

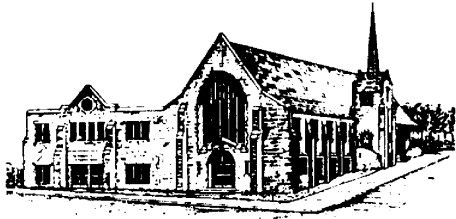
# ***CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH***

***405 Kennedy Avenue, Duquesne, PA 15110***

***Church telephone - 412-466-7773***

***Email - christluthduq@gmail.com***

***Website: www.christlutheranduq.org***



***A Partner in the ministry of Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries***

***Pastoral Team***

***Rev. John J. Gropp: 412-680-7867   Rev. Brenda Henry: 412-390-8005***

***Rev. Susan Devine: 412-496-4889***

***March 2024   Volume 46   No. 3***

**We are the Church, gathered and equipped, sent and scattered, for faith in action.**

***There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens  
Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)***

Ecclesiastes chapter 3 begins with the beautiful verse “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” This verse is followed by a poetic description of opposites that we will experience over our lifetime:

- 2   a time to be born and a time to die, a  
time to plant and a time to uproot,***
- 3   a time to kill and a time to heal, a  
time to tear down and a time to build,***
- 4   a time to weep and a time to laugh, a  
time to mourn and a time to dance,***
- 5   a time to scatter stones and a time to  
gather them, a time to embrace and a  
time to refrain from embracing,***
- 6   a time to search and a time to give  
up, a time to keep and a time to throw  
away,***
- 7   a time to tear and a time to mend, a  
time to be silent and a time to speak,***
- 8   a time to love and a time to hate, a  
time for war and a time for peace.***

This passage of scripture is rich in its description of the rolling aspects of life. The ups and the downs. It offers hope in that nothing is constant, change is an expected part of life, and those changes will bring points of joy, sadness,

confusion, and perhaps even enlightenment. What is clear about the passage is that change is a normal and natural part of life.

Many of us have seen this passage and may even have a version of it posted in our homes. It may be a source of comfort for us when we are experiencing change, especially when that change is unexpected or unplanned.

Siblings in Christ, in the first two months of this year the ministry of PLUM received two unexpected announcements. Pastor Alexander Sumo resigned effective February 4<sup>th</sup> due to unexpected family concerns. Pastor Sue Devine shared that she will be retiring effective June 30<sup>th</sup>. This passage of scripture aptly describes the range of emotions that we are feeling upon hearing these announcements. Prayerfully this newsletter is not the first time that you are hearing about these changes.

What does this mean for PLUM? Clearly, we are in a time of change and transition. We will need to go through another call process after so recently completing one. This may raise concerns: are we ok? Truthfully, we are in a period of lament. We are grieving. Odd as it may seem, the timing of this fits so well with the season of Lent that we are in. As we reflect on Jesus’ suffering

and death we are filled with lament, with sadness. Just as in Lent we reflect on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, that road that took him to the cross, we too will be reflecting on our ministry and where God is calling us to next. Jesus knew that his death was not the end, rather a transformation of living out God's promise of being with us always. The cross reflected hope.

Here too at PLUM we have hope. This year is PLUM's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Can you believe it? Twenty years of doing ministry together. An idea that started through the faithful response of three congregations (Christ, East Liberty, St. Andrew) and two pastors (Pr. Beth Seifert, Pr. John Gropp) to care for one another and their communities. It was a response to offer a way for congregations like us to continue to be *Christ's Light of Hope* in our communities despite our size.

PLUM has grown, it has experienced changes, and once again God is calling upon us to transform our ministry. What has been constant in these changes is our commitment and faithfulness to trust, to believe that God remains with us and guides us. During the upcoming months, we will lament together as we process these changes. We will have an opportunity to celebrate together as you will hear more about our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration that is being planned by our What's Next committee. We will also reflect together as we listen to God's voice as we prepare to enter the call process. As we have heard in our scripture journey through the gospel of Mark, we are called to listen and to follow with a child-like posture.

I encourage us to continue to listen, to offer words of encouragement and affirmation to each other. And just like Jesus stayed focus on his journey to Jerusalem, through the struggles to remain faithful to God's will, let us too remain faithful to the journey of transformation to which God is calling us.

Christ's Peace,  
Pr. Brenda  
On behalf of PLUM Pastors

***“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers.”*** Romans 1:8-9

February 8, 2024

Dearest Family and Friends of Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries,

Little did I know that when my congregation at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sheraden joined PLUM that my life would be changed so much. I found myself again hearing a call to become a pastor and through the leadership, guidance and encouragement of my pastors and siblings in Christ, I entered the Call Process and began Seminary in 2015. By the grace of God, I was ordained as a pastor on February 15, 2020 and received as one of your pastors. The past four years have been filled with so many blessings.

