MUDDY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH

MARCH 2026

Newsletter

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. Psalm 121:1-4

Blessed Lent Brothers and Sisters,

For decades, farmers have predicted that if March begins with storms, it will end with calm days. This brings to mind the phrase "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb."

While no one is really sure of the origin of the phrase, I love its reference to both the weather and to the Bible. Some believe that it is based on astronomy, others attribute it to 16th and 17th century literature. Still others believe that the phrase represents the transition of Jesus from the loud Gospel proclaimer to the quiet lamb who chose to sacrifice himself for us. Whichever belief you hold, I hope that you are comforted by the fact that although we will experience both storms and calmy weather, God is there – sometimes roaring, and sometimes speaking in still, small voices.

Since God – our constant help – is speaking, are we listening?

For March, I ask us to consider being in prayer over what we are listening for, sharing, and opening ourselves up to on the Lenten journey to the Cross.

- Are we listening for God's will?
  Or have we allowed the noise of human division to drown out God's direction and call for our lives?
- Are we sharing truths that have been revealed?
  Or are we hiding "the light" under a bushel or under our bed – somewhere we don't have to see it.
- Are we opening ourselves to advice that leads us to giving and generosity?
  Or are we still trying to make our way on our own, stuck in past beliefs and mindsets?

Consider the Love of a God who does not slumber. Consider the Love of Christ. Consider the sacrifice. Remember to listen attentively, friends – God is speaking. Share the Good News and be open to a renewed commitment to not keeping the Gospel a secret.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Chavis

For 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. John 3:16

We'd Love to Hear From You!
(717) 336-2770 office@mclchurch.org
11 South Muddy Creek Road Denver, PA 17517

Council Corner

The past month has been a busy time for Church Council and Committees, especially the Property Committee. Winter weather has caused many issues for Muddy Creek (and many others). Along with getting parking lots and walks cleared, we unfortunately, had to cancel services twice—not a decision that was made without having made contacts trying to get the parking lots cleared, along with many emails and phone calls. We continue to work on this issue and hope to have it completed very soon. We will also work on being able to livestream a service in the event we need to cancel a service due to inclement weather.

At our last Council meeting, we discussed adding additional Congregational meetings to help keep everyone better informed. We are planning to hold these meetings quarterly, following a combined service at 10:15am. The first is scheduled for April 19th. Please mark your calendars—this initial meeting will focus on sharing important information with the congregation.

Committee Updates: The Safety/Security Task Force continues its work. This committee will collaborate with other committees, as many projects overlap across different areasYou'll soon notice new signage indicating the location of the AED. Training sessions on how to use the AED will also be organized. Many thanks to Julie Emrhein for leading this important initiative. The Call Committee is made up of Mike Leid, Hollie Kemper, Stacy Aungst, Marliese Emrhein, Nick Duong, and Joe Sanchez. As they continue their work, please remember this is not a speedy process – we need to be patient and continue to keep them in our prayers.

Church Administrator Update: Join me in welcoming our new Administrator Mel Forrer who started on the 17th. Regular office hours will soon be announced. Thanks to our HR Committee (Lauren Gallagher, Nick Dung, and Pastor Chavis) who worked diligently to advertise, interview, and select the best candidate.

Audrey Noll, Council President

The Discipline of Lent

God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of his creation. But because in and selfishness often separate us from God, our neighbors, and creation, we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus, we are called to push against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love—the discipline of Lent—help us to wage our spiritual warfare. Commit to confessing your sins, asking God for strength, spending time in reflection, seeking the good in others, and drawing closer in communion with God.

Reflection

"In coming closer to the cross, we discover that God is already present in places of suffering and injustice, drawing us into hope and courageous discipleship."
Rev. Dr Anupama Hial,
LWF Program Executive

Prayer

God of the covenant,
in the mystery of the cross,
you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.
ELCA worship blog 1229

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Redner's Save-A-Tape Program

Support the Muddy Creek Good Samaritan Fund with your Redner's receipts! Simply place your complete register receipts ("tapes") in the Redner's containers at all church entrances. **How it works:**

- Muddy Creek receives **1%** of the Save-a-Tape total printed on each receipt when you use your Redner's Rewards Card for purchases at Redner's Market and Quick Shop
- Food and other items qualify.
  (You will receive a discount for gas, but these purchases do not qualify for the church donation.)

