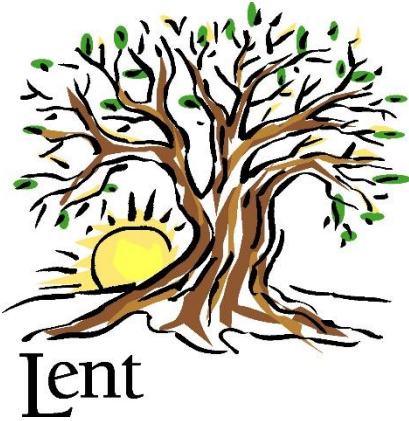


# Nativity Lutheran Church

Allison Park, PA 15101

Caring, Witnessing, Serving

March 2022



From the Pastor's heart...

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. The spiritual disciplines of lent include: prayer, penance, repentance, or almsgiving (giving to others). Yet it seems as though the most popular is giving up something you enjoy, such as chocolate, sugar, fast food, etc.

The spiritual discipline of fasting can help us grow in our faith, as it should be accompanied by increased and intentional prayer, but the addition of something can also help bring us to feel closer to God. Perhaps you could devote more time reading the Bible; setting aside time each day to spend time in Scripture. There are two opportunities for study during Lent. The six-week

zoom book study with me, (it's not too late to join), classes start Monday March 7 in the evening. Or you may read through the ELCA World Hunger devotional book, which also includes a calendar of different scripture, prayers, questions to think about, and ideas for giving. You can find these resources in the Narthex, or they can be sent to you by request. Perhaps you could be more intentional about prayer; setting aside time each day to pray using a different prayer/meditative practice. Another suggestion is becoming more active in the ministries of the church. If you have any questions or need suggestions on how to get started, feel free to contact me, I'd love to help.

The Lenten season provides us with time for reflection and introspection; it is a journey we take together, moving us towards Holy Week. During our individual and communal time of prayer, God guides us in strengthening our faith.

Faith is a process; a process that takes a whole lot more than forty days. Our faith is a life-long process of patience, prayer and love. We go through this process of faith together, and support and encourage one another.

Perhaps this Lenten season gives us the chance to reflect upon our own lives. To reflect on how our faith is being transformed in our sacred times we have in our prayers to God. Whether those prayers are for hope, strength, encouragement, patience, we know that we have a God who hears our cries for strength, and who sent Jesus Christ to be our light and our salvation.

*O Lord God, you led your ancient people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide now the people of your Church, that, following our Savior, we may walk through the wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who loves and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (Lutheran Book of Worship, pg 17)*

Blessings on your Lenten journey,

Pastor Jennifer Soltis



## March Council Highlights

**Covid 19 Updates** - It has been a long and difficult two years of living with the Covid-19 pandemic in our midst. Throughout it, we have made difficult decisions about guidelines; with the health and safety of our worship community and beyond, and our call to love our neighbor, foremost in our minds. While Covid 19 is still a concern, things appear to be looking up, and for that, we are so grateful.

On Sunday morning after worship, Nativity Lutheran Church Council met to review our mask policy. This discussion and decision came after the CDC released new guidelines. We looked at the CDC's Community Level Chart. Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area.

Allegheny County's level is currently low.

The CDC's guideline for county's whose level is low (green)...

People may choose to mask at any time. People with symptoms, or exposure to someone with Covid 19 should wear a mask.

After prayerful discussion, the council decided to follow the CDC's recommendations for the guidelines here at Nativity. Our new guidelines are...

**Masks are optional while in the building with others. If you have symptoms, or have had exposure to someone with Covid 19, we ask that you wear a mask. Please continue to monitor any symptoms you may have, and stay home if you're feeling unwell.**

Let us also remember that everyone has different comfort levels when it comes to concerns over Covid safety; especially in regards to wearing a mask and keeping a comfortable distance between households.

This new policy is effective immediately.

Council will continue to discuss and review this each month, and as need arises.

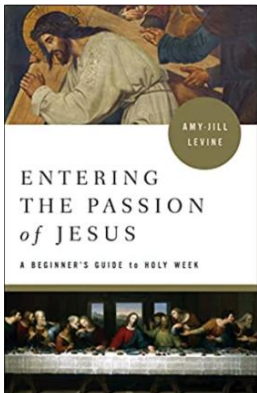
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Jen.



All women of Nativity and their friends are welcome to join our weekly meetings which will be held in person.

