

# The Good News

St. Luke's Lutheran Church      Rt. 73 & Neiffer Road      Obelisk, Pennsylvania      January 2026  
3206 Big Road, Zieglerville, PA 19492      stlukeslutheran.church      StLukesObelisk.Office@gmail.com



## Worship Schedule

**Sundays:**  
9:00 a.m. – Holy Communion

Praise Worship with Holy Communion –  
January 18, 2026

### Cancellation Notices

In the event our worship service and Faith Formation schedule is affected by winter weather, we will notify you on our Facebook Page.

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The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Welcome Center - light snacks, coffee, and water, will be available. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. During the Congregational meeting we will review the reports of the Church Committee's and Task Force activities for 2025. We will also review and approve the Budget for 2026 and elect members to join the Church Council for 2026.



Dear St. Luke's family and friends,

January often feels quieter after the joy and busyness of Christmas. Decorations come down, the days are short, and we settle into a new year with fresh calendars and familiar routines. Yet the Church gives us a gift in this season: Epiphany. Epiphany invites us not to look backward at the manger, but forward—toward a wider world illuminated by Christ's light. At the heart of Epiphany is the story of the Magi, who follow a star beyond familiar boundaries, trusting that God is doing

something new. When they reach the child Jesus, they respond with generosity. Their gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—are both practical and symbolic, offered simply because they have encountered something holy.

These gifts still speak to us. Gold represents what we value: our time, talents, and treasure. Frankincense, used in worship, points to prayer and praise—the offering of our hearts and attention to God. Myrrh, associated with healing and burial, acknowledges the brokenness of the world and the cost of love. Together, they reflect a whole-life response to God's grace.

As Lutherans, we often speak of stewardship not as fundraising, but as discipleship. Giving is one way we follow Jesus, alongside prayer, service, and learning. In January, as we set intentions for a new year, Epiphany invites us to ask meaningful questions: What gifts has God entrusted to me? Where is Christ's light leading me to share them? How might my giving—of time, talents, or treasure—be an act of worship? Lutherans believe that everything we have is a gift of grace. We send these gifts back out into the world, not out of fear or scarcity, but out of trust in a God of abundance. Like the Magi, we may not see the full picture or know exactly where this giving or road will lead. But we give anyway, trusting that God will use what we offer where it is needed most.

This January, I invite you to reflect on generosity as a spiritual practice for the year ahead. Perhaps that means committing financial gifts to support the ministry of this congregation. Perhaps it means offering your time, your treasure, or your talents. No gift is too small when it is given in love.

The Magi went home by another road, changed by their encounter with Christ. May we, too, be changed as we follow the star—learning again that generosity is one of the ways God's light shines through us for the sake of the world.

Pr. Amy Smith

## Congregational Council Highlights

### December 2025

We held the Congregational Council meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>. We moved forward with several pieces of business:

- Reviewed the financial status of the church
- Approved a tentative budget to be sent to the Annual Meeting in 2026
- Approved a church hall rental
- Reviewed the church calendar through March
- Reviewed steps for revising the Constitution and Bylaws of St. Luke's
- Discussed the need for two new candidates for the Congregational Council in 2026

If you have any questions about what's happening with the Congregational Council, please reach out to me.

Dennis Faust  
Congregational Council President

## Offering Envelopes



The 2026 offering envelopes have been distributed in your church mailboxes. If you would like to use envelopes and did not receive any, please let our Financial Secretary, Peggy Brendlinger know with a note in her church mailbox or by email ([ktdunn777@comcast.net](mailto:ktdunn777@comcast.net)). Also, if you receive envelopes and do not want them, please put them in the Financial Secretary's mailbox with a note.



## **Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# **Synod Update**

## **December 2025**

### ***MLK Day of Service***

In partnership with United Lutheran Seminary (ULS) and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Liberty Lutheran is hosting an MLK Day of Service and ingathering at ULS on Monday, January 19. Participants will collect hygiene supplies for local organizations in need and pack them into kits for distribution. The goal is 200 kits. Make plans now to participate in this service event to support our neighbors in need. St. Luke's Missions-Discipleship Committee is going to facilitate our participation by buying the contents of 20 bags. After worship on January 4, the congregation will help assemble the kits.

### ***Council Officers Gathering***

There will be a gathering on February 21 at the United Lutheran Seminary, targeted for Congregational Council Officers. There will be a general session and then breakouts for Presidents & Vice Presidents, and separate session for Treasurers and Secretaries. I attended last year and it was a great event.

### ***Next Synod Assembly***

The exact dates are not yet confirmed. Muhlenberg University construction will not be done in time, looking at two other sites. The event will possibly start on Friday evening and run all day on Saturday, to allow people that work a day job to attend. St. Luke's will need

to send two representatives (one male, one female)

### ***Rostered Minister Transitions***

First time since I've been on Synod Council that there were fewer additions to the list than there were positions filled! Still a lot of empty pulpits but improving!

### ***Update from Federal Chaplain***

Concerns from the Federal Chaplin regarding military presence in Philadelphia are due to the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Bishop Penman is concerned and monitoring the situation.

### ***New Task Forces***

Synod Council approved two task forces, one to look at providing childcare at Synod Assembly and one to review the Compensation Guidelines.

Dennis Faust  
SEPA Synod Council member

### ***Help Us to Save On Energy Costs:***

One of our largest expenses for the Church is the monthly expense for Heat and Electric.

- ✖ Please remember to turn off a light if you turned it on when you leave an area.
- ✖ If you are using a classroom or office, and turn up the Heat for your activity, please return the thermostat to its prior setting when you leave. (Most of the Education wing is set to 65 degrees.)
- ✖ If you notice something related to heat or lights that does not seem right, please let a Property Committee member know.

Thanks in advance for being good stewards of our energy resources!

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
 Financial Information  
 As of November 30, 2025

**Cash:**

Cash in Bank - Checking		\$ 43,584.60
Designated Funds - savings		\$ 40,701.97
Savings Account		\$ 9,897.57
Investments		<u>\$ 383,866.60</u>
Total cash on Hand		<u>\$ 478,050.74</u>

**Revenues:**

	Actual	Actual Year to Date	Budget
Current Giving	\$ 17,594.33	\$ 192,968.74	\$ 210,350.00
Fundraisers	\$ 3,046.00	\$ 61,141.73	\$ 58,300.00
Designated #	\$ 635.00	\$ 4,977.97	\$ 6,700.00
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 21,275.33</u>	<u>\$ 259,088.44</u>	<u>\$ 275,350.00</u>

**Expenses:**

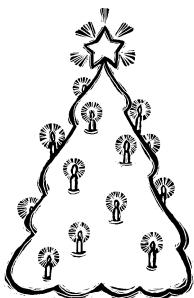
Pastor's expenses	\$ 7,147.94	\$ 78,269.09	\$ 87,678.00
Worship & Music Expenses	\$ 1,589.28	\$ 16,251.58	\$ 18,321.00
Faith Formation			\$ 20,550.00
Discipleship	\$ 165.00	\$ 5,710.25	\$ 4,000.00
Office Expenses	\$ 2,181.95	\$ 29,361.41	\$ 41,028.00
Property Expenses	\$ 3,194.75	\$ 85,853.46	\$ 118,132.00
Fundraisers	\$ -	\$ 32,365.05	\$ 25,600.00
Designated	<u>\$ 300.00</u>	<u>\$ 5,301.28</u>	<u>\$ 10,100.00</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 14,578.92</u>	<u>\$ 253,112.12</u>	<u>\$ 325,409.00</u>
Net Surplus/Deficit	\$ 6,696.41	\$ 5,976.32	\$ ( 50,059.00)

Please remember St. Luke's in your weekly giving. Consistent giving is crucial to meet the mission of our Small Church with a Big Mission. Electronical give through Tithely.com or Paypal.com - select St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Zieglerville, PA – email [stlukesobelisk.treasuer@gmail.com](mailto:stlukesobelisk.treasuer@gmail.com)

A detailed copy of the balance sheet and income statement are posted on the bulletin board across from the Pastor's Office. Questions or more information. Contact Penny O'Donnell, treasurer at [stlukesobelisk.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stlukesobelisk.treasurer@gmail.com)

Your gifts meet the needs of God's people. And that's not all. Your gifts also cause many people to thank God.

2 Corinthians 9:12 NIRV



## Christmas Tree

We are extending a heartfelt thank you to Craig and Peggy Brendlinger for their generous offering of our beautiful Christmas tree. Each year, the trees they provide for us get better and better and add so much to the warm feeling in our sanctuary.



## New Year's Resolutions

If you're like most people, new year's resolutions fall by the wayside after a few days, maybe a week. Some of the old familiar resolutions like losing weight, cutting down on sweets or alcohol, exercise etc. are ones that people typically find difficult adhering to for more than a few weeks. What if we tried a different approach? In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 10:31 the message is: *So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.* What if that's the way we looked at things in 2026?

Now that might be easier said than done but here's a strategy that might also be helpful. B.J. Fogg, PhD Behavior Scientist at Stanford, has been researching human behavior for over 20 years. He was instrumental at the start of Instagram. He authored a book called [Tiny Habits: The Small Changes that Change Everything](#) and he encourages people to make small changes and celebrating those small things increases our endorphins and helps us feel better. <https://tinyhabits.com/book/>

Whatever your goals are for the new year, join us in celebrating the good news of the Christ child.

## Welcome Center



The sign-up sheet for Welcome Center host is on the bulletin board in that room. Please consider volunteering and helping us keep this ministry alive.

## Book Club

Our book club has chosen our new read, *Sensible Shoes: A Story About the Spiritual Journey* by Sharon Garlough Brown. Dig into this highly recommended book and then join us on Sunday, February 8, 2026, after worship for our discussion. See Pastor Amy if you need a copy of the book.

## Thrift Shop Meeting

Join us on Sunday, January 11, 2026, during Faith Formation for an organizational meeting discussing the proposed St. Luke's Thrift Shop.



Our next dinner is Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. If you have never attended our Community Dinner, this is an excellent opportunity to experience this ministry of fellowship with our neighbors. Please join us. Also, if this is a ministry you would be interested in working in, please reach out to Marty Jordan or Sharon Killough.

## Food Needed



Thank you for your generosity by sharing from your abundance, or giving as sacrifice, when you bring food and other household supplies for the Daily Bread Community Food Pantry. Supplies may be deposited in the room across from the church office.

# January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 New Year's Day	2	3 8:00am Property Committee Mtg. (Zoom)
4 9:00am Holy Communion 10:15am Faith Formation	5 7:00pm Conference Comm. Mtg. (Zoom)	6	7 9:30-10:30am Bible Study	8 7:00pm Discipleship/Missions Committee (Zoom)	9	10 Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon
11 9:00am Holy Communion 10:15am Thrift Shop Mtg.	12	13 2:00pm Worship & Music Committee (Zoom)	14 9:30-10:30am Bible Study	15 5:30-6:30pm Community Dinner	16	17 Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon
18 9:00am Praise Service - Holy Communion 10:15am Faith Formation	19	20 7:00pm Council	21 9:30-10:30am Bible Study	22	23	24 Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon
25 9:00am Holy Communion 10:30am Annual Congregational Mtg.	26	27	28 9:30-10:30am Bible Study	29	30	31

## January 4

Greeters: Jen & Paul Christman  
 Lay Reader: Joyce Brothers  
 Altar Guild: Brenda Foose  
 Welcome Center: Dennis & Gail Faust  
 Counters: Gwen Semmens, Mike Way

## January 11

Greeters: Joyce Brothers, Spencer Brothers  
 Lay Reader: Gwen Semmens  
 Altar Guild: Joyce Brothers  
 Welcome Center: Pat Stonerook, Merlyn Jordan  
 Counters: Deneen Kratz, Doug & Sharon Killough

## January 18

Greeters: Brenda Foose, Marty Jordan  
 Reader: Pastor Amy  
 Altar Guild: Eve Gehringer  
 Welcome Center: Jen Christman, Charlotte Christman  
 Counters: Judy Hunsberger, Jerry Jordan

## January 25

Greeters: Mike Way, Judy Moyer  
 Lay Reader: Brendan Greer  
 Altar Guild: Joyce Brothers  
 Welcome Center: Gwen Semmens, Donna Usavage  
 Counters: Marty Jordan, Pat Stonerook

## February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 9:00am Holy Communion 10:15am Faith Formation	<b>2</b> 7:00pm Conference Committee (Zoom)	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 9:30-10:30am Bible Study	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 8:00am Property Committee Mtg. Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon
<b>8</b> 9:00am Holy Communion 10:15am Book Club	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 2:00pm Worship & Music Committee (Zoom)	<b>11</b> 9:30-10:30am Bible Study	<b>12</b> 7:00pm Missions/Discipleship Committee (Zoom)	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon  <b>Valentine's Day</b>
<b>15</b> 9:00am Holy Communion – Praise Service 10:15am Faith Formation	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:00pm Council	<b>18</b> 9:30-10:30am Bible Study  <b>Ash Wednesday Service – 7:00 pm in Chapel</b>	<b>19</b> 5:30-6:30pm Community Dinner	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon
<b>22</b> 9:00am Holy Communion 10:15am Faith Formation	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 9:30-10:30am Bible Study  Mid-week Lenten Service	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Diakonia – 9:00am-12 noon

### February 1

Greeters: Kevin & Charlotte Christman  
Lay Reader: Sharon Killough  
Altar Guild: Jen Christman  
Welcome Center: volunteer needed  
Counters: Peggy Brendlinger, Randi Rose

Counters: Doug & Sharon Killough, Judy Hunsberger

### February 18 – Ash Wednesday

Greeters: volunteers  
Lay Reader: Dennis Faust  
Altar Guild: volunteer

### February 8

Greeters: Marty Jordan, Brenda Foose  
Lay Reader: Jen Christman  
Altar Guild: Brenda Foose  
Welcome Center: volunteer needed  
Counters: Mike Way, Gwen Semmens

### February 22

Greeters: Paul & Jen Christman  
Lay Reader: Rob Bickelman  
Altar Guild: Joyce Brothers  
Welcome Center: Donna Usavage, Gwen Semmens  
Counters: Jerry Jordan, Peggy Brendlinger

### February 15

Greeters: Deneen Kratz, Ian Kratz  
Reader: Pastor Amy  
Altar Guild: Eve Gehringer  
Welcome Center: Rob & Paula Bickelman