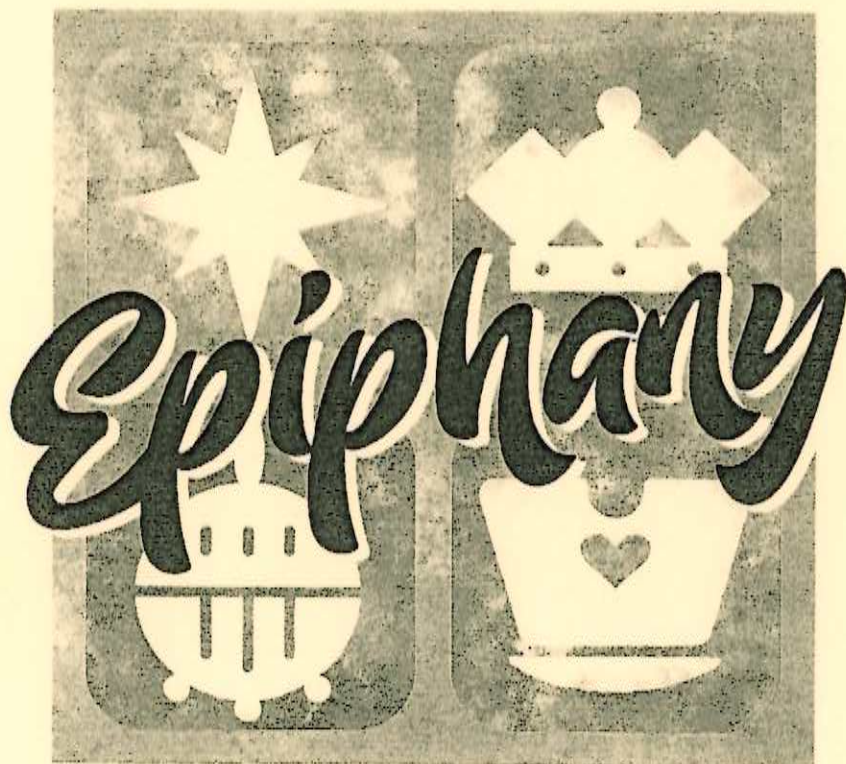


*Sunday, January 5, 2025*



**Millcreek Lutheran Church  
Newmanstown, Pennsylvania**

**www.millcreeklutheran.com  
610.589.2570**

Prelude of Entrance (seated)

Announcements (seated)

Prelude of Preparation (seated)

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**We Gather as God's People**

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Prayer of Confession (standing)

God of Light,

**we confess that we have gone astray and have left Your light.**

We follow the dim lights of the world of success and fortune.

**We follow the dim lights that call us to be more religious by following rules.**

We follow the fading light of personal salvation.

**Forgive us for not seeking the true Light of your love for all the world.**

Forgive us for not following the ways of Jesus, who commanded us to love one another.

**Call us to be light-bearers of love, compassion and justice, in which the mystery of your love is revealed. In the name of Jesus the Messiah, we pray. Amen.**

(Pastor Mindi Welton-Mitchell)





## Gathering Song: "Angels from the Realms..." (standing)



1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far,  
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

## Prayer of the Day (standing)

Let us pray. O God of light and peace, whose glory, shining in the child of Bethlehem, still draws the nations to yourself: dispel the darkness that shrouds our path, that we may come to kneel before Christ in true worship, offer him our hearts and souls, and return from his presence to live as he has taught. **Amen.**

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## **We Hear God's Word**

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## Children's Sermon (seated)

## First Reading (seated)

A reading from Isaiah [60:1-6].

- <sup>60:1</sup> Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth  
and thick darkness the peoples,  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.  
<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.  
<sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together; they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried in their  
nurses' arms.  
<sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be  
brought to you;  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.  
<sup>6</sup> A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.  
They shall bring gold and frankincense  
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.  
**Thanks be to God.**



Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (seated, read responsively)

- <sup>72:1</sup> Give the king your justice, O God,  
**and your righteousness to the king's son;**  
<sup>2</sup> that he may rule your people righteously  
**and the poor with justice;**  
<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,  
**and the hills, in righteousness.**  
<sup>4</sup> Let him defend the needy among the people,  
**rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**  
<sup>5</sup> May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,  
**from one generation to another.**  
<sup>6</sup> Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,  
**like showers that water the earth.**  
<sup>7</sup> In his time may the righteous flourish;  
**and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.**  
<sup>10</sup> May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,  
**and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**  
<sup>11</sup> May all kings bow down before him,  
**and all the nations do him service.**  
<sup>12</sup> For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,  
**the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**  
<sup>13</sup> He has compassion on the lowly and poor,  
**and preserves the lives of the needy.**  
<sup>14</sup> From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,  
**and precious is their blood in his sight.**

Second Reading (seated)

A reading from Ephesians [3:1-12].