I have been truly blessed by each and every one of you. Thank you for your trust in me as your pastor. Thank you for your support and prayers. Thank you for challenging me to continue to learn and grow.

The time has come for me to retire. I did not come to this decision quickly or lightly. I began my discernment about this many months ago. I began to wonder, was it time to seek a new call? Did I want to go from full time to part time? Could I financially do this at this time? Is God calling me to another kind of ministry? I sought out the guidance of my Spiritual Director and our bishop. After months of praying about it, Keith and I both decided that it was time for retirement.

Keith retired in 2020. Last year we both had some health issues that brought home the fact that we are no longer young. We want to enjoy time together while we can still do things. Most of you know how important family is to me and how I love my role as Yia Yia, chief babysitter. Our family is blessed to be welcoming two more grandchildren this summer. The babysitting duties are going to be increased, thanks be to God!

I was blessed during my time in PLUM to become a Certified Spiritual Director and Leader. One of the things that I am hoping retirement will allow me is the opportunity to do more spiritual direction and perhaps work with others occasionally in planning and conducting retreats.

I know that the timing of this news is hard after PLUM just hearing the news of Pastor Alex's resignation. I assure you that my decision was made before we heard that news and that it gave me pause about announcing my retirement. It gave me a pause, but did not change my course. I have already set in motion the steps that I need to take.

My last day with PLUM will be June 30, 2024.

My prayer for PLUM is that you continue to be open to new ideas and new people. I pray that the person that God is preparing to come to you will love you as much as I do and that you will welcome them as you did me. I pray that you will continue to grow in your relationship with God and with each other.

I will miss you all very much. I hope that in these last months before I retire that we can share memories, make plans for the future, and dwell in the moment. Many times in the last few years, when things seemed overwhelming, I heard the voice of God say to me, "Don't worry, I've got this." God's got this. God is in control. Let go and let God.

God's Peace and Blessing,

The Reverend Susan K. Devine



### **At Home Prayer Service**

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

7:00 pm on Zoom

*Taizé is a contemplative style of Christian worship characterized by the repetitive singing of simple harmonized tunes, interspersed with readings and prayers. **All are welcome!***



PLUM (Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries) includes:

**Bethany Lutheran, Dormont**  
**Christ Lutheran, Duquesne**  
**East Liberty Lutheran**  
**Hope Lutheran Church, Forest Hills**  
**Immanuel Lutheran Church, Irwin**  
**Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, North Huntingdon**  
**Messiah Lutheran, Munhall**  
**Prince of Peace, Pleasant Hills**  
**Resurrection Lutheran, Oakdale**  
**St. Andrew Lutheran, East Carnegie**

The next PLUM Board Meeting is 7 PM on Monday, **March 25, 2024**, on Zoom. Christ Lutheran's PLUM board members are Elsie Ferencz, Deann George, Beryl Gundy and Mary Anne Novak.

PLUM's afternoon worship services are on Zoom on **Sundays at 3 PM. All are welcome!** Bulletins for worship services on Zoom are always available on the PLUM website, [www.plumofpa.com](http://www.plumofpa.com).

The call-in line for worship, Bible Study, and Meetings:

Zoom online: <https://zoom.us/j/401596541>

Zoom by phone: **+1 646 876 9923 Meeting ID: 401 596 541#**

*It is PLUM's mission to be LIVING CHRIST'S LIGHT OF HOPE IN OUR COMMUNITIES. PLUM will:*

- ❖ *Provide stability of Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral Care.*
- ❖ *Foster opportunities for connectivity among individuals, congregations, and communities.*
- ❖ *Develop lay leadership for sharing the Gospel.*
- ❖ *Encourage freedom to care for neighbors.*

**Join PLUM for...**



**5 Thursdays: February 22 & 29; March 7, 14 & 21**

**7 pm on Zoom**

*Using the 2024 Lenten Study created by ELCA World Hunger, we will study scripture and explore how we experience the living God today.*

*Along the way we will reflect on what it means to encounter God in experiences of reconciliation, transfiguration, crucifixion, restoration and resurrection.*

Save the date for MLK event sponsored by our synod.

**The Legacy of  
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr:  
Fires of Freedom and Cloud of Witnesses**

**Sunday, April 7, 2024**

House of Prayer Lutheran Church  
2100 West Irwin Street, Aliquippa, PA 15001

PLUM is one of the community partners promoting this event.

Gather for Strength; Scatter with Love.



