

 To all the saints of Schwarzwald Lutheran Church,
Grace to you all, and peace!

I am a quotation collector, and over the last week, three quotations in particular have bubbled to the service, as Council has decided to make Communion available on a monthly basis. But knowing how important receiving Communion is, let's begin by sharing how it will be offered, on a month to month basis.

¶ Communion will be offered at the outdoor worship service on August 30, September 13, and (if necessary) October 4. "Pods" of a wafer and grape juice will be available as you walk into the worship space. You may also choose to bring your own elements of bread and the beverage of your choice. (Notes on opening pods or bringing elements can be found elsewhere in the Pulpit & Pew.)

¶ At 7pm on August 30, September 13, and (if necessary) October 4, Communion will be offered via Zoom; the link will be sent out to everyone with the bulletin information. You can use your own elements of bread and the beverage of your choice. This service will be the shortened Home Communion service (about 20 minutes) that is offered when I visit those who are homebound. The first 100 devices can get on Zoom.

¶ Lastly, Home Communion will be brought to those who are homebound, or restricted because of COVID-19. I can stand outside your door and offer the Home Communion service, with pods or elements of your choice. Or I can call you and offer the service by phone as you have the elements on hand. This will be available about three times a year, which is the normal Home Communion schedule. Those currently on the Home Communion schedule will get a call from the church as usual. However, if you have not received Home Communion from SLC in the past, **you must contact us at 610/779-3480** to let us know you desire this option. Otherwise we won't know who is self-quarantining or Zooming.

So...the quotations I mentioned. Some may be wondering why it has taken so long to have Communion? A reasonable question. I can say this: Council has been following church and scientific wisdom in the best interest of everyone's safety, and that has been evolving since March. So I was glad to read these words from the author Maya Angelou, "Do the best you can until you know better, and when you know better do better." I hope we know better, but we definitely know different!

These have been challenging times for every pastor I know. Trying to squeeze the round 2020 peg into the square hole of 1517 theology is not an easy fit! Some things violate some understandings, while other things violate other understandings. I've found myself reciting words attributed to the 18th century philosopher Voltaire: Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. We all have our idea of what "perfect" worship is, and it may include being inside the sanctuary, singing hymns, hearing organ music, shaking hands to pass the peace, and in my case, theologically sound Communion. We all have to make adjustments, because if we wait for perfect, we will be waiting a long time. (continued)

Finally, when our decisions frustrate others, or others' decisions frustrate us, when judging is easier than forgiving, and we want perfection more than good, I try to remember words from a not-so-famous pastor that have shaped my ministry since first hearing them early in my ministry. "If we err, let us err on the side of grace." What we are trying now will not please everyone. Be patient—life is an experiment. Please know we'll keep trying and we'll keep trying to do better.

God is all in all,

Pastor Steve

From Tim Morgan, member of Church Council:

Martin Luther said, "Man is not to rack his brain about the future, but live in the hour that has come. That is the same as living in faith, receptive to God who is present now and has something he will do now."

On behalf of the Schwarzwald Lutheran Church Council, I would like to update the congregation on what we have been discussing at meetings and our plans as we move forward.

COVID-19 has definitely brought ambiguity and a lot of change to our world, SLC being no exception. While it is true that our governing bodies have exempted us from many of these things, it is our responsibility, as council, to put the safety of our congregation first as we look to how it is best to begin resuming a more normal Sunday, like we are all used to.

Council has met monthly, with occasional extra meetings as necessary, regarding the Covid-19 pandemic as well as our normal business. When we first shut down the church, we were able to move right into virtual worship. This YouTube "pre-taped" platform has gotten better every week as we learn how to be more IT savvy! Council chose not to do a "live" virtual service such as FB live, YouTube live, or Zoom due to disruptions and distractions. It has always been our goal to give all of you the best "Weekly Worship Experience."

Once able, we chose to move to an outdoor service, keeping virtual as well, hoping that we have been able to meet everyone's needs and comfort levels.

