



# *The Window* into the heart of

*Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church*

## **Lent & Holy Week Services**

**Ash Wednesday**

**February 18th**

**7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.** Silent Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes  
**Sanctuary**

**7:00 p.m.** Service of Evening Prayer w/ Holy Communion &  
Imposition of Ashes  
**Sanctuary**

**Good Friday**

**April 3rd**

**3:00 p.m.** Good Friday Service

**Sanner Chapel**

(followed by Fish Fry at 4:00)

**Maundy Thursday**

**April 2nd**

**7:30 p.m.** Service of Tenebrae  
w/ special offering for Pastor's  
Discretionary Fund  
**Sanctuary**

**Easter Sunday**

**April 5th**

**7:00 a.m.** Outdoor Sunrise Service

**Wesley Patio (Rain Location - Wesley Hall)**

**8:30 a.m.** Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

**9:30 a.m.** The Gathering in Asbury Center

**10:45 a.m.** Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

**5:00 p.m.** Spanish Service in Asbury Center

## The Wounded Healer: A Reflection on Isaiah 53:4–6

As we approach the season of Lent—a time of repentance, reflection, and renewal—Isaiah’s ancient words speak with startling clarity:

*“Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases... he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.”*

These verses, written centuries before the birth of Christ, invite us to see the heart of the gospel: the self-giving love of God revealed in the suffering servant. Isaiah paints a picture not of a triumphant conqueror, but of one who enters fully into the pain, sin, and brokenness of humanity—not to condemn, but to redeem.

During Lent, we are reminded that the cross is not an accident of history; it is the deliberate path of love. Jesus does not stand at a safe distance from our struggles. He steps into them, bearing the weight of our failures, our griefs, and even the wounds we inflict on one another. In doing so, he transforms suffering into the very means of our healing.

For the United Methodist tradition, which emphasizes both personal holiness and social holiness, this passage calls us to two responses:

**Personal repentance**—acknowledging the ways we have turned from God and receiving the grace Christ offers.

**Compassionate action**—joining Christ in bearing the burdens of others, especially the marginalized, the hurting, and the forgotten.

Lent is not merely about giving something up; it is about taking something on—the posture of Christlike love that Isaiah describes. As we journey toward Good Friday and Easter, may we remember that the One who was “wounded for our transgressions” is also the One who makes us whole.

**Here is a question for you to reflect upon:** As you enter this Lenten season, what burden will you allow Christ to carry for you—and whose burden will you help carry in his name?

*Pastor Tom Strandburg*

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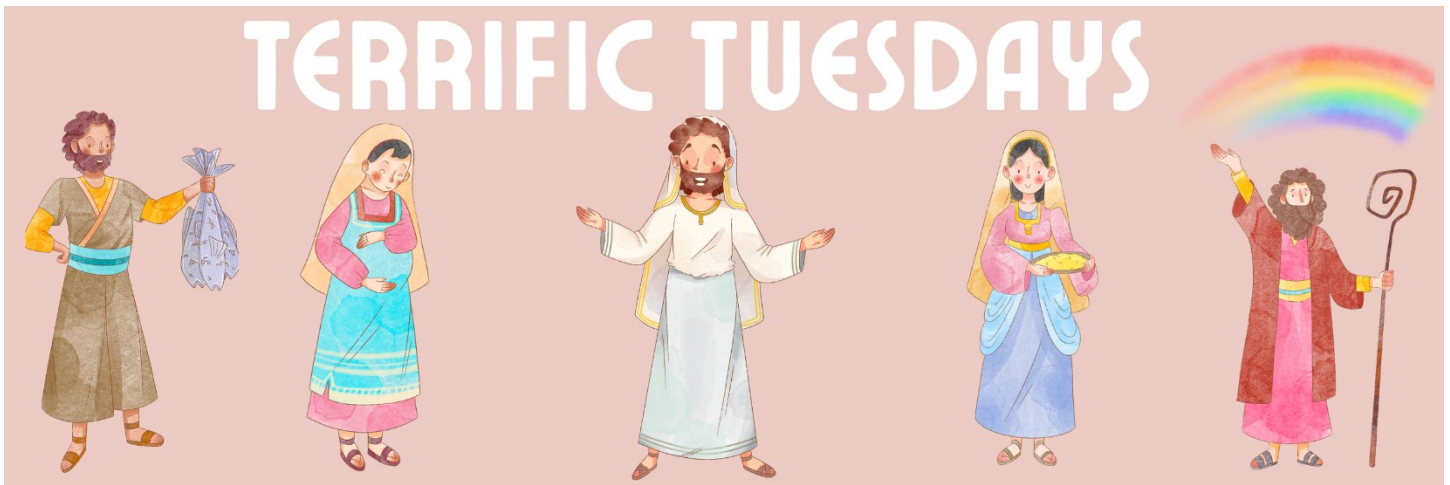
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### Albright-Deering Lecture