This Lenten season, Thursdays at noon we will gather **in person** at Christ Lutheran for **Bible Study** where we reflect on various people of the Bible and what God has for us to learn about them and ourselves. We'll have soup, too! Join us at **noon**. **All are welcome!**



Ruth Baker, Gordon Boyd, Lenroy Bright, Andy Cerpani, Betty Ciglar, Ian Cogley, Charlayne & Denise DeCecco, Veronica Faulkner, Gregory Ferencz, Rico Ferencz, Robbie Ferencz, Pastor John Gropp, Beryl Gundy, Lucy H., Marianne Hantz, Richard

Jackson, Kelly Keech, Pastor Paul Koch, Bev Kogler, Lisa Kogler, Ethel Kotrady, Maryanne Lasko, Jeff Moss, Haydn Oskin, Leonard Oskin, David Pederson, Donna Reyes, Zach Schmude, Jessie Seliga, Angel Shepherd Grzyb, Harriette Shepherd, George Simo, Kpannah Sumo, Jonella Terek, Tammy Thomas, Lois Tubbs, Makenna Wills; Children's Hosp: Ozzie Rankin; Navy: Aaron Duffy



**March**

10 - Katie Surmick (1993)  
15 - Ron Miller (1948)  
15 - Tara Ursiny

**April**

3 - Elsie Ferencz (1942)  
19 - Everly Minkel  
21 - Kolleen Barva Hamlin  
21 - Shelly Davis (1967)  
24 - George Simo (1938)  
27 - Cora Surmick (2019)  
30 - Bruce Keffer (1998)

*To have your name/birthday/anniversary listed in future newsletters, or to make a change to the prayer list, please contact Deann at [christluthduq@gmail.com](mailto:christluthduq@gmail.com) or 412-466-7773.*



Spread the word about what's going on at Christ Lutheran by liking and sharing our Facebook posts!

Our website is **[christlutheranduq.org](http://christlutheranduq.org)**

**HOMEMADE Pierogi Sale**

Orders due by March 14

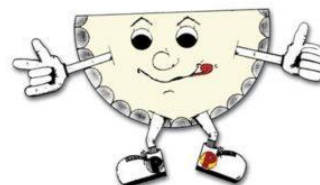
potato/cheese, potato/cheese/jalapeno, sauerkraut, lekvar and cottage cheese 3 of 1 kind for \$2.50

Tammy Thomas will be collecting orders and money.

Pick up is Palm Sunday, March 24.

An order form is included in this newsletter. They can also be ordered through our website,

**[christlutheranduq.org](http://christlutheranduq.org)**





## Forty Days - Forty Items

### We have a challenge for you!

Each day of Lent, remove one item from your closet, kitchen (no food), toy box, etc. that you no longer wear or need and place it in the Sharing Bag. At the end of the Forty Days (after Easter), please bring your Sharing Bag back to church and we will donate these items where they can be shared with others who can really use them. Bags are available at the church. Contact Carlene Oskin with questions or to help.



This Holy Week or Easter Sunday would be a great time to invite friends or family to join you for worship at Christ Lutheran!



Sunday, March 24, 9:15 am

FREE Pancake Breakfast, 10:30 – noon

Please join us for some yummy pancakes and sausage after our church service. This Breakfast will be open to the community as we once again open our doors and hearts in our service to God. This event is an Outreach Program made possible from the GBU Matching Funds Program.

**There is no charge! Hope to see you there!**



Thursday, March 28

7:30 pm at Christ Lutheran and on Zoom



Friday, March 29

7:30 pm at Christ Lutheran

Our sister church, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Pleasant Hills will broadcast their 7pm Good Friday worship service on Facebook. This service, as well as other worship services can also be viewed later. The pastors and lay preachers will be familiar to you because they are the same ones who lead worship at Christ Lutheran and other PLUM churches.

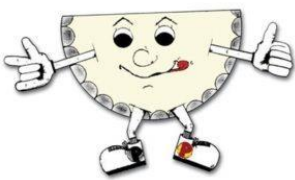


Easter Sunday, March 31

9:15 am at Christ Lutheran

3 pm Worship Service on Zoom

<b>Fundraiser for Christ Lutheran Church, Duquesne, PA</b>						<b>412-466-7773</b>	
SELLER'S NAME			Phone Number				
SELLER TO PICK UP FROM CHURCH- Sunday, March 24							
<b>HOMEMADE PIEROGI SALE! -- 3 for \$2.50</b>							
						Pierogies will be sold frozen	
NAME	PHONE #	Lekvar	Potato & Cheese	Cottage Cheese	Sauerkraut	Jalapeno	Total Paid
TOTAL							
THANK YOU!							
All order slips and money are due March 14th, to Tammy Thomas (412-403-0028).							



----- (tear off) -----

**This is Christ's church.**

*There is a place for you here.*

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person-- questions, complexities and all.

Join us as we do God's work  
in Christ's name  
for the life of the world.

**CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*Gather for Strength,  
Scatter with Love!*



PLUM encourages families to send their children to camp for a week this summer.

**2 area camp options**

**Lutherlyn**

Prospect, PA 16052



**Agape**

Hickory, PA 15240



Lutherlyn: <https://www.lutherlyn.com/summercamp/>  
 Agape: <https://www.campagape.org/page/general-information>

- Visit the websites.
- Find a week that fits your schedule.
- PLUM can support youth of our parishes for up to \$300/person as needed for Agape or Lutherlyn. Please let a PLUM pastor know about your registration (name of camp, dates, type of camp) or questions.
- Your home church may also be able to make a contribution.

## VFW Post 914



March 10, 2024

Noon – 5pm

Thompson Club, 4904 Ball Ave., West Mifflin

Spaghetti, Meatballs, Breadsticks,  
Salad & Beverage

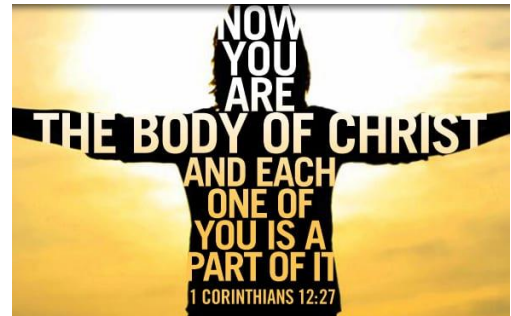
Adults - \$12; Children 10 and under - \$6

Raffles and 50/50

Take Out Orders: 412-508-1313

For more info, see Jake Bradich

*Thanks to all who bring their offerings to worship, or drop off or mail offerings to the church, or use PayPal! Your continuing support and faithfulness are greatly appreciated and keep the Lord's ministry at Christ Lutheran church alive!*



### 2024 Christ Lutheran Church Council

Keri Eckert, Kalee George, Ray George,  
Mary Anne Novak, Carlene Oskin, Marissa Paule,  
Casey Surmick, Katie Surmick

The next Church Council Meeting is Tuesday, March 12, 7 PM.

**NEED DIAPERS,  
CLOTHING, FORMULA,  
OR OTHER BABY  
SUPPLIES?**

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OUR  
SAVIOR PRESENTS:**

## BLESSED BUNDLES

Blessed Bundles is an exciting program which offers new and gently used baby supplies to individuals in the local community.



Blessed Bundles will be collecting and distributing items such as diapers, baby wipes, baby clothes (up to size 8), baby/toddler toys and equipment, and other baby supplies. Items may vary and will be available as they are donated to Blessed Bundles.

### Blessed Bundles Distribution

Where:  
Lutheran Church of  
our Saviour  
1570 Clay Pike  
North Huntingdon, PA  
15642  
724-863-2591



When: 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday  
of Each Month  
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

IF YOU ARE  
INTERESTED IN  
MAKING A DONATION  
OR HAVE QUESTIONS  
PLEASE CONTACT US  
AT:  
[BLESSEDBUNDLES1COOS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BLESSEDBUNDLES1COOS@GMAIL.COM)

Like us on Facebook





**CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

405 Kennedy Ave.

Duquesne, PA 15110

**Non-Profit Org.**

**Postage Paid**

**Permit #1201**

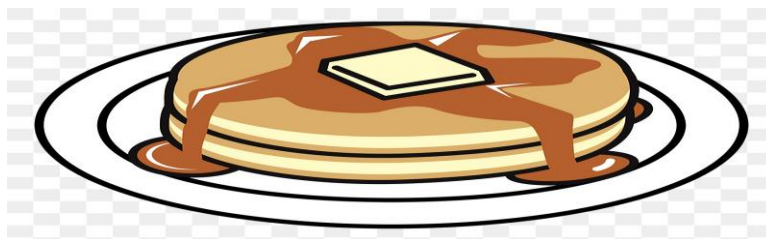
**Pittsburgh, PA**

**ELECTRONIC ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



Time sensitive material

# *Pancake Breakfast*



**No Charge**  
**All are welcome!**

*Palm Sunday,*  
**March 24, 2023**

**10:30 am - noon**

You're also welcome to join us  
for Worship at 9:15 am!

**Christ Lutheran Church**  
**405 Kennedy Avenue, Duquesne**  
**412-466-7773    [www.christlutheranduq.org](http://www.christlutheranduq.org)**