Your council has talked at every meeting about when to go indoors. This past Wednesday, we met for three hours, two of which were spent on this very topic. Moving back indoors has been, and will continue to be, a very sensitive subject. It is again important to know that your safety is our number one priority. For now, we collectively feel that going indoors would not be in the best safety of the congregation. While we may have the "space," our building does not have a way to safely circulate and disinfect air. Our plan currently is to continue worship outdoors and virtually. We will monitor the possibility of indoor services on a month to month basis. If we find ourselves still outdoors when the seasons turn, we can go back to a complete virtual experience. (continued)

So what we are doing next? Forward progress is our goal! To that effect, I am pleased to announce that we will be moving to a Communion service monthly. This will look very different from our traditional receiving of Communion but we will all have an opportunity to receive the gifts. This will be done in one of three ways. First at the outdoor service. Second, there will be an opportunity for a short (15 minute) Communion liturgy live on Zoom the same week as outdoor Communion. Finally, for those not able to attend live or virtually, we will offer safely distanced house calls.

Second, we plan to resume our normal scheduled Sunday's, date TBD, with 9:15 Sunday school (if permissible) and 10:30 outdoor service (with a virtual YouTube option). Sunday School details are still being worked out, and we hope to share this plan with you shortly. Unfortunately, due to current conditions, Rally Day and the Church Picnic are on hold.

Our ministries continue to thrive and our giving is strong...THANK YOU! We appreciate each and every one of you and encourage all of you to reach out to council with ideas or concerns that you have. We speak to each and every one of them. You are our voice!

For now, please be patient. Know that we are doing everything that we can to bring Schwarzwald Lutheran Church weekly worship and will continue to do so. These times are difficult and things change daily. Our current plan may look different tomorrow. Know that all decisions are in your interest. We are strong. We are a community. We are evangelists. We are servants to God.

Finally, a very special thank you to Pastor Steve, Diane Hafer, Ben D'Annibale, Kevin Kennedy, Church council members, our ministries and committees which continue to work- and most importantly, all of you.

Have a wonderful day and may God's Peace Be With All Of You.

COMMUNION IN CORONAVIRUS TIMES

While the pre-packaged Communion "pod" makes the distribution of the elements a safer process, as with everything else, it introduces its own problems. Some have found the packages somewhat difficult to open.

To open pre-packaged Communion pod:

Pick at the tab of clear plastic at the top to remove the wafer. You can then hold or consume the wafer. Then lift up the tab from the bottom, creamer-like container. Once opened, you can consume the juice.

Providing your own Communion elements

Whether you are worshiping in-person at our outdoor service, or joining the church in Communion over Zoom, you may choose to have your own bread and cup available. The bread or cracker can be of any type. While the "fruit of the vine" - wine or grape juice - may be preferred, in these days of trusting God in so many ways, we can trust God to be present in other beverages as well.

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

. . from Kathy and Greg Galtere / *Hack Away At Hunger*—On behalf of the golfers of Reading Country Club and the Exeter-RCC Partnership, we would like to thank everyone involved with the 10th Annual *Hack Away at Hunger* Golf Tournament. Because of your generosity, we are able to give local food pantries over \$15,700. This contribution will go far to help families put food on the tables and not have to choose between that and other expenses. Thanks again for being a sponsor for the tournament. Your support is greatly appreciated.

. . from Family Promise—We would like to give thanks for the continued and generous support your church has given to Family Promise of Berks County over the years. The investments you have made to help us fulfill our mission are immensely appreciated. Your recent donation enabled us to provide care and services to hard working families who have fallen on difficult times. Thanks again from the board of directors, staff and families that need a helping hand in crisis. We will continue to provide help for today and hope for tomorrow.

. . from Exeter Area Food Pantry—On behalf of the Steering Committee of the EAFF, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous donation. Your generosity will help to make a difference in the lives of people in need in our community.

. . from our Youth—Thank you for supporting the youth yard sale! Your donations of items and time towards the event helped raise over \$1800 for the youth to attend the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN. On behalf of the youth and their families— THANK YOU!!!!!! The remaining donated items will be going to local charities. This event was a beautiful display of community in challenging times. Thank you for your support.

. . from Evangelism Committee—Thank you to all the donors from the blood drive held August 15. We were able to collect 20 units of blood, which is four more than had been projected!

. . from Social Ministry Committee—Thank you to everyone who donated school supplies. Six bags of supplies plus supplies obtained with two Thrivent Action Teams led by Marlene Harlow and Carol Gunzelmann were delivered to Reformation Lutheran Church for distribution. During a busy 2 hours, 200 bags of elementary and secondary school supplies were handed out for students. Great work!

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

If the only prayer you say is "Thank you," that is enough.

~Meister Eckhart

You have heard this from me a lot – because I think it is true! And it is especially true in this year, when despite the ups and downs of the Coronacoaster, your generosity has meant that Schwarzwald Lutheran Church has not suffered the financial instability that many other churches have. This allows us to continue many of the things we planned (within the circumstances) and to think about how we can continue to grow and evolve to reach more deeply and widely with Christ's message. This would be impossible without generosity such as yours.

Thank you!

Financial information, Year-to-date as of 7/31/20, Budget vs. Actual

Overall Budget \$-22,552	Current Envelopes Budget \$124,036
Actual \$-15,500	Actual \$125,265

PERSONAL CARE DONATIONS

The Social Ministry Committee is coordinating the donation of personal care items to be distributed to Safe Berks and Hope Rescue Mission. A bin will be placed in the church office breezeway to hold these items. Please notify the church office 610-779-3480, administrator@schwarzwaldlutheran.org or Mary Phillips 610-779-5875, maryphillips@ptd.net when you drop off your donations. During these uncertain times, our generosity is needed more than ever. Let's show our gratitude with giving hearts. Thank you.

Please donate for men and women with products appropriate for all hair and skin types. Personal care items requested: soap, body wash, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, comb, razor, shaving cream, deodorant, lip balm

Reading-Berks 39th Annual CROP Hunger Walk is GOING VIRTUAL!!!
Sunday, October 11, 2020



This year, because of the coronavirus pandemic and the need for physical distancing, we are introducing our VIRTUAL CROP Hunger Walk. We are encouraging small groups or individuals to WALK for this important cause. Walk in your neighborhood! Walk around your church! Walk in your home! Walk on October 11th or any time before then. We strongly encourage you to register for our Reading-Berks Walk by going online to www.crophungerwalk.org/readingpa and following the instructions. Encourage your sponsors to donate online as well. If you have questions or need more information, please call Dawn at 610-223-2305 or go to www.crophungerwalk.org/readingpa OR check out our Facebook page! This link will get you there: <https://www.facebook.com/Reading-Berks-CROP-Hunger-Walk-332030921042472/> Thanks!



SUNDAY SCHOOL

We are eagerly awaiting the day when we can safely return to in-person Sunday School with our youngest members. We have many ideas currently in the mix and will update everyone as quickly as we can once a clear plan is established. Sunday School will continue in some capacity through the fall. Keep watching for email updates from Crystal!

Our children have really enjoyed our weekly mystery readers! We would love to continue this initiative! Please submit a video of you reading your favorite Bible Story to Crystal at clw1481@aol.com or 610-451-2983. Any adult may submit a video!

Weekly Walk-in Wednesdays MOVING TO MONTHLY THURSDAYS

We're looking to find a time and day that more folks would be available to join us. **Please join us for Walk-in Thursdays 9am-10am on the second Thursday of the each month!** Come on in and chat with anyone who decides to drop by! Join by Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83716527099> or call +1-929-205-6099. See you there!

AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNOLOGY NEEDED!

Do you have skills, experience, or interest in Audio-Visual technology? Schwarzwald wants you! Call us at 610-779-3480 to help us move into a new era in SLC worship.

EXETER CARES website has been established, at www.exetercares.net If you need help, or if you can give help (including donations), go here!

Go to YouTube's "Schwarzwald Lutheran Church" channel or our Facebook page or our website: schwarzwaldlutheran.org.

The Sunday bulletin can be found there for the worship service, as well as hymns for the recorded worship.

(Please note: bulletin emails and Facebook postings may be sent anytime between Friday and Sunday)



PRAYER GROUP

The Prayer Group meets via telephone every other Tuesday at 6:00 PM.

The September dates are the 8th and 22nd.

Please contact Joanne Rutherford for additional information.

610-406-9355 or jmr14290@gmail.com

Outdoor Worship

Weather permitting and no new COVID-19 impositions

Please note the following:

First and foremost, if you are not feeling well or have reason to think you have been recently exposed to the coronavirus, please don't come. And if you don't feel safe or you are at a high risk, don't come. Worshiper safety is our highest priority.

- Ushers and markers will indicate where to park and sit.
- Bring your own lawn chair(s).
- Six feet will separate family units.
- Wear a mask. A limited supply is available if you forget one. Masks may be removed once you are seated.
- There will not be any congregational singing.
- Please no lingering before or after worship. We want you to stay safe.
- An accessible Port-a-Potty is onsite.
- Bulletins will be sent via email for you to print.
- If you want to save a stamp, you can drop off your offering envelope at the service.
- You will still be able to watch recorded worship services!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Zachary Hoover, Clarence Swoyer, Jr.
- 2 Barry Ruppert, Larry Yoder, Patricia Bechtel,
Amanda Giannotti, Zachary Vlasak
- 3 Shannon Darlington, Emma Scalese,
Adam Crotty, Jillian Crotty
- 4 Joshua Boone, Crystal Jordan, Nancy Wolf, Frank Kerber
- 5 Elise Kohler, Michael Jordan, III
- 7 David Johns
- 9 Richard Sassaman
- 14 Gary Tice
- 15 Miles Gibson, Janice Stanislaw, Iris Ringler
- 16 Fred Mohr, Jr., Lisa Lutz, Jennifer Oswald
- 17 Mary Phillips
- 18 Marcia Holbrook
- 19 Cynthia Mohr, Diane Cataldi, Gannon Harlow
- 21 Don Gunzelmann, Kaila Zenger, Thomas Herb
- 22 Barbara Herbst, Patricia Grim, Curtis Prince, Jr., John Dobbins
- 23 Cynthia Lott, Penny Kroznuski, Amy Schaeffer, Tanner Karas
- 24 Jennifer Strausser, Steven Moyer
- 26 Karen Darlington, Lori Bauer
- 27 Courtney Marquard, Edward Kroznuski
- 28 Dennis Karas
- 29 William Jaeger, Brian Crotty

If your birthday is in September and is not listed here, please call the church office,
610-779-3480,
with your full birth date M/D/Y.

FROM WEST BERKS MISSION DISTRICT

Ministry during the pandemic continues as we find new ways to be the church in these trying times. Many of our WBMD congregations have been finding new and varied ways to stay connected with members as well as seeking opportunities to share best practices with other church leaders as we move through this ever-changing storm. Congregations have developed new opportunities for worship – some have been streaming online services or gathering together through Zoom, learning as they go to find what works best for their faith community; some started drive-in worship services on parking lots; as shelter-in-place orders have loosened, several have started having worship outdoors and some small groups are meeting inside; others stay connected through weekly mailings and/or social media posts. Today's church may not be the same – but it certainly is not CLOSED! People are regularly being fed, both spiritually and literally. In addition to worship opportunities, many congregations have grown or initiated new ways of sharing food with neighbors in need in partnership with Helping Harvest. Community meals are still being shared but in take-out form. People are reaching out and checking on others to be sure folks have what they need and so they know they are not forgotten. God is truly among us in so many forms of Christian service being carried out daily. Even in the midst of this tumultuous time filled with so many unknowns, we are still cared for and blessed by a loving God!

Pastors have been gathering each month for Zoom meetings with Bishop Zeiser and synod leaders and also, with other ministers from the WBMD. They have been sharing what they've been doing – what has worked well and what has been challenging. They remind each other that we are in this together and support each other by discussing what is best for all; especially during the phase of reopening some churches. Our congregations vary greatly – in attendance size, in property, in numbers and ages of families that participate, and in leadership structures and personalities. We won't all do things the same way at the same time but we must all keep the safety and well-being of each person and our love for our neighbor as a priority in all we do. We must stay aware of current medical advice and state recommendations for keeping gatherings as safe as possible. We must remain vigilant to keep this virus at bay until there is medical support available through viable treatments and/or a vaccine.

We will continue to be God's faithful people during this challenging time as long as it may prove to be, remembering always that God walks with us, offering his presence and strength to help and guide us, as we seek to do his will. ***Be well friends! Stay safe! And may the peace of the Lord be with!***

5th Annual Toy Give for the Children of the Exeter Area Food Pantry

2020 Revised Plan

As many of you are aware, Schwarzwald Lutheran has sponsored a Toy Give for the children of the Exeter Area Food Pantry for the past several years. During this time, we have collected toys with the help of most of our local churches and several businesses. The Pantry families had the opportunity to come to a special Christmas celebration and hand pick toys for their children. The celebration is a time of joy for both the families and the volunteers. Covid-19 and the regulations that accompany gatherings has forced us to take a step back from this format for 2020. (Hopefully, we will be back to normal for Christmas 2021).

Even with the challenges that are currently a part of our day to day life, we need to be mindful of the children and do all that we can to make sure that they have the opportunity to experience the joys of Christmas morning. The number of families in 19606 and 19508 who are currently being served by the Pantry is close to double the number of families served this time last year. This means MANY children.

A new plan needed to be developed to accommodate the large number of children (we are anticipating 400+ children) and the distribution challenges. The gifts will need to be distributed “drive through” style with volunteers placing items in the trunks of cars.

We are requesting that you consider filling a shoe box (do you remember Operation Christmas Child?) with the types of things you might use to fill a Christmas Stocking. You can choose a boy or girl (or both) in the following age categories: 0-2, Toddler 3-5, School Age 6-10, School Age 11-13, and High School 14-18. (**Ideas for filling the boxes is on the next page**). Our goal is to provide each child with a box.

We will be providing an Amazon Wish List with items you may purchase if you do not wish to fill a box yourself. You can purchase the items online, have them shipped to the church and volunteers will use the items to fill additional boxes. We will also list games, puzzles and books that can be purchased and shipped the same way. These items will be distributed to the families in addition to the Shoeboxes.

Donations of hats, gloves and scarves are also appreciated.

For those who prefer a monetary contribution, please send a check made payable to Schwarzwald Lutheran Church (marked “Toy Give”) and send it to 250 Church Lane Road, Reading, PA 19606

***If you have a Thrivent Project that you have not used yet this calendar year and wish to use it for this effort, please let me know and I will help you.

If you have questions please contact Doris Jaeger at 610-780-9825 or bdj43077@msn.com. You may also call the church office at 610-779-3480.



Exeter Area Food Pantry Christmas Shoebox Ideas

You may use an adult shoebox, a box similar in size to a shoebox or a plastic shoebox that can be purchased at most retailers. Please wrap the box and lid separately and tie or rubber band them together when your box is filled. Place a note on the outside of the box with the age and gender of the child the box was prepared for.

All Ages: Chocolate or novelty candy, healthy snacks, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, hat, gloves, socks, age appropriate books.

Age 0-2 Boy or Girl: stuffed toy, blocks, soft dolls, soft trucks, small Fisher Price items such as play phones or keys, lotion, soap, bubble bath, tub toys, Baby Shark items, baby snacks, etc.

Age 3-5

Boy: cars, trucks, boats, dinosaurs, Nerf toys, Paw Patrol, SuperHero action figures, etc.

Girl: dolls, Barbies, small toy animals, Little People, hair accessories, toy jewelry, dress up, etc.

Boy or Girl: ball, crayons, markers, coloring books, stickers, flash cards with numbers and letters, tub toys, magnetic letters and numbers, Baby Shark items, stickers, Play Dough, stuffed toys

Age 6-10:

Boys: cars, trucks, small Lego sets, baseball, tennis ball, yo-yo, Hacky Sack, mini Etch A Sketch, sunglasses, action figures, paper airplanes, etc.

Girls: doll, Barbie, Littlest Pet Shop, Calico Critters, hair accessories, nail polish, jewelry, etc.

Boy or Girl: craft Items, colored pencils, markers, puzzles, small travel games, glue, glitter, stickers, stuffed toy

Age 11-13

Boy: small Legos, balls of any kind, baseball/football cards, etc.

Girl: Hair accessories, magazines, books, small Legos, nail polish, bracelets, brush, diary, photo book

Boy or Girl: card games, notepads, notebooks, colored pencils, pastels, paints, art kits, stuffed toy, gift cards for Walmart, Target or Amazon.

Age 14-18

Boys: small electronic games, balls, comic books, sports team items, socks, etc.

Girls: make-up, nail polish, magazines, hair care items, socks, hair accessories, diary, photo book, etc.

Boy or Girl: Card games, games, puzzles, colognes, body wash, travel sized games, special notepads, Gift Cards to Walmart, Target, Amazon, or area food chains.

Please consider inserting a note wishing your child a Merry Christmas and letting them know that they are in your thoughts and prayers. Do not sign your name.

FILLED SHOEBOXES MAY BE DROPPED AT THE CHURCH. PLEASE PLACE THEM IN THE BOX PROVIDED IN THE OFFICE BREEZEWAY FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR OFFICE STAFF. THE BOX WILL BE EMPTIED PROMPTLY.

If you have any questions, please contact Doris Jaeger at 610-780-9825 or the Schwarzwald Lutheran Church Office at 610-779-3480.

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Schwarzwald LUTHERAN CHURCH

Serving and Loving Christ Since 1737

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Join our family, share God's love.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Pulpit and Pew

SEPTEMBER 2020

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