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## **Terrific Tuesday Continues in February & March**

*February & March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, & 24<sup>th</sup>*

*6:00 p.m. Dinner*

*6:45 – 7:30 p.m. Discussion for All Ages*

### **SUBJECTS FOR THE ADULT STUDY:**

#### **February 17<sup>th</sup> Shrove Tuesday Celebration**

Join us for a traditional pancake supper and some insights into the meaning of Lent.

#### **February 24<sup>th</sup> – March 24<sup>th</sup> Video Study**

#### **The Last Supper: Conversations that Led to the Cross**

Travel with Jesus on the road to Jerusalem in this profound Lenten study that explores the parables and stories Jesus told at tables along the way to his final meal. Will Willimon invites us all to experience how these table stories—about searching shepherds, welcoming hosts, prodigal sons, and rejected invitations—illuminate the deeper meaning of the Last Supper and Christ's sacrifice.

# 2026 Easter Memorials

Purchase flowers in honor or memory of friends or loved ones! The flowers will be on display in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026 and may be picked up after the 10:45 am service or anytime after Easter. Consider brightening someone's day: Deliver your flowers to a shut-in or ask the church to deliver on your behalf. You can also donate to our Food Pantry in lieu of flowers.



## 2026 Easter Memorials Deadline Sunday, March 8 2026

Make checks payable to MLUMC with memo line marked "Easter Flowers" or "Food Pantry".  
Flower Selection (color cannot be guaranteed)

#\_\_\_\_\_ Daffodil @ \$10.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_\_ Gerber Daisy @ \$13.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_\_ Hyacinths (3 plants) @ \$10.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_\_ Mums @ \$13.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_\_ Tulips (3 plants) @ \$10.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_\_ Lilies (1 stem) @ \$14.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Food Pantry Amount \$\_\_\_\_\_ Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of:

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I will pick up flowers



I will deliver to shut-in



Deliver to a shut-in

Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_



Enroll Now for full/part time all day care  
Children ages 3-5  
6:30 am – 6:00 pm



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## • WEEKDAY MINISTRIES •

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& exciting learning environment to  
ready your child for Kindergarten

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Soccer Shots Available  
for sign up



Reserve your child's  
spot today!



+412.531.5790



sneary@MLUMC.org

# Snow-cial Butterflies

## November 1st Rummage Sale Delivers for Missions!



The November 1st Rummage Sale was a resounding success. The sale netted more than \$12,000 for missions in Western PA, elsewhere in the United States, and around the world. The expression “one person’s trash is another person’s treasure” was certainly in evidence!

Special thanks to the volunteers (both regulars and first timers) who made the sale possible, particularly the Scouts sponsored by our Church who did much of the “heavy lifting” during the pre-sort of items. Special thanks as well to Alan Volek, who assisted in many areas prior to and during the sale, and to Caryl and Michael Drabick, who helped coordinate set-up and clean-up. And last, but certainly not least, special thanks to all who donated and/or purchased items. It took a village, and with God’s help a village we had!

Many recommendations have been made as to how this money should be distributed. The Missions and Outreach Committee will soon be meeting to vote on said recommendations. Look for an update on the organizations that will be receiving proceeds in the Summer edition of *The Window*.

Our next Rummage Sale will be on Saturday, June 6, 2026. Please mark your calendars and plan to help. And start collecting that rummage!

## SHIM Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who donated to our SHIM Giving Tree. Because of your support, we were able to donate 104 lbs. of diapers and toiletries and raise \$1,025 in gift cards!