Our schedule for **March** is as follows:

- Tues., March 1, 10:00 a.m. - Project Day – Quilting  
Tues., March 8, 10:00 a.m. - Business Meeting  
Tues., March 15, 10:00 a.m. - Bible Study – The Kingdom of God:  
*Session 3: “Eternal Life in the Gospel of John”*  
Tues., March. 22, 10:00 a.m. - Book Review: Surviving Savannah by Patti Callahan  
Tues., March 29, 10:00 a.m. - Project Day - Quilting

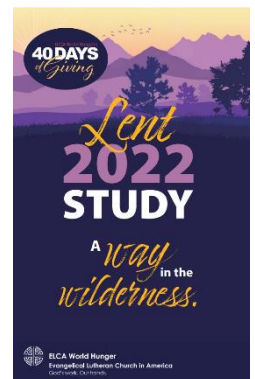


### Lenten Bible Study

During Lent, Pastor Jen will be leading a six - week book study on zoom. The classes will be on Mondays, starting March 7 at 7pm. The book we will be reading and discussing is “Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner’s Guide to Holy Week”, by Amy Jill Levine. If you are interested, please sign up using the sign-up genius on our website or talk to Pastor Jen. The Christian Education committee will cover the cost of the books for those who would like to participate.

**ELCA Lenten Study** – In addition to, or instead of, the Lenten book study on Zoom led by Pastor Jen; the Christian Education Committee invites all members of

Nativity to join in working through the 2022 ELCA WORLD HUNGER LENTEN STUDY, “A Way in the Wilderness.” This study includes 5 weekly devotionals to read on your own. Copies are available on the table in the narthex, or you may call the church office and request one to be mailed to you. Also available is a “40 Days of Giving Calendar” with a daily activity, Bible verse or thought for each day in Lent. You are encouraged to give to the ELCA World Hunger Cause and make a contribution during Lent. Special giving envelopes are available, or you may designate an amount in your regular offering. Please consider giving to a charity that does so much good to bring hope to our neighbors in the world.





## North Hills Community Outreach Personal Care Collection

The current Sharing Project is the Personal Care Collection. These products are often expensive, tend to be overlooked in pantry donations, and are not covered by SNAP (food stamp) benefits. This project will continue through April 10; please put your donations in the containers under the coat rack. Here are the requested items:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Disposable Razors       | Deodorant                 |
| Chapstick               | Body Lotion               |
| Dental Floss/Mouthwash  | Bar Soap                  |
| Toothpaste/toothbrushes | Shower Gel                |
| Wash Cloths             | Feminine Hygiene Products |
| Shampoo/conditioner     |                           |

Thanks for your ongoing support.

The Food pantry is currently in short supply of these groceries:

- Granola Bars/Canned Fruit
- Peanut Butter
- Oatmeal
- Chunky Soups/Canned Pasta
- Tissues/Toilet Paper
- Toiletries
- Cleaning Products
- All donations appreciated!



## February 2022 Attendance & Offering

	<u>In-Person</u>	<u>On-Line</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Sunday, 2/6/2022	37	36	\$ 2,072
Sunday, 2/13/2022	36	19	\$ 2,177
Sunday, 2/20/2022	39	25	\$ 1,733
Sunday, 2/27/2022	44	15	\$ 2,274

## Attendance and Offering Report

We always thank  
GOD for all of you  
and continually  
mention you in  
our prayers.

1 Thessalonians 1:2, NIV

*(Prayer from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Occasional Services for the Assembly. Copyright 2009 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Published by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers)*

**Prayer List:** You may use this prayer as you pray for those on our prayer list, and all those for whom you wish to pray....

Almighty and merciful God, you are the source of health and healing; you alone can bring calmness and peace. Grant to our siblings, an awareness of your presence and a strong confidence in you. In their pain, weariness, and anxiety, surround them with your care, protect them by your loving might, and grant to them once again the gifts of health and strength and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Need to submit a Prayer Request? You can do so on-line. Visit our website's home page [Nativity Lutheran Church – Nativity Lutheran Church of Allison Park, PA \(nativitylutheranchurch15101.org\)](http://NativityLutheranChurch.org) and click the link for the Prayer Request form. Your request will be automatically sent to the church office and the Outreach Committee!

Also, there are Prayer Request forms in the Narthex. Complete the form and leave on the church office door. You can also call the church office and leave a message. Please don't forget to leave YOUR name so we can follow up on the prayer request.