Bring the entire receipt — do not cut it – so that we can calculate our total.

Thanks to recent submissions, we will receive **$137.25**. Thank you for your continued support!

A Call To Serve - Usher Informational Gathering

Sunday, March 1 | 8:45am & 11:30am
March 8 | 8:45am & 11:30am

We will hold instructional meetings for all individuals who would like to assist with the ushering duties of the church. This is a great opportunity to assist with worship and become a part of a real team effort. The meetings will take place in the rear of the sanctuary.

Easter Flowers

Order from March 1 through March 22

This year, we will again order Easter lilies, daffodils, and tulips for the congregation and loved ones. All orders must be placed by March 22nd. They will be delivered to the church on April 5th. Order forms are available on the table below the mailboxes.

Celebration of Life for Betty McMahon

Saturday, March 21 | 1 – 4pm

All are welcome to join the family and friends of Betty McMahon as we celebrate her life following her passing on February 8, 2026. The service will be held at Venue 272, 112 Muddy Creek Church Rd.

College/Military Goodie Boxes

March 22 through April 12 – Collection Dates

We are collecting snack donations for our College and Military Goodie Boxes!
Donations may be placed in the designated collection boxes located at all church entrances.

Church & Grove Outdoor Clean-Up

Saturday, March 28 | 8am – 12pm

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for a morning of outdoor clean-up around the church and in the grove. **Items Needed:** Wheelbarrows, Rakes, Shovels, Pruners, Gloves, and any other tools you've found helpful at past clean-ups**.** Trailers are also needed to haul debris to the Denver Borough site. If you are able to provide a trailer on March 28, please contact Judy Nichol at 717-484-1447. Thank you for using your gifts to serve the Lord as we care for His church grounds together.

Partner Ministry Events

"Brenda and Friends" Bus Trips

Monday, March 2nd Asher's Chocolate & the Philadelphia Flower Show
Thursday, March 19th Andy Cooney Irish Cabaret at Hunterdon Hills Playhouse
For more information, contact Brenda Berger (717) 336-6886 or berger@dejazzd.com

MUDDY CREEK CEMETERY BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Clean-Up Day

Saturday, March 21 | 9am

The Muddy Creek Cemetery Board will host a Spring Leaf Clean-Up Day. Volunteers are needed to help rake and remove leaves. Local Boy Scouts will be assisting, but additional help would be greatly appreciated. If you're interested in helping, please feel free to bring your own rake, wheelbarrow, or leaf blower.

Special Offering Request

Sunday, March 22

Muddy Creek Cemetery is a historic cemetery that has been in operation since the American Revolution. It serves as the final resting place for more than 200 veterans who have served in the United States military, dating back to the Revolutionary War. The Cemetery Board is requesting a special offering to help offset a portion of our general maintenance and landscaping expenses. Any support you can provide would be greatly appreciated and will be used to help preserve and maintain the cemetery for future generations.

Board Opening

A volunteer is needed to fill a one-year term on the Cemetery Board.
If you are interested in serving, please contact Council President Audrey Noll

We are excited to welcome **Mel Forrer** our new **Church Administrator**, to the Muddy Creek Staff team!

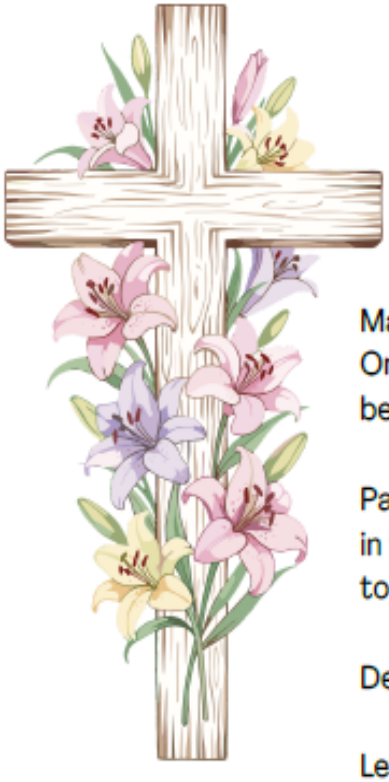
Mel and her husband both grew up in Berks County and have called Denver, PA home for the past 12 years. Life is busy and joyful with their 9-year-old son, who keeps them on their toes and fills their days with energy and laughter.

