	Marilyn Smail	
Mar 22	Glenna Stitt	Ken Riggle	
Mar 29	Patty Newton	Eileen Coyle	

**2026 Council Members** – Tara Malucci, President; Christina Gross, V. President; Dee Bish, Secretary; Karen Disciscio, Treasurer; Interim Pastor Wayne Gillespie, Bob Lawrence, Patty Newton, Glenda Paul, Glenna Stitt, Cindy Walker, Kim Zimmerman.

## March Birthdays

5 Meghan Kennerdell  
6 Janet Nichols  
7 Jack Kennerdell  
8 Leann Heilman, Jacob Heilman  
13 Richard Long  
14 Marilyn Smail  
17 Maegen Hess; Beau Retter  
24 Sarah Kersheski, Susie Strapac  
31 Colin Saxion

## March Anniversary

31 Scott and Jennifer Gray





Updated 2/23/2026

***Please keep the following people in your prayers:***

Cindy Walker, Sammy Hess, Marilyn Smail, Hershel Phares, Mary Walker, Sandy Kotvas, Brenda Ribet, Dale Altman, Bob Lawrence, Betty Black, Lou Fondrk, Sherry Gray, Blair Shick, Nikki Paul Akins, Jeff Crowe, Mary Czonka, Debbie Munko, Kathi Finley Jendrzewski

**HOMEBOUND**

**Dale Altman**

108 Jack Rd., Vandergrift, Pa 15690  
**724-842-7252**

**Betty Black**

239 Johnetta Rd., Vandergrift, PA 15690  
**724-845-8057**

**Fran Coffman – Oertal Care Center**

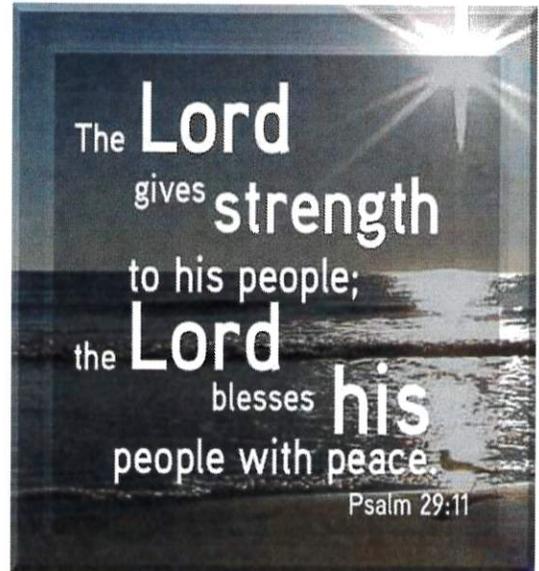
Room 207, 615 N. Pike Rd.; Cabot, PA 16023

**Grace B. Van Dyke - Concordia**

134 Marwood Road, Lund - Room 2155  
Cabot, PA 16023  
**724-524-1505**

**Mary Walker – Concordia**

134 Marwood Rd., Room 2131; Cabot, PA 16023  
**724-524-1125**



**Congratulations to Steven and Shannon Kotvas on the birth of their son, Crosby!**

He was born on January 22, 2026, weighing only 5 lbs., but is growing quickly!

Crosby has two sisters, McKenzie and Kendall.

Proud grandparents are John and Sandy Kotvas.



Our sincerest condolences to Bob Lawrence and his family on the death of his mother, **Rose Mary Lawrence**. Rose Mary passed away on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, from endometrial cancer. Please keep Bob in your prayers during this very difficult time.



**Pantry Team**  
**Tuesday, March 3 @ 2pm**  
**Pantry Open Date**  
**Sunday, March 8**  
**12:30 pm – 2:00 pm**

The Pantry Team is asking for donations of **Pancake Mix, syrup, cereal, poptarts, breakfast bars, and juice** for the month of March to restock Pantry shelves.

Thank you so much!

*The Pantry is supported by the Ethel Verney Grant.*

## **CHOCOLATES, CHOCOLATES, CHOCOLATES**



**Feed My Sheep Pantry** is once again having a **Sweetlane Chocolate Fundraiser.**

**Each week in March, we will have chocolate covered oreos and chocolate covered pretzel rods available for "Cash and Carry", at the church.**

**Check each week during Lent for new chocolate items to take home with you.**

**Please remember to bring cash with you so you don't miss out on this delicious opportunity.**

**As always, we appreciate your support.**

**Feed My Sheep Pantry Team**



### **FRIDAY LENTEN LUNCHES**

**11:45AM**

**February 20-March 27**

at Cross Roads Community Presbyterian Church  
251 Main Street, Leechburg



Sponsored by the congregations of the Leechburg Ministerial Association.

Forks will host the luncheon on March 27.  
Pastor Wayne Gillespie will preside over devotions.  
A free will offering will be accepted.



**Registration is OPEN for Lutherlyn Summer Camps.**

For more info: contact Lutherlyn's Office, M-F 9AM – 5PM  
Phone: 724-865-2161 email: [registrar@lutherlyn.com](mailto:registrar@lutherlyn.com)

### **DRESSES and BRITCHES**

This group met at St. Paul's-Highfield Lutheran Church on February 12. It was an interesting few hours. There was conversation, sewing, brainstorming and laughter. The "collection" of creations has been moved from the narthex to one of the education rooms in the fellowship hall. Please take a minute to see what this group has made.

We will meet next on March 19 at 2 p.m. in the fellowship hall. If you don't know how to sew, we can find something for you to do. Or we can teach you.

Any questions, call Glenda Givens at 724-567-6494. Always like to see new faces!



### **SHAMROCK SHUFFLE 5K & 1 MILE WALK**

**Address: 1116 Gosser St., Leechburg, PA 15656**

[info@sempergratuspgh.org](mailto:info@sempergratuspgh.org)

**Saturday, March 21, 2026**

**9:00 AM REGISTRATION**

**10:00 AM RACE**



### **SAVE THE DATE**

**Southwestern PA Synod Women of the ELCA Convention  
May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026**

**"From Memories to New Beginnings"**

*"Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old.  
I am about to do a new thing, now it springs forth" Isaiah 43:18-19a NRSVUE*

FORKS ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
253 Forks Church Road  
Leechburg PA 15656



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