

Happy Birthday to:

Jeanene Hill—Feb. 4
 James Scott Eshelman—Feb. 28
 Joe Smith—March 19
 Lois Beam—March 20
 Mim Spence—March 30
 Charlotte O'Neill—April 5
 Dale Creed—April 30



Did we miss anyone? If you are a “Senior” Member over age 55 and wish to be included on the birthday list, please call the church office at 610-856-7242.

PARISH REGISTER:**Baptisms:**

9/22/21—**Hailey Quinn Smith**, daughter of Kyle and Denise Smith
 9/26/21—**Isabelle Elizabeth Carr**, daughter of Samuel and Bree Carr
 1/16/22—**Kieran Hawk Lawrey**, son of Shawn and Elizabeth Lawrey

Membership Losses:Transfer:

1/31/22—William and Janet Haney to St. Andrew's Ev. Lutheran Church, Audubon, PA

Deaths/Funerals:

11/30/21—**David J. Trout**, 65. A Memorial Service will be held at the convenience of the family.

12/12/21—**Elsie I. Trout**, 99. Service was held at Dengler Funeral Home with burial in Forest Hills Cemetery.

1/30/22—**Louise A. Styer**, 63. A Memorial Service will be held at the convenience of the family.

Our missionary, **Dr. Mark Jacobson**, passed away on February 11, 2022. Dr. Jacobson recently returned to his U.S. home after serving as a physician in Arusha, Tanzania, for almost 40 years. He continued to work parttime during his treatment for a brain tumor.

The Parish Digest

FROM THE PASTOR:

LENT 2022



“⁸And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.”

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

Dearest Friends in Christ,

The season of Lent is soon upon us. Lent is a season of repentance; turning us toward God and asking for God's goodness to wipe away our sins and show us how to live anew. Lent is a season of thanksgiving; turning us toward God in thanksgiving for the many ways in which God bestows mercy and grace upon grace in our lives. Lent is also a season of hope; turning us toward Easter and the abundant life God will offer us through the Three Days.

To that end, this year's Joint Midweek Zoom Lenten Services will seek to help us turn toward God's blessed abundance by focusing on five divine attributes drawn from the Gospel texts for Lent: faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and love. Each evening service is designed for sustained reflection on the gospel in the context of contemplative prayer, readings, silence, and song.

Also, as part of our celebration of God's blessed abundance in our lives, our joint Lenten offerings this year will be going to support the work of the **Afghan Sponsor Circle of Greater Reading Area (ASCGRA)** - a volunteer-led group that is helping to resettle an Afghan refugee family in our area. The ASCGRA (which includes several Robeson church members) is helping our US government's emergency response to identify placement for a family of Afghan allies who were evacuated to this country after (cont. on page 4)

Please call or email staff members.

Rev. Michael Ware, Pastor

Home: 610-875-0015 Office: 610-856-7242

Email address: revmikeware@gmail.com

Louise Wilson, Minister of Music—Phone: 610-273-3911

Email address: weeziecow2@yahoo.com

Becka Malanios, DCE

Phone- 610- 507- 3657 Email: becka.malanios@gmail.com

Debbie DeMarco, Parish Secretary

Home: 610-856-7386 Office: 610-856-7242

Email address: ddemarco@dejazzd.com

Julia Bond, Preschool Manager— Phone: 610-856-7613;

Email: preschool610@dejazzd.com

Don Freeman, Maintenance and Sexton—Phone: 610-856-7349

Council Officers:

Mike Wisniewski, President

Julia Bond, Vice President

Jessica Shepherd, Secretary

*Dorothy Martin, Treasurer

*Kay Good, Treasurer Special Funds

*Lori Sifford, Financial Secretary

*do not actually serve on council

Other Council Members:

Karen Kercher