# Petal to the Metal



## EGGstravaganza 2026

MLUMC's annual Easter EGGstravaganza will take place on Saturday, March 28th from 10 a.m. to noon. This family friendly event is perfect for all ages, especially children preschool through elementary school age, and is open to everyone in the community at no charge. Please invite friends and neighbors to come! Children and their parents will move at their own pace between several stations including egg decorating, crafts, and games.

We need volunteers to help make this year's EGGstravaganza a success! We need adult and teen helpers with stations, set up helpers on Friday and Saturday, and a clean-up crew. Please contact Kim Rhoton ([krhoton@mlumc.org](mailto:krhoton@mlumc.org)) to help.

## Please join us for soup, salad, and fellowship on Sunday, Feb. 15th

The UWF will be dishing up piping hot bowls of soup and crisp salad on **Sunday, Feb 15th** in Asbury Center immediately following the 10:45 service. (We'll also offer a kid-friendly food option.)

Everyone is welcome — and encouraged — to attend this time of fellowship with church family members.



## FISH, FISH, AND MORE FISH—MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND READY YOUR TASTE BUDS!



The Missions and Outreach Committee will once again be hosting Community Fish Frys during the 2026 Lenten Season. Fish Frys will take place on Friday, February 20th, Friday, March 13th, and Good Friday, April 3rd. Eat-in and take-out will be offered. There will also be limited delivery to shut-ins and Food Pantry clients.

The tradition of Lenten Fish Frys at our Church started in 2016. They have always been extremely popular, not only for our Church members but also neighbors in our surrounding communities. Covid 19 limited us for several years, but we are back with over 2,000 meals served each year.

The menu for the February 20th and March 13th Fish Frys will include fried and baked fish as well as chicken nuggets (for non-fish eaters), French fries, hush puppies, macaroni 'n cheese, Cole slaw, buns, fruit, and desserts. The Good Friday Fish Fry, in addition to the preceding, will include a few additional items and Communion elements offered by Pastor Tom.

These Fish Frys are a terrific way for us to provide hospitality and all to share food, fun, and fellowship. As is our practice, there will be no charge for the Fish Frys, although donations will be accepted. As Pastor Tom says, "Those able to donate will help ensure that those unable to do so can still eat."

Please mark these dates on your calendar and plan to attend. And, if you would like further information on these Fish Frys or wish to help in some manner with them, please contact Rob Spicher at 412-720-4589 or [robert.spicher@pnc.com](mailto:robert.spicher@pnc.com).



## Youth Ministry Changes

With regret, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee has received a letter of resignation from Sarah Boice Stecker, who has been serving as our part-time youth ministry director since July of 2024. Her busy personal and professional life prevents her continuation on our youth ministry staff. We appreciate Sarah's service, and we'll look forward to working with her in other areas of ministry in the future. For the present, our faithful youth ministry volunteers will build upon the foundation which has been laid. Pastor Tom will consult with this group concerning the provision of longer-term leadership for the future. Our church continues its firm commitment to vibrant youth ministry in the years ahead.

## Capital Campaign Update

Work on our Capital Campaign projects was deferred during the winter months. When the weather warms, work on the roof and lighting of the front of our church will commence. In addition, we have decided to use the additional funds that were raised to refurbish as many outside doors as funding allows. The first doors to be refurbished are the ones at the entrance to Asbury Center. The doors on Scott Road also need attention so we hope we will have enough funds to complete that project. Finally, we are anxious to see our new landscaping in full bloom this spring. It is interesting to note that our new sign has caught the attention of another Pittsburgh church, and they are interested in installing a similar sign.

### MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SANCTUARY CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES

AMOUNT	ITEM
\$116,350.03	Pledges and Contributions to Date
	<b>CAPITAL CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES</b>
\$42,635.00	New Digital Sign (actual-completed)
\$2,485.00	Sign - Electrical Work (actual-completed)
\$909.90	Sign - permit/engineer fees, etc. (actual-completed)
\$23,485.00	Sidewalks (actual-completed)
\$16,362.27	New Landscaping (actual)
\$1,995.00	Columbarium Alcove Wall Repair (actual-completed)
\$2,500.00	Exterior Lighting Upgrades (estimate)
\$13,950.00	Roof Repairs for Scott Road Side of Sanctuary (bid)
\$7,375.00	Slate Replacement - Various Areas (bid)
\$4,276.18	Refinishing Outside Doors - estimated cost
\$376.68	Incidental Campaign Costs (mailing, recognition reception)
\$116,350.03	Total Capital Campaign Expenditures



