

LENT 2026 - MARCH

# CROSS CONNECTION

Official Newsletter of St. Luke Lutheran Church



Dear Family and Friends of St. Luke,

+ Grace and Peace.

It's never a convenient time to absorb difficult news. Understandably, we would prefer to move from one moment of joy to the next. However, it doesn't take much life experience to figure out that is not how things work. We live, move, and have our being in a challenging time. There seems to be so much that is changing, so much that is being discontinued or simply passing from existence.

In the face of these things, we might rather hibernate than engage life on life's terms. As people of faith, we certainly rely on the blessed assurance of God's larger purpose for us and for the whole of creation.

The Lenten season, I believe, is just what we need at a time like this. Fresh from the mountain-top experience of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, we follow Jesus on a gradual descent that begins with the not-so-subtle reminder on Ash Wednesday that we are dust and unto dust we shall return. The remainder of the Lenten journey summons us to follow Jesus in a time of discovery and revelation of what it means to be marked with the cross of Christ. Our baptismal identity as children of God will not only sustain us in these days but also provide the necessary fortitude, hope, and purpose for all the days ahead.

Embracing our Lenten discipline robustly will generate an awareness of God's grace in Christ. It is that grace that will sustain us and all of God's creation in the hope of new life. That is the good news. Please join me as you are able in this Lenten journey.

In Christ's love for you,  
Pastor Frye

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## **Concordia Lutheran Ministries to Acquire SpiriTrust Lutheran**



Following a court-approved bankruptcy auction and sales hearing, Concordia Lutheran Ministries is blessed and excited to announce that all six SpiriTrust Lutheran communities, located in central Pennsylvania, specifically York, Franklin and Adams Counties, will join the Concordia family of services.

The closing process requires approval from several regulatory authorities and could take approximately 60-90 days to officially close and transfer the assets. While many details regarding the transition are still yet to be determined, Concordia plans to hold a number of town hall meetings with employees, residents and families in the coming weeks, and will infuse significant resources into a number of substantial upgrades at the SpiriTrust Lutheran communities. SpiriTrust Lutheran provides residential living, assisted living, personal care, memory support and nursing and rehabilitation services for about 1,050 residents across six life plan communities and employs more than 600 team members. While their origins date back to the early 1950s, today, SpiriTrust Lutheran is one of the leading non-profit organizations in the region.

Headquartered in Cabot, PA and founded in 1881, Concordia Lutheran Ministries is a faith-based Aging Services Network serving over 50,000 people annually through in-home care and inpatient locations. Throughout its system, Concordia offers adult day services, home health care, hospice, medical and rehabilitation services, memory care, personal care, assisted living, respite care, retirement living, skilled nursing/short-term rehab, spiritual care and medical equipment. Every year, Concordia provides subsidized care to hundreds of residents in its system who have outlived their resources.

Since 2009, Concordia has grown exponentially. Primarily in southwestern Pennsylvania, the organization has worked to expand its faith-based mission and become a "Christian consolidator" in the industry, to protect and preserve organizations with Christian roots and to aid in the long-term support of Christian health care ministries.

"This transition represents a hopeful and meaningful new chapter for SpiriTrust Lutheran," said Melissa Frownfelter, Interim President and CEO/COO of SpiriTrust Lutheran. "Concordia Lutheran Ministries shares our deep commitment to faith-based service, compassionate care and long-term stability, and we are confident that our residents, families and team members will continue to be supported and strengthened as this legacy moves forward. We are grateful for the prayers, dedication and trust of all who have been part of the SpiriTrust Lutheran mission for more than seven decades."



## SUPPORT

### **Congregation, Council, and Committee Highlights - February 2026**

- Three new council members were elected at the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, February 8, 2026: Lisa Horton, Ellen Kroepil and Linda Miller.
- The Installation of Council Members will be held on Sunday, February 15.
- Offering was up 18.41% the end of 2025
- Actual Surplus for 2025 - \$37,698.69
- In the future the yearend review video will be played on the Sunday of the annual congregational meeting.
- Continental Breakfast will be held on Easter Sunday, April 5 beginning at 8:30 AM
- Audit Committee - Toby Forrester, Lisa Horton and Judy Wingfield
- Lenten midweek evening services will begin at 6:30 PM.
- Vespers in the Park is scheduled for this Summer on the third Saturday of June, July and August, beginning at 6:30 PM
- The annual church picnic will be held in conjunction with St. Paul on Saturday, September 12 at Greene Township Municipal Park.

### **Financial Stewardship Report**

	January 2026	YTD 2026
Total Income	\$15,094.38	\$15,094.38
Expenditures	\$30,764.22	\$30,764.22
Net Income	-\$15,669.84	-\$15,669.84



### **Easter Flowers**

Interested in helping decorate the Sanctuary for Easter Sunday? Pick up your order form in the Gathering Area and order flowers in memory of or in honor of your loved ones. \$10 each. Following worship on Easter, you can take them home with you or donate them to be planted at the church. Orders due by March 8th.





Manow Students  
Scholarship Recipients

## Powerpacks

On Thursdays in April at 9am we meet in the fellowship hall to pack lunches for 95 children. If you are interested in helping, please contact Cheryl Vorhauer.



**Faith in Action** committee  
baked cookies for our  
homebound St. Luke members

## Luncheon for St Luke and Luther Ridge Community

Wednesday May 13 @ 11:30am.





