

# Lent



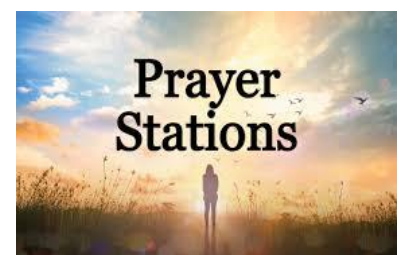
Lent certainly invokes a multitude of ideas and attitudes for people. Some people wholeheartedly commit to the season of Lent. Others have commented to me that it is depressing and boring. UMC.org shares the following description of Lent: “Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, meaning “lengthen” and refers to the lengthening days of spring. The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry. Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection.”

I believe that a lot of folks have a hard time with that last part: self-examination and reflection. In my experience, most folks don’t want to look too closely at themselves because they will see their weaknesses and flaws. And it takes time and intentionality to enter into a time of reflection.

One of the best ways that we can do both of these things is through prayer. Someone recently told me that I “pray too long.” Is that even possible? Why would you consider time spent in conversation and relationship with God to have a time limit?

This year for Lent we will be focusing on prayer. Some of you have already committed to using the Dynamite Prayer book for our Breakthrough Prayer initiative. Thank you for making the commitment to deepen your prayer life during the season of Lent. Based on the readings in the book, we will have a time of discussion and prayer on Wednesdays during Lent beginning on March 12th. We will meet on the following Wednesdays: March 12, March 19, March 26, and April 9. We will meet at 11:00 A.M. and at 6:30 P.M. Even if you have not indicated that you want a book, you are still welcome to come and be a part of the discussion.

I am also setting up a prayer room in the chapel. It will be open every day that Pam is in the office (Tuesday - Friday, 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.). It will also be open Sundays after church and the Wednesday evenings we meet. If you need access to the upper rear door, please call Pam in the office.



I pray that all of you will also make use of the Lenten devotional that we have created for you. I am so appreciative of all those who contributed to it.

May this season of Lent be one in which we deepen our relationship with Christ and recognize his deep and abiding love for us in his sacrifice.

Blessings,

*Pastor Sara*

*“if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”*

2 Chronicles 7:14



Beginning in February, we started a new and ongoing fundraiser through Pizza Hut in Lower Burrell. On the last Tuesday of each month, we are asking that you help support us by either dining in or doing carry out at the Lower Burrell Pizza Hut. We receive 20% of the net sales for everyone that presents a \*coupon or let the server know that you are from LFUMC that night. Everyone has to eat supper so why not support your church while feeding your family. Next date is Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

This fundraiser does not require the church to front any money or require manpower to prepare and serve the food. This will also give us an opportunity to share in a time of fellowship for those that choose to dine in.

***\*Coupons are available in the vestibule.***

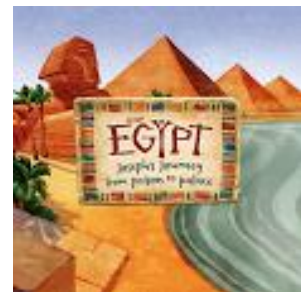
**Vacation Bible School**

June 23 - 27

8:30 - 11:30

Volunteers needed for:

Crew leaders, Games, Crafts, Bible stories, Snacks,  
Decorating, Registration, and other sections



### Worship Leader Schedule for March & April

Date	Name
<b>*March 2, Transfiguration Sunday</b>	<b>Elaine Brenneman</b>
<b>March 9, First Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>Gloria Womer</b>
<b>March 16, Second Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>M.J. Cline</b>
<b>March 23, Third Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>Don Sheaffer</b>
<b>March 30, Fourth Sunday on Lent</b>	<b>Elaine Brenneman</b>
<b>*April 6, Fifth Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>Gloria Womer</b>
<b>April 13, Palm Sunday</b>	<b>M.J. Cline</b>
<b>*April 20, Easter Sunday</b>	<b>Don Sheaffer</b>
<b>April 27, Second Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>Elaine Brenneman</b>