# A Year of Monthly Education, Contemplation and Action based on Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, 2024-2028

<u>Month</u>	<u>Social Principle</u>	<u>Proposed MLUMC Activities</u>
February	<b>Church and Governments Civil Disobedience Restorative Justice Graft, Bribery &amp; Corruption</b>	What do the Scriptures say about Church and Government? Discussion at Terrific Tuesday; Book groups to discuss <u>The Watsons Go to Birmingham</u> by Christopher Paul Curtis and <u>While the World Watched</u> by Carolyn McKinstry
March	<b>Human Trafficking and Slavery</b>	Book study <u>SOLD</u> by Patricia McCormick—March 18th Unity Lunch Speaker from Assure—March 1st
April	<b>Global Warming and Climate Change, Affirming Science and Traditional Wisdom</b>	Earth day activities at Mt. Lebanon Park; Book discussion of <u>Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World</u> by Robin Wall Kimmerer
May	<b>Media and Communication Technologies</b>	Media validity activity for all ages
June	<b>Human Sexuality</b>	Pride day participation; Book discussion of <u>Tomorrow Will be Different</u> by Rep. Sarah McBride
July	<b>Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities Gender Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	Faith For Today family story time
August	<b>Food Justice</b>	Snack drive for MLUMC's food pantry in coordination with Outreach Committee backpack drive

## Save the Date

Come to Asbury Center after the 10:45 service on March 1 to learn more about the Social Principle for March, Human Trafficking. A speaker from [The Asservo Project](#) will present, and a lunch of vegetarian lasagna will be served. Please RSVP to Kim Rhoton, [krhoton@mlumc.org](mailto:krhoton@mlumc.org).

## Start Reading!

To go along with the Social Principle topic for March, there will be a discussion of the book SOLD by Patricia McCormick on March 18 at 7PM via zoom. The book is a fictional account of a child sold into human trafficking, but based on real events as researched by the author.

## **MISSIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE – FINANCIAL PARTNERS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED!**

Many of the events (such as large community meals) hosted by the Missions and Outreach Committee are self-sustaining, with free will donations from attendees covering event costs.

Relative to activities organized by the Committee, however, such is not always the case. Fortunately, several members of our congregation have become regular financial supporters of these activities, sparing the general church budget from taking a financial “hit” to cover them.

As the Missions and Outreach Committee begins its 2026 activities, there is an opportunity to provide it with financial support. By becoming a “financial partner” of this Committee, you will not only help to underwrite the cost of these activities but also have the opportunity to assist with them.

The Lenten Fish Fries, the annual Back-to-School Backpack Drive, a Sunday afternoon picnic at the Daily Bread mission, the Fall Festival, and the Community Thanksgiving Dinner were some of the Committee’s 2025 activities. Although one-time donations played an important part in covering the costs of them, funds provided by “financial partners” helped guarantee their success. Having “financial partners” in place will ensure that activities such as these continue to flourish in 2026 and beyond.

If you are interested in becoming a “financial partner” of the Missions and Outreach Committee, please contact Rob Spicher (Committee Chair) at either 412-720-4589 or [robert.spicher@pnc.com](mailto:robert.spicher@pnc.com).

Thank you in advance for your financial support.

## **Missions and Outreach Committee – Continuing to Provide Hospitality, Fellowship, and Service to Others**

In late 2023, Charge Conference approved the merger of the former Missions Committee and the former Community Events and Outreach Committee into a “new” committee – the Missions and Outreach Committee. Said merger became effective on January 1, 2024. The “new” committee hit the ground running and continues to go strong!

The Committee, chaired by Rob Spicher, has four subcommittees: 1) Hosted Community Events (Donna Chesleigh – Coordinator); 2) Local Ministry Partnerships (Don Langston – Coordinator); 3) Community Outreach (Liz DiPietro – Coordinator); and 4) Missions (Louanne Baily – Coordinator). During 2025, the work of these subcommittees included three Lenten Fish Fries, daily/bi-monthly/monthly food distributions, a back-to-school backpack drive, Spring and Fall Rummage Sales for missions, a picnic for the Daily Bread ministry, an outdoor Fall Festival in conjunction with our sister church from Zwickau, and a Community Thanksgiving Dinner. The Committee plans to feature these outreach activities, events, and ministries monthly via "Missions and Outreach Moments" during morning worship.