<sup>3:1</sup> This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, <sup>2</sup> for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you <sup>3</sup> and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, <sup>4</sup> a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. <sup>5</sup> In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: <sup>6</sup> that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

<sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ <sup>9</sup> and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, <sup>10</sup> so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup> in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

**Thanks be to God.**



Gospel Acclamation (standing)

Alleluia. We have observed his star at its rising,  
**and have come to worship him. Alleluia.**

Gospel Reading (standing)

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew [2:1-12].

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>2:1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

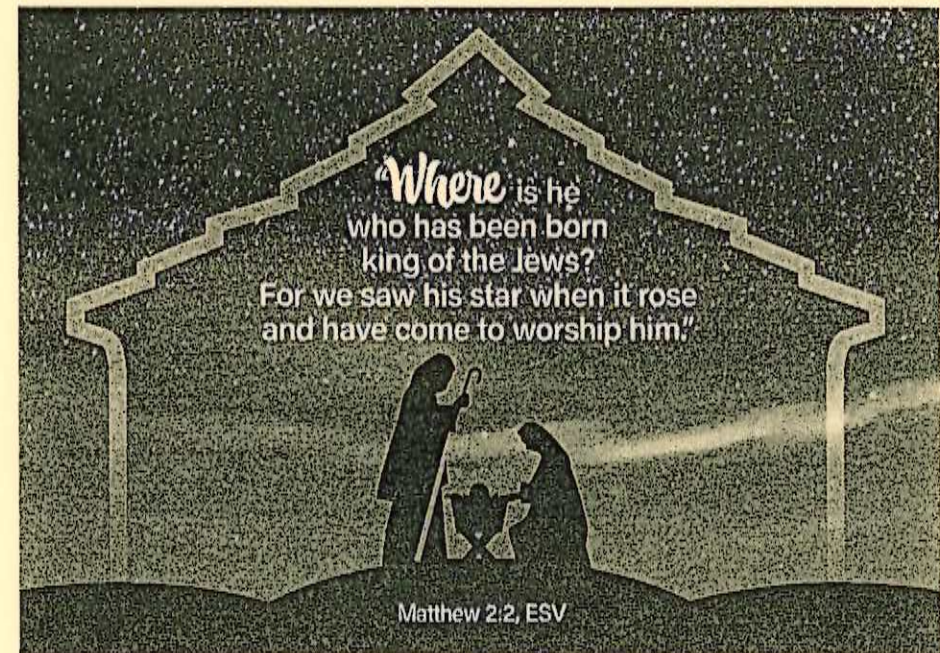
<sup>6</sup> 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." (continued....)

<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon (seated)





## Hymn of the Day: "The First Noel (seated)



1 The first Noel the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . . .



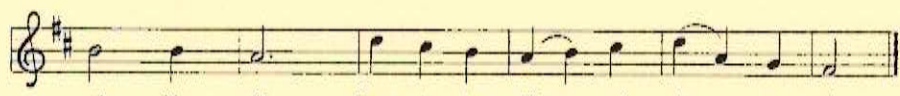
cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the  
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave great light, and so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their gold . . . and



night that was so deep,  
tin-ued both day and night,  
star wher - ev - er it went, No - el, No - el, No -  
place where Je - sus lay,  
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## The Prayers (standing)

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

*A brief silence.*

Your glory fills the earth. Bless the work of all who engage in dialogue with people of other traditions and faiths. Bridge our differences with a shared mission of revealing your boundless love to the world. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Restore the glory of creation. Send rain to water-parched lands. Revive ecosystems and habitats threatened by unpredictable weather, and protect the peoples and creatures who live in them. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Give the rulers your justice and reveal your righteousness to those who govern. Frustrate the plans of tyrants and oppressors. Encourage the work of community organizers and activists who speak out against injustice. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Help those who have no helper. Draw near to those who have no one to advocate for them or those who feel forgotten. Deliver those who call to you—especially those on our congregational prayer list—Lorraine, Debbie, Violet, Abbie, the Leibig family, Ron, Barbara, Norm, Deb, Stewart, Aaron, Devon, Michael, and Greer. Precious are they in your sight. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**