### Greeter & Usher Schedule for March & April

Date	Greeters	Ushers
<b>*March 2, Transfiguration Sunday</b>	Cathy Kepple	Don & Brentta Sheaffer
<b>March 5, Ash Wednesday</b>		Russ Lamison/Sam Sheaffer
<b>March 9, First Sunday in Lent</b>	Sandy Ashbaugh/ Pam McGranor	Alana Gipson/Paul Wrona
<b>March 16, Second Sunday in Lent</b>	Don & Brentta Sheaffer	Chris VanDervort/Gloria Womer
<b>March 23, Third Sunday in Lent</b>	Gloria & June Womer	Leslie Buckingham/Cathy Kepple
<b>March 30, Fourth Sunday in Lent</b>	Cathy Kepple/Alana Gipson	Pat Daugherty/Janel Cibik
<b>*April 6, Fifth Sunday in Lent</b>	Pam McGranor	Russ Lamison/Chris VanDervort
<b>April 13, Palm Sunday</b>	Don & Brentta Sheaffer	Gloria Womer/Alana Gipson
<b>*April 17, Maundy Thursday</b>		Don & Brentta Sheaffer
<b>*April 20, Easter Sunday.</b>	Gloria & June Womer	Paul Wrona/Chris VanDervort/Leslie Buckingham
<b>April 27, Second Sunday of Easter</b>	Sandy Ashbaugh/Pam McGranor	Sam Sheaffer/Alana Gipson


  
**MARCH & APRIL**
  
*Birthdays and Anniversaries*

<b>MARCH BIRTHDAYS</b>	
<b>Terry Morrill</b>	<b>3/2</b>
<b>Ron Stewart</b>	<b>3/6</b>
<b>Brentta Sheaffer</b>	<b>3/19</b>
<b>APRIL BIRTHDAYS</b>	
<b>Chuck Sarver</b>	<b>4/10</b>
<b>Jean Camp</b>	<b>4/14</b>
<b>Linda Taylor</b>	<b>4/16</b>
<b>Cheryl Gidos</b>	<b>4/17</b>
<b>Kristy Helsel</b>	<b>4/19</b>
<b>M.J. Cline</b>	<b>4/21</b>
<b>Lisa Klingensmith</b>	<b>4/27</b>
<b>Bob Ashbaugh</b>	<b>4/27</b>
<b>Lynn Sibley</b>	<b>4/30</b>
<b>APRIL ANNIVERSARIES</b>	
<b>Bob &amp; Sandy Ashbaugh</b>	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Brian &amp; Kristy Helsel</b>	<b>4/11</b>
<b>Josh &amp; Kelly Hobbins</b>	<b>4/21</b>
<b>Chris &amp; Kay VanDervort</b>	<b>4/26</b>

If you would like to tell us when your birthday or anniversary is please let us know and we will put you in a future newsletter!



Remember to turn your clocks **AHEAD**  
 one hour on Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>  
 before you go to bed!

## Finance Committee

As has been our practice, we are providing a condensed version of the Treasurer's Report prepared for Finance Committee and Church Council meetings. The most recent report is for the month ending January 31, 2025, and follows:

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$13,882.81</b>
Deposits	\$11,220.69
Expenditures	-\$11,158.62
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$13,944.88</b>
Designated Funds	-\$11, 912.77
<b>Working Balance</b>	<b>\$ 2,032.11</b>

Deposits in January included \$9,761.69 to the General Fund and \$1,459.00 to Designated Missions and Funds. Of the \$11,158.62 in expenditures, \$10,000.00 went to Operating Expenses, \$570.00 to Connectional Apportionment and \$650.00 to Outreach/Missions expenses, Special Sunday and UMCOR donations.

Contributions to the General Fund fell short of covering operating expenses for the month by \$238.00. Fortunately due to your extra giving over the holidays as well as your awareness and response to our reports of little cash on hand, we began January with a working balance sufficient to cover the shortfall and we thank you very much.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Leechburg First UMC has many important and impactful missions, ministries and programs in place as we continue our work for God's Kingdom. Most if not all work out of our buildings and for these to continue to be available, operating expenses have to be met. Your contributions to the General Fund allow for the funds needed to keep the bills paid. Please keep the General Fund on your priority list for giving.

To supplement our giving to the General Fund, beginning on February 25<sup>th</sup> we will have an ongoing fundraiser through Pizza Hut in Lower Burrell. On the last Tuesday of each month, if you dine in or order carry out at the Lower Burrell Pizza Hut and present your server or cashier with a coupon, the church will receive 20% of the net sales for all coupons presented. Coupons are available in the vestibule. We hope you will join us for a meal and fellowship while helping support our church.

### **Connectional Apportionment:**

Our 2024 goal was \$20,608.00, as you know. We finished the year with a total of \$13,008.00 paid, leaving a shortfall of \$7,600.00 This was the first of the last four years LFUMC did not meet goal. This is disappointing, but 2024 was a year of change and challenges for the United Methodist Church and Leechburg First as well. Although we fell short with connectional apportionment, we were blessed in that we were able to meet all operating expenses and continue our local missions and ministries.

The goal for 2025 is \$24,003.00. After a \$570.00 payment in January, our balance is \$23,433.00 which equates to a monthly payment of \$2,130.00. This will undoubtedly be a challenge but we must work toward meeting our obligation. Our continued giving, faith and prayers will be needed and important.