She enjoys camping, hiking, and spending time at home—an avid adventurer and homebody all in one. Mel is always eager to start a new craft project, many of which she features in her Etsy store, as a way to nurture her creative side.

The Forrers are longtime, active members of Allegheny Evangelical Lutheran Church, where Mel serves as Council President and chairs several event committees.

Welcome Aboard, Mel!!

NORTH LANCASTER / COCALICO CLUSTER ELCA 2026 LENTEN SERVICES			
1 Corinthians 12: *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.*			
DATE	**HOST CHURCH**	**SERVICE TYPE**	**NOTES**
Wed 2/18	**ASH WEDNESDAY**		
Noon	Muddy Creek, Denver	Quiet Service, no music	
7pm	Center/St. Paul's		
	Bergstrasse, Ephrata	Traditional Service	
	Faith United, Denver	Traditional Service	
	Muddy Creek, Denver	Traditional Svc w/Choir	
	Mellingers at Swamp	Traditional Svc w/Choir	Pr. Craven preaching
Wed 2/25	**Midweek Service**		
7pm	Faith United, Denver	Candlelit Prayer with Song	For the Healing of the Nations
Wed 3/4	**Midweek Service**		
7pm	Bergstrasse, Ephrata	Interactive Worship	Munchies & Mingling - 6:30pm Embracing change through our habits!
Wed 3/11	**Midweek Service**		
7pm	St. Paul's, Adamstown		
Wed 3/18	**Midweek Service**		
Noon	Muddy Creek, Denver	Traditional Svc w/Choir	Soup Fellowship afterward
Wed 3/25	**Midweek Service**		
7pm	Mellingers, Schoeneck	Song-Play Sermon	
Thu 4/2	**MAUNDY THURSDAY**		
7pm	Faith United, Denver	Traditional w/Footwashing	Eucharist, stripping of altar
	Bergstrasse, Ephrata	Dinner Church - 6 pm	Eucharist, stripping of altar
	Center St./ Paul @Mellingers	Institution of Communion	
	Muddy Creek, Denver	Maundy Service	Eucharist, stripping of altar
7:30pm	Swamp, Reinholds	Traditional w/Footwashing	Eucharist, stripping of altar
Fri 4/3	**GOOD FRIDAY**		
10:30am	Faith United	Denver Prayer Walk	
Noon	Adamstown Cemetery		
3pm	Center Cemetery		
7pm	Bergstrasse, Ephrata	Experiential, Interactive	Readings & pix from trip to Jerusalem
	Faith United, Denver	Trad. w/Candlelighting	
	Center/St Paul @Mellingers	Service of the Shadows	Seven Last Words from the Cross
	Muddy Creek, Denver	Tenenbrae	
8pm	Swamp, Reinholds	Service of Shadows	Seven Last words from the Cross
Thu 5/15	**ASCENSION**		
7pm	Swamp, Reinholds	Traditional Svc w/Choir	Eucharist



EASTER FLOWERS

Make this Easter extra special by helping our church bloom with color and joy! Order flowers to decorate the sanctuary for Easter on April 5th and share in the beauty of the season. Lilies, Tulips, and Daffodils are available.

Payments and order forms can be given to Jane Wenger, dropped in an envelope in the marked box under the sanctuary mailboxes, or mail your order with a check to the church office.

Deadline to place your order is Sunday, March 22.

Let's fill the church with color, fragrance, and Easter joy together!

_____

YOUR NAME

If you would like "in honor of" or "in memory of" included in the bulletin,. please fill in the appropriate lines..

IN HONOR OF	IN MEMORY OF
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

DO YOU WANT YOUR NAME TO APPEAR IN THE BULLETIN? _____

TYPE	# OF PLANTS	TOTAL OWED
6" EASTER LILY $11.00/ea		
6" TULIPS (ASSORTED) $8.00/ea		
6" DAFFODILS $8.00/ea		

Any questions, please contact Jane Wenger at jlwredjet@gmail.com or (717) 471-0556

**All flowers ordered can be picked up following the service.