Liberate us from forgetting the future. Fuel our passion for discovery. Give us the boldness to dream and to imagine our ministries in new and different ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Help us to see where you are guiding us as your people in this new year. Keep us mindful that just as lowly shepherds and mighty kings alike came to greet the Christ Child, we are called to join together with all our siblings in Christ to worship and praise you in our words and deeds. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for all your holy ones who now rest in your radiant glory. Make us, with them, sharers in the boundless riches of Christ, our hope and promise. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, **Amen.**

#### The Peace (Standing)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.*

*Peace*  
**BE WITH YOU!**

---

## **We Share in God's Meal**

---

#### Great Thanksgiving Dialog (standing)

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.



Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name,**

**thy kingdom come, thy will be done,**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Distribution of Holy Communion (kneeling)

Blessing after Communion

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion (standing)

Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. **Amen.**

---

**We Are Sent to Serve in God's World**

---

Closing Dialog, Blessing, and Dismissal (standing)

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child.

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

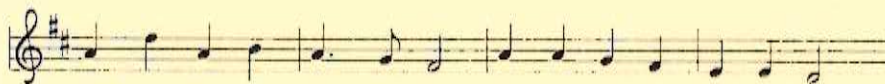
Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly  
**Thanks be to God!**



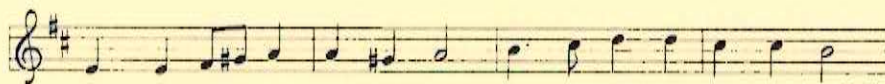
## Sending Song: "Songs of Thankfulness..." (Standing)



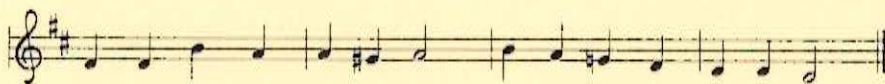
1 Songs of thank-ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to thee we raise;  
2 Man - i - fest at Jor - dan's stream, proph - ct, priest, and king su - preme;  
3 Man - i - fest in mak - ing whole weak - ened bod - y, faint - ing soul;  
4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord, pres - ent in thy ho - ly word;



man - i - fest - ed by the star to the sa - ges from a - far,  
and at Ca - na wed - ding guest in thy God-head man - i - fest,  
man - i - fest in val - iant fight, quell - ing all the dev - il's might;  
grace to im - i - tate thee now and be pure, as pure art thou;



branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem in thy birth at Beth - le - hem  
man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, chang - ing wa - ter in - to wine;  
man - i - fest in gra - cious will, ev - er bring - ing good from ill;  
that we might be - come like thee at thy great e - piph - a - ny.



an - thems be to thee ad - dressed,  
an - thems be to thee ad - dressed, God in flesh made man - i - fest.  
an - thems be to thee ad - dressed,  
and may praise thee, ev - er blest.

## Moments of Meditation (seated)

### Postlude (walking)



## **Overwhelmed with Joy**

*Epiphany* means "a manifestation of a divine or supernatural being." On Epiphany we give thanks to God that Jesus, king of the Jews, was born to become Savior of all. Salvation sounds like good news, doesn't it? However, in today's gospel reading we learn that Jesus' nativity caused fear in King Herod and all of Jerusalem. Why?

People oppose change for many reasons. They fear the loss of personal power or resources. They are reluctant to shift the way things have always been done. They are concerned about financial, personal, or societal costs. Any of these reactions might have been at work in the royal court.

It says something about the wise men, that they left everything when Jesus' star rose in the East and were "overwhelmed with joy" (Matthew 2:10) upon finding Jesus and his mother. This is another possible response to change.

Although the wise travelers did not know everything about Jesus, they were open to being led by God, excited by new possibilities, and willing to pour out the treasures of their time, talent, and money for the opportunity to kneel at Jesus' feet.

Today we are invited into an Epiphany experience! The Holy Spirit is out ahead of us, blowing through the neighborhood, revealing Jesus in words and deeds. How can we follow God into the world? Where might we catch sight of Jesus and partner with him in the work God is already doing? How can we worship outside the church building? And how can our enthusiasm, our overwhelming joy, ease the fear of others who are more uncertain about change?