### **E-Giving:**

As a reminder, please remember that we offer an electronic giving option for those times you may not be able to attend services in person or writing a check is not an option. Giving electronically can be done anytime from anywhere by visiting our website LFUMC.org or ([LFUMC251@comcast.net](mailto:LFUMC251@comcast.net)) and clicking on the Donation button. Credit or Debit cards and ACH payments are accepted. Additionally, we now have a **QR Code** you will be seeing in bulletins and other correspondence. You can open your smartphone camera, point it at the QR Code and your phone will automatically take you to the linked online giving webpage without typing anything. The code is included here in case you want to give it a try.

Blessings,  
*Don Sheaffer*  
*Stewardship & Finance*



## OUTREACH TEAM



The Caring Crockpot Ministry will resume on Wednesdays in March.

Dates for March 12, 19, 26

Dates for April 9, 23, 30

Please see Carla Shaffer if you would like to help!

### Schedule for March

Sunday, March 2 – Pack lunch bags after NOW Meeting

Monday, March 3 – Make sandwiches & deliver bags

### Schedule for April

Sunday, April 6 – Pack lunch bags after worship

Tuesday, April 8 – Make sandwiches & deliver bags



**Feeding  
Our  
Neighbors**

## Nurture Committee

Thank you to everyone who made soup and/or sandwiches and desserts for the Souper Bowl luncheon on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. We had wide variety of soups, sandwiches, and sweets so that everyone found a favorite or maybe found a new one. Thank you too for the donations of food and monetary gifts, which go to our local food bank. Food and fellowship are always good but when the food bank and those in need benefit, it is even better!

Please remember, the Nurture Committee sends Birthday and Anniversary cards as well as a get-well card when needed to our church family. We want to be sure no one is missed so please be sure we have your special days on file. If you are not sure, you can check with Pam in the office or a member of the committee.

We will be meeting in early March to plan projects and events for 2025. If you would like to join the committee or help in any way, we would love to have you. Watch for a meeting announcement in the very near future.

Brentta Sheaffer  
Nurture Committee

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." John 13:34

## Witness Committee

**Fundraisers** - We again want to thank everyone who purchased a sweatshirt during our most recent fundraising event and those who purchased a t-shirt during our summer fundraiser. We have a limited number of each remaining so if you missed out earlier or know someone who might like one, please see Pam in the office or either of us. The funds raised will be used for our witnessing ministry projects. Your support is very much appreciated. Items still available:

Extra Sweatshirts-Lighthouse	Long Sleeve T-Shirts - \$15	Short Sleeve T-Shirts \$15
1 Hoodie - Medium - \$28	Lighthouse Logo - 2 Large	Lighthouse - 1-M, 2-L, 1-2XL
3 Hoodies - 2XL - \$30	Cross/Flame Logo - 2 Large	Cross/Flame - 2-S, 1-M, 2-L
1 Zip Hoodie - 3XL - \$35		

Deb Loftus continues to make various **Mary Kay** products available to anyone interested. These remain on display in the fellowship hall. A free will offering for any of the products will be appreciated.

**Card Ministry** - We are in the process of moving the inventory of cards from the Fellowship Hall to the overflow area in the back of the sanctuary. We now have a file cabinet to store cards and it is located next to the desk in the library area (although it is not yet filled). After the move is completed, you will be able to pull cards from the file, sit at the desk to sign, address and drop in a mail bin for mailing. We will provide postage and get them in the US Mail. Of course if you prefer to take the cards home to sign and mail, that is fine too. If you have greeting cards, birthday, anniversary, thinking of you, etc. that you no longer need and would like to donate them to the card ministry, we are always happy to accept and use them. Your continued support of this ministry is appreciated.

As a reminder, **Visitor Packets** are available for visitors who attend Sunday services. Information about Leechburg First UMC, service times, our ministries and missions as well as resources and references to scripture and a few other useful items are included. If you bring or notice someone new to our church, please see a member of our committee for a packet.

We will be meeting in March to plan our 2025 projects. If you would like to join our committee, participate in any of our projects or just help in any way, please see either of us.

Blessings to you,  
*Deb Loftus & Don Sheaffer*  
Witness Committee Co-Chairs



### March

Thursday, March 20  
Tuesday, March 25

Messy Church from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
Pizza Hut Fundraiser

### April

Saturday, April 12  
Thursday, April 17  
Tuesday, April 29

Mission Barn Trip  
Maundy Thursday/Messy Church  
Pizza Hut Fundraiser



The Sunday school class with Deb Loftus will continue in March & April at 9 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring your Bibles and something to take notes.

### MISSION BARN TRIP, SATURDAY, APRIL 12TH

There is a sign-up sheet in the vestibule. We are allowed 15 people. However, if you are interested in going, please sign up in case there are people that are not able to go.