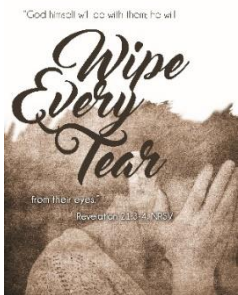
### **Our On-going Prayer List:**

Ken & Jean Johnson  
Pat Brick  
Lorraine Howell  
Joe Lambert  
Eric Holsinger  
Rachael Faulkner  
Carol Gustafson

Allen Kirkland  
Connie Whittiker  
Sharon Greer  
Rev. Mont Bowser

### **Service Personnel:**

Sarah Foster



We remember in our prayers those who have recently lost loved ones. We pray especially for the family and friends of:

Ruth Duessel Ruth was the sister of Carol Messner and the aunt of Diana Mitchell

Carol Kusserow, wife of Pastor Ralph Kusserow and mother of Bishop Kirk Kusserow, South Western PA ELCA Synod. Pastor Ralph and Carol Kusserow were former members of Nativity.



**Flowers:** If you would like to provide altar flowers for your special Sundays in 2022, please sign the flower chart on the bulletin board across from the nursery. The cost of each altar vase is now \$30. Thank you to all who provide the beautiful altar flowers each week!





## March 2022

### Kantor Korner

Each season brings its changes. Spring is no exception. With the change comes Lent. This year it begins with the imposition of ashes on March 2nd. The original meaning of Lent means "Lengthening" in Old English. Our days are "lengthening" more with the passing of the sun.

Our liturgy reflects the changes, too. One of which is the inclusion of ELW Hymn 602 "Your Heart, O God is Grieved" *Nzame to, Pane Boze Nas*. It serves as a Lenten Kyrie at the beginning of the service. It is a welcome change. It is rather dear to me. Back in 1975, I collaborated on this Slovak Chorale with my cousin, Jaroslav Vajda. We call him "Jerry." With a name like "Jaroslav" you can see why. He did the translation from the Slovak language and I set the harmonization to *Zname to, Pane Boze Nas*.

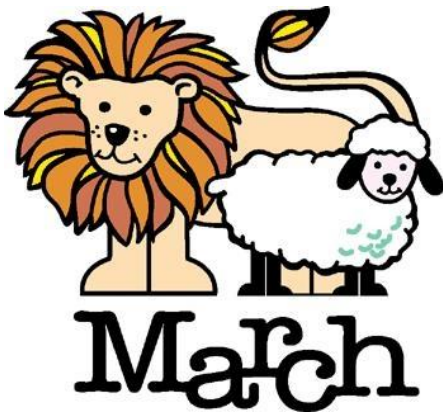
"Jerry" was a magnificent poet both in the English and Slovak language. Several of his hymns are also included in the ELW:

- ❖ ELW 285 "Peace Comes to Earth"
- ❖ ELW 460 "Now the Silence"
- ❖ ELW 543 "Go, My children, With My Blessing"
- ❖ ELW 740 "God of the Sparrow"
- ❖ ELW 795 "God, My Lord, My Strength"

Some of these are Slovak, or with hymn tunes composed by his buddy-Carl Schalk, or even Welsh Tunes mixed in. Maybe Jerry and I related so well because we were related. My great-grandmother and his mother were sisters from the Hazelton area.

The pastor will sing the opening of "Your Heart, O God is Grieved" and the congregation will respond with each stanza to the Holy Trinity. Yes, Lent brings it changes of contemplation upon our Lord's suffering and death and this hymn reflects this so well.

The Rev. S. Cyril Hurnyak, *Kantor*



## ANNIVERSARIES

Jerry & Nancy Sever 22

## BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Kerry Bishoff 3/ /73  
 Charles T. Brandt 3/03/68  
 Jean M. Chantz 3/06/60  
 V. Gayle Henne 3/ /54  
 Jessica R. Kiefer 3/09/80  
 Jonathan D. Knapp 3/06/88  
 John R. Maier 3/18/79  
 Louise K. Smith 3/23/69  
 Thomas K. Weller 3/21/37  
 Betty L. Weller 3/26/50

## BIRTHDAYS

Wendy Wolfe 7  
 Melissa Chantz 8  
 Andrew Werner 11  
 Carol Francis 12  
 Taylor Radebaugh 12  
 Atius Samuel Anson Weller 12  
 Victoria Hoburg 13  
 Kyra Sever 15  
 William Chapman 17  
 Richard Chapman 17  
 Rafael Romero Lauro 18  
 Sarah Rembe 18  
 William Lamberson 19  
 Judy Beecher 20  
 Shaun Price 21  
 Kerry Bishoff 23  
 Tim Bishoff 23  
 Diana Mitchell 25  
 Alexandra Lamberson 27  
 Joyce Zelnis 27  
 Marlene Grimes 30  
 Charlene Ott 30  
 John Ott 31



Serving **Altar Guild** this month:

Merlinda Bisese

**Offering Counters** for the month of March are Linda Ryan and Ken Saunders.

Many members are now using the online service VANCO for donations. Please go to the Nativity Website <https://nativitylutheranchurch15101.org/> and select GIVING. If you need assistance, please call the church office.



## What If?

There may be a time when we will need to cancel in person worship on short notice, due to the weather, or some other cause. If that happens, we would send an email from the church and post it on Facebook and our website. For the few without internet from the congregation, someone will contact them by phone. If the weather looks dicey, check your email for any notices.





## Scripture Readings and Psalms for March

### Wednesday 2, 2022 – Ash

#### Wednesday

First Reading - Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

*Return to the LORD, your God*



Psalm - Psalm 51:1-17

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)*

Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

*Now is the day of salvation*

Gospel - Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

*The practice of faith*

### Sunday March 6, 2022

First Reading - Deuteronomy 26:1-11

*The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand*

Psalm - Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

*God will give the angels charge over you, to guard you in all your ways. (Ps. 91:11)*

Second Reading - Romans 10:8b-13

*If you confess that Jesus is Lord, you will be saved*

Gospel - Luke 4:1-13

*The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days*

### Sunday, March 13, 2022

First Reading - Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

*The covenant with Abram and his descendants*

Psalm - Psalm 27

*In the day of trouble, God will give me shelter. (Ps. 27:5)*

Second Reading - Philippians 3:17--4:1

*Our citizenship is in heaven from where we expect a Savior*

Gospel - Luke 13:31-35

*I have desired to gather Jerusalem as a hen gathers her brood*

### Sunday, March 20, 2022

First Reading - Isaiah 55:1-9

*Everyone who thirsts, come to the water; seek the LORD*

Psalm - Psalm 63:1-8

*O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)*

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

*Israel, baptized in cloud and seas, ate the same spiritual food as Christians*

Gospel - Luke 13:1-9

*Unless you repent, you will perish: parable of the fig tree*

### Sunday, March 27, 2022

First Reading - Joshua 5:9-12

*Israel eats bread and grain, the produce of the land*

Psalm - Psalm 32

*Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD. (Ps. 32:11)*

Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

*The mystery and ministry of reconciliation*

Gospel - Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

*The parable of the prodigal father and the repentant son*





This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on March 2. During worship services that day, pastors in many Christian churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning branches from the previous Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners' foreheads.

Why ashes? Traditionally, they're a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. Ashes also represent the frailty and temporary nature of human life ("You are dust, and to dust you shall return," Genesis 3:19). Christians are pained because our sins led to Jesus' death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing that it leads to Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

**A prayer for Lent:** 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, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (ELW, pg. 254)

### **Lenten Services:**

Midweek Lenten services will be held on Wednesdays at 7pm. Please join us for a time of reflection, song and prayer.



?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Which of the following are mentioned in the list that follows?

- A. a time to teach, and a time to learn
- B. a time to mourn, and a time to dance
- C. a time to fast, and a time to eat
- D. a time to work, and a time to rest

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

How many times in the Old Testament do people cross a body of water on dry ground?

- A. once
- B. twice
- C. three times
- D. four times

Bible Quiz – Answers next month!

### **Answers to February Quiz Questions**

In the book of Revelation, who or what is "prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband"? D: A New Jerusalem; See Revelation 21:2

Complete this proverb: "Like snow in \_\_\_\_ or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool." B: Summer (Proverbs 26:1)

# MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 10am WELCA mtg	 2 7 pm – Ash Wednesday Service 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	3 7 pm – Worship & Music Comm. Mtg	4 7 pm - NA Mtg	5
6 9 am – Sunday School 10:15am – Worship Service	7 8 pm – AA Mtg	8 10am WELCA mtg	9 2-4pm Estate Planning Seminar  7pm – Lenten Service  7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	10	11 7 pm - NA Mtg	12
13 9 am – Sunday School 10:15am – Worship Service 	14 8 pm – AA Mtg	15 10am WELCA mtg 6pm Confirmation Class	16 7pm – Lenten Service 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	 17	18 7 pm - NA Mtg	19
20 9 am – Sunday School 10:15am – Worship Service	21 8 pm – AA Mtg	22 10am WELCA 6-8pm Estate Planning Seminar Abernathy & Hagerman	23 7pm – Lenten Service 7 pm - Harmony Line Chorus	24	25 7 pm - NA Mtg	26
27 9 am – Sunday School 10:15am – Worship Service	28 8 pm – AA Mtg					