Jesus' incarnation was the greatest change to ever come into the world. In this season of Epiphany, how might you embrace the change necessary to bring the gospel to all of your neighbors for the sake of Christ?





"The Church on the Hill"

Church Office  
(610) 589-2570  
secretary@millcreeklutheran.com

221 North Sheridan Road  
PO Box 399  
Newmanstown, PA 17073  
www.millcreeklutheran.com

Pastor Scott Paradise  
Home: (717) 628-1241  
Cell: (540) 335-1693  
pastorscottparadise@gmail.com

### Our Mission

Helping God restore and renew our community, our congregation, and our selves.

Sunday January 5, 2025

#### Serving You This Morning:

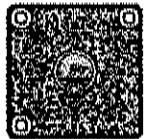
**Pastor,** The Rev. Scott J. Paradise  
**Lay Reader,** Dara Wolfe

**Lay Leader,** Susan Long  
**Ushers/Audio,** Frank Hoffman and Scott Johnson

**Pianist,** Jamie Keener

The altar flowers and bulletins are given to the honor and glory of God and to honor Dotti Hoglund on her birthday on January 11<sup>th</sup>. Happy Birthday Dotti!!

You can **listen to the worship service** over the phone patch at **10:15 AM**. Just dial **717-628-0125**. You will hear a message welcoming you to Millcreek. At that point you are connected to our church sound system, so just stay on the line. You may also watch the service later on You Tube.



### Helping God Restore and Renew our Community

Please see the blue insert concerning the next blood drive at Millcreek Lutheran Church.

### Helping God Restore and Renew our Congregation

Copies of the January Parish Echo may be picked up from the narthex table or wall rack.



We will share in the **Sacrament of Holy Communion** Sunday January 5, 2025.

**CONGREGATION COUNCIL** will meet Sunday January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 after the worship service.

**TREASURER'S REPORT: December 29, 2024**, Current Offerings- \$344.00, Plate-1,691.00, Initial- 7.00, Christmas/Advent-230.00, Memorials: Sylvia Hoffman and Ginny Wolfe-85.00, **Total-\$2,357.00.** Attendance-56, Sunday School-13

**Important Notice for Keyholders**

The Congregation Council has contracted with Reed's Locks to have the exterior locks changed to a system that will allow us to keep better control of keys to the church building. This change will take place on Thursday, January 2.

- If you have a key to the church, you will need a replacement key for the exterior locks, which you can get from the church office. Please make sure the office is staffed ([secretary@millcreeklutheran.com](mailto:secretary@millcreeklutheran.com) or 610.589.2570) before coming to get your key.
- If you have a key to the church, please keep it. You will still need it for the interior locks. (After January 2, this key will not work for the exterior locks.)

**Thank you** to all who had a part in making our Advent and Christmas services special. Special thanks to Julie Strickler and Stephanie Sheetz for organizing and directing the band, choir members for their anthems, the Sunday School students, teachers and parents. Shoutout to Scott Johnson and family, and Frank and Morgan Hoffman for all the extras they needed to do with extra services and communion services. And of course, our "unstoppable" secretary Linda Sheetz and our fearless leader Pastor Scott. Everyone's accomplishments made for festive and meaningful worship experiences. Many thanks to Jamie Keener for playing for both the Travelers Service and today's service.

*Choir rehearsals resume this Thursday, January 9 at 7 pm.  
All are welcome to make a joyful noise!!*



**CHURCH BREAKFAST:** The next church breakfast will be held at Country Fare Restaurant on **Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m.** Everyone is welcome & no advanced notice is needed. Ask the hostess for the Millcreek Lutheran group & you will be directed to our table. We'd love to have breakfast with you...a nice way to start the day! Nancy Deiter

**THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE** will not be meeting in January. The Evangelism committee would like to remind you that there are many opportunities for you to share the WORD with friends and family members. - Evangelism Committee

**FLOWER AND BULLETIN SIGNUP SHEETS FOR 2025** are available in the narthex. Flowers-\$30.00, Bulletins-\$10.00



**YEARBOOK 2024-25:** I am requesting information for the 2024-2025 yearbook and would prefer all reports and information to me ASAP. If you have changes in addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, births, or deaths in your family, please let me know so we may include the information in the new yearbook. Updated information may be put in my mail slot in the office, or emailed to [secretary@millcreeklutheran.com](mailto:secretary@millcreeklutheran.com). Thank you, Linda Sheetz

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### Helping God Restore and Renew Our Selves

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**WEATHER ALERT:** In case of bad weather, please listen to WI.BR 1270AM for a notice of cancellation of church services. Pastor Scott will send out an email to those on the email address list. You can also tune to Channel 27 WHTM (Comcast Channel 12) for notices of church service cancellation, which scrolls across the bottom of the TV screen. When church is cancelled due to the weather, there is no one at the church for a service on the Phone Patch.