The Committee meets bi-monthly (every other month). Meetings are open to the congregation in person or via ZOOM.

If you would like more information about the Missions and Outreach Committee or would like to join, please contact Rob Spicher at 412-720-4589 or [robert.spicher@pnc.com](mailto:robert.spicher@pnc.com).



## CHURCH FINANCIAL INFORMATION

*By Rob Spicher, Finance Committee Chair*

Since 2018, every edition of The Window has included financial information on our Church – this edition is no different. Summarized below are the Church's 2024 actual, 2025 budgeted, and 2025 actual financial results.

As noted in the table below, the Church's financial performance during 2025 was in line with the budget. Although less was paid against the Connectional Apportionment than budgeted, the major dip in the year-end bottom line compared to 2024 resulted from declines in both stewardship and Weekday Ministries. Notwithstanding the negative bottom line, special gifts (including several bequests) helped to plug any gaps. The numbers below include \$88,250 in revenues and expenses from the Centennial capital campaign (the \$88,250 is included in the revenue number and makes up most of the expense number shown near the bottom).

The Finance Committee would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to all whose pledges, non-pledged gifts, and other financial contributions ensure that our staff is paid, our buildings are maintained, and our ministries continue to flourish.

Any questions regarding the actual and budget information shown below should be directed to Rob Spicher (Finance Committee Chair). He can be reached by calling the Church office (412-531-7131) or by e-mailing him at [robert.spicher@pnc.com](mailto:robert.spicher@pnc.com).

Church Budget	2024 <u>Actuals</u>	% Of <u>Expenses</u>	2025 <u>Budget</u>	% Of <u>Expenses</u>	2025 <u>Actuals</u>	% Of <u>Expenses</u>
<b>Revenue:</b>	\$814,416	103.2%	\$766,356	86.7%	\$798,298	86.9%
<b>Expenses:</b>						
Personnel	\$394,214	50.0%	\$422,528	47.4%	\$409,970	44.7%
Programs & Facilities	167,926	21.3%	207,960	23.4%	192,321	20.9%
Utilities & Taxes	101,233	12.8%	106,490	12.0%	112,332	12.2%
Insurance	64,893	8.2%	70,800	8.0%	69,580	7.6%
Connectional Contribution to WPA UM Conference*	49,923	6.3%	70,023	7.9%	32,882	3.6%
Loan Payments	11,251	1.4%	11,251	1.3%	11,251	1.2%
Capital Campaign/Other					90,210	9.8%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$789,440	100.0%	\$889,052	100%	\$918,546	100%
<b>Total Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>\$24,976</b>		<b>(\$122,696)</b>		<b>(\$120,248)</b>	

\* Payments in 2025 approximately 46% of the requested amount.

Net losses are covered by cash on hand, special gifts, and reserves.

## Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

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Pittsburgh, PA 15216

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### ALBRIGHT-DEERING LECTURES IN METHODIST STUDIES 2026

#### **CALLED AND ORDAINED: CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF WOMEN'S ORDINATION IN THE METHODIST TRADITION**

**March 3, 2026**

**Pittsburgh Theological Seminary**

Marking the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's ordination in the Methodist Church, this three-part lecture series explores the past, present, and future of women's leadership in Methodist ministry. From the early pioneers who preached without permission to the complex realities faced by clergywomen today, the series traces how the Holy Spirit has moved—and continues to move—through the lives and leadership of women called to serve. Through historical analysis, theological reflection, and constructive visioning, these lectures invite the church and academy alike to consider how women's ordination has shaped Methodist identity, and how it will continue to form the church's witness in the decades ahead.

The Rev. **Stephanie York Arnold**, general secretary for The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women of The United Methodist Church, and the Rev. Dr. **Emily Nelms Chastain**, assistant professor of Christian history and Methodist studies at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, will present the 2026 Albright-Deering Lectures.

- Lecture 1: She Preached Anyway: How Methodist Women Turned Print and Polity into Power (1919-1956)
  - Lecture 2: Still Called, Still Climbing: Clergywomen Today
  - Lecture 3: The Next Itineration: Envisioning Women's Leadership Together

*In collaboration with and co-sponsored by the Western Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church*