Flowers available  
March 2, 9, 16, 30

Bulletins available  
March 2, 23, 30  
April 6, 13, 20

*Dates available as of 2/26/2025*

Our new Messy Church is off to a great start. We have had four sessions so far. We have a wonderful time as we learn about God while we do hands on lessons to enhance our Bible stories. We include crafts, songs, and a time of fellowship over a meal. We have a great team of people who are working hard to make this a program a success. We also just received a grant to help fund this new and exciting program. We meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month from 5:30 - 7:30 P.M. Our next Messy Church is Thursday, March 20. Please use the sign-up sheet, call or email the church office, or go onto our Facebook page to RSVP. Thank you!





## ***Food Bank News***



### **Packing & Distribution Dates for March**

Packing – Tuesday, March 25– 8 a.m.to 12:30 p.m.

Distribution – Wednesday, March 26

9:30 – 11:30 a.m. & 6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

### **Packing & Distribution Dates for April**

Packing – Tuesday, April 29 – 8 a.m.to 12:30 p.m.

Distribution – Wednesday, April 30

9:30 – 11:30 a.m. & 6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

## COMMUNITY P.A.T.H.

PROVIDING ALTERNATIVES TO HUNGER

### **How Can You Help A Child In Need?**

Donate Money – Make checks to *Leechburg Food Bank*. Please note on check "Community P.A.T.H." Mail donations to: Leechburg Food Bank Treasurer, PO Box 127, Leechburg, PA 15656.

Sponsor a Child – If you'd like to sponsor a child, send a note with your check to above address. Please include name(s) & address(es) of the sponsor(s).

Each child's P.A.T.H. bag costs \$3/week. Each child gets 1 bag/week, 50 weeks/year. Cost is \$150/year, about \$12/month



### **Our Mission and Vision**

The mission of Communities of Transformation is to move families from surviving to thriving by developing personal leadership skills and building authentic relationships.

The vision of Communities of Transformation is to take the church into the community, to invite the community into the church, and to build relationships that elevate families in the name of Christ.

Alle-Kiski Valley Site  
Thursdays from 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.  
Central Presbyterian Church  
305 Allegheny Street, Tarentum

## Lent and Easter Happenings



is a summary of the Lent and Easter activities that will be taking place within our congregation and community.

**Ash Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>** - We will offer a service of contemplation that will include the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. Pastor Sara will also be assisting with Ashes to Go that will be held in the Crossroads Presbyterian Church parking lot from 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. and at Coco's Coffee Shop 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.



The Leechburg Ministerial Association is once again sponsoring the Lenten Lunches on Fridays during Lent at Crossroads Presbyterian Church at 11:45 a.m. A brief devotion will be shared, and lunch will be provided by various churches in our community.

March 7<sup>th</sup>, CRPC, Rev. James Arter  
March 14<sup>th</sup>, First Lutheran Church, Dr. Sandra McKee  
March 21<sup>st</sup>, Forks-Zion, Pastor David Rike  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, Leechburg First United Methodist, Rev. Sara Wrona  
April 4<sup>th</sup>, Christ the King, Father Alan Polczynski  
April 11<sup>th</sup>, Hebron Lutheran, Deacon Amy Santoriello

**Palm Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>** - We will have palms (both commodore and cross palms) as we celebrate Christ's Triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

**Messy Church / Maundy Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>** - We will celebrate Christ's last night with his disciples as we share in the sacrament of Holy Communion.



**Good Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>** - The Leechburg Ministerial Association will sponsor the Good Friday Cross Walk at 2:00 P.M. beginning in front of our church and moving throughout the community as we pray and place crosses at various places in town. At 7:30 P.M., we will have our **Tenebrae Service of Darkness** as we remember the Passion of Christ.

**Community Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup>** at 1:00 P.M., at Leechburg/Gilpin Park sponsored by LACA and the Ministerial Association.



**Easter Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 A.M.** - Our sunrise service will be held at Leechburg/Gilpin Park.

# BE CONNECTED

Join the Greensburg District  
e-newsletter and the  
Greensburg District Facebook  
Group to stay up-to-date on  
events in the district.

**FACEBOOK**

[FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/WPAUMCGREENSBURGDISTRICT](https://facebook.com/groups/WPAUMCGREENSBURGDISTRICT)



**E-NEWSLETTER**

[WPAUMC.ORG/SUBSCRIBE](https://WPAUMC.ORG/SUBSCRIBE)



First United Methodist Church

251 Main Street

Leechburg, Pennsylvania 15656-1394



# The Stepping Stone

“Growing, Loving & Serving in Christ’s Name.”

March/April 2025

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Prepared especially for...



Online Giving QR Code



March/April 2025

## Livestreaming on YouTube

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#21214474