**SWEET SECOND SUNDAY** will be held in the multi-purpose room after worship on **January 12, 2025**. All proceeds go to the church. Thank you, Charmayne!

**THIS WEEK WE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) WITH CARDS & PRAYERS:**

Paul Zimmerman, 139 Sweetwater Lane, Newmanstown, PA 17073

**IF YOU ASKED FOR A MILLCREEK MEMBER TO BE PUT ON THE PRAYER LIST, PLEASE TELL THE CHURCH SECRETARY WHEN OUR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED SO SHE CAN KEEP THIS LIST CURRENT.**

**MILLCREEK MEMBERS PRAYER LIST:** Lorraine Eberly, Debbie Hartman, Violet Hepler, Abbie Keath, The Leibig Family, Ronald Merkel, Barbara Potteiger, Norm Sharp, Debra Webber, Stewart Wolf, Aaron Yiengst, Devon Yiengst, Michael Yiengst, Jr., Greer Zellers

**NON-MEMBER REQUESTS ARE LISTED ON A WEEKLY BASIS. TO BE INCLUDED, YOU MAY CONTACT LINDA EACH WEEK WITH YOUR REQUESTS BY NOON ON THURSDAY.** [secretary@millcreeklutheran.com](mailto:secretary@millcreeklutheran.com) or call 610-589-2570

**NON-MEMBER PRAYER LIST:** Mike Nelson, (friend of Kristin Bender), Jane Yocum, (friend of Debbie Hartman), JoAnn Deahl (Brandy Gahres' Mother)



Greetings friend, supporter, partner!



### Market on 7th Open House



We welcome you to an open house of our new Market on 7th space.

**January 17th, 10am**  
(remarks at 10:20)

**250 S. 7th Street, Lebanon**  
(enter on the north side of the building at the Market entrance)



After remarks, we welcome guest to walk-a-round the new space as we prepare to open to our neighbors on January 20!



In our 2024-2026 strategic plan, we approved a transition to expand the space of our Market on 7<sup>th</sup>, charitable food pantry. This move has transformed the way we do other work within the organization, while meeting best practices for choice food pantry work. We are excited that our renovations are complete, and it is time to show you the space! This renovation was made possible by many individual donors, and a grant from our partners at the Central PA Food Bank. Come celebrate with us before we open back up for our neighbors.

We would love for you to visit us on January 17<sup>th</sup> ~ beginning at 10am. We have very brief remarks at 10:20 and following remarks, we welcome you to take a walk around the facility to see the updates. We will be opening back up on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January to our neighbors for service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. D. Smith".

Bryan D. Smith, B.S.  
Executive Director  
250 S. 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lebanon, PA 17042  
Office: 717.272.4400  
Direct Dial: 717.769.1040

Contact Us

717.272.4400

LCCM.us

Vision: Investing in people. Improving lives.

Mission: Lebanon County Christian Ministries shares the love of Jesus through food, shelter, and connections to promote wellbeing and a healthy community.



# BLOOD DRIVE

Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> • 11:00 am - 7:00 pm

## Millcreek Lutheran Church

221 North Sheridan Road, Newmanstown 17073

*In the Multipurpose Room*

*Everyone will receive 2 FREE admission  
vouchers to the Pennsylvania  
Auto Show & a Blood Donor T-Shirt!*

PENNSYLVANIA  
**AUTO SHOW**



3 ways to schedule your donation appointment:

- go to [717GiveBlood.org](http://717GiveBlood.org) & click on **DONATE NOW**
- call 1-800-771-0059
- scan the QR Code



A form of ID is  
**REQUIRED** to donate



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- We kindly suggest you schedule an appointment to donate blood. Appointments help us improve your donation experience.
- Walk-ins are welcome; however, donors with appointments will be taken first and this may result in a significant wait time.

**Central  
Pennsylvania  
Blood  
Bank**  
*Your Community Blood Bank*