### **Confirmation**

In collaboration with St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fayetteville and Memorial Lutheran Church in Shippensburg, St. Luke is serving as the gathering place for this cooperative ministry of education. Pastor Frye has recently begun teaching this class that meets twice a month.

During the following months, Rev. Effisah from Memorial Lutheran will join this effort. The young people from the three congregations have been able to develop an appreciation that being part of the church transcends membership in any one congregation. By virtue of the Baptism they are preparing to affirm, they are part of the whole Body of Christ

### **Adult Faith Formation**

All are welcome!

Faith Formation: The Word

A new Faith Formation topic each Sunday at 8:45AM

Discussion to follow.

Faith Formation Committee is looking for volunteers to help teach our youth classes on Sunday mornings.

Reach out to someone on the committee to find out more!

There will be no Faith Formation class on Easter, instead join us for breakfast!



On Ash Wednesday we hear the words “You are dust and to dust you shall return,” and so it is. We recognize the frailty of human existence, the reality of our personal and corporate sin, and our deep need for Jesus, who forgives our sin and gifts us with eternal life.

Throughout the season, we are called to put our priorities in order. Lent is a forty-day reminder that it is God who saves. God saves us through the ministry of almsgiving as our hearts are opened to the injustices of our world. God saves us through fasting as the concerns of our hearts are reorganized when we meditate on Jesus and all that we truly hold dear. God saves us through prayer as we join Nicodemus in learning that in Jesus we are reborn; we join the woman at the well in understanding God’s unconditional love for her and the entire neighborhood; we stand with the blind man in receiving God’s healing of body and restoration to beloved community. In all the stories of this Lenten season, let us remember that the agency always belongs to our God.

This truth leaves us with naught but to follow the Holy Spirit into the neighborhood, our hearts aflame with the good news. We are in solidarity with our neighbors, following the example of both Martha and Mary, who choose to actively align themselves with the promises and purposes of God. We join the crowds in glad jubilation—and desperate hope—as we declare, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (Matt. 21:9). We stand in awe with the centurion who exclaims at Jesus’ death, “Truly this man was God’s Son!” (Matt. 27:54).

Lent is an invitation from God that requires a response. It is not a response to “choose salvation”; as Lutherans, we know we don’t have to feel such pressure! Instead, it is the response of a heart overflowing with gratitude as we continually encounter Jesus, who was willing to go to all lengths to redeem us.

Right now, and at all times, God is at work redeeming the world and inviting us into a deeper relationship and ministry with God. In all cases, when human beings encounter the spirit of the living God in the work and ministry of Jesus, awe is inspired. Perhaps the woman at the well said it best: “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” (John 4:29).

Later we learn that upon this woman’s testimony to her fellow villagers, and after hearing Jesus teach for two days, the villagers declared, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world” (John 4:42).

At the end of this Lenten season, what profession of faith will flow out of our hearts? How might we come alongside God’s Holy Spirit, who is already at work bringing greater justice and peace to all the earth?



## **Ash Wednesday Liturgy**

Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes

February 18, 2026

11:00 AM and 6:30 PM

## **Lenten Midweek Series**

Conversations with Jesus:

Services of Word and Healing

Wednesdays of Lent at 6:30 PM

In these five midweek services, we will be invited to join the conversation between Jesus and his partners from the previous Sunday's gospel reading. How does each character inform a contemporary life of discipleship? How might Jesus respond now to our own questions, confusions, and need for healing?

Each week uses Service of Word and Prayer with Healing. Extended moments of silence allow us to take time to participate in the holy conversations of Lent

February 25

Matthew 4:1-11

March 4

John 3:2-9

March 11

John 4:5-15

March 18

John 9:1-11

March 25

John 11:1-6, 17-27

## **HOLY WEEK**

### **Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday**

March 29, 10:00 AM

We encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant.

### **Wednesday of Holy Week**

April 1 at 11:00 AM

Holy Communion and Rite of Healing



### **Maundy Thursday**

April 2 at 6:30 PM

Tonight we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal.

### **Good Friday**

April 3 at 6:30 PM

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday.

In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death.



# CROSS CONNECTION CALENDAR

March 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2 AA <i>Fellowship</i>	3 Book Group Music Therapy	4 Midweek Service Choir Lenten Service	5 New freedom AI Anon	6	7
8 Faith Formation  Holy Communion 2nd Sunday	9 AA <i>Faith in Action</i> <i>Audubon</i> <i>Property</i>	10 Book Group <i>Staff Meeting</i> Music Therapy Bible Study	11 Midweek Service Choir Lenten Service	12 New freedom AI Anon	13	14
15 Faith Formation Holy Communion	16 AA Finance	17 Book Group <i>Staff Meeting</i> Music Therapy	18 Midweek Service Choir Lenten Service	19 New freedom AI Anon	20	21
22 Faith Formation Holy Communion	23 AA <i>Council</i>	24 Book Group <i>Staff Meeting</i> Music Therapy Bible Study	25 Midweek Service Choir Lenten Service	26 New freedom AI Anon	27	28
29 Faith Formation Holy Communion	30 AA <i>Council</i>	31 Book Group Music Therapy	Midweek Service Choir Lenten	New freedom AI Anon		31



**Special Day, Holiday = bold text**

**Worship Services = red text**

**Education Opportunities = green text**

**Outreach/Fellowship Opportunities = purple text**

*Church Meeting = italicized text*

*Support / Community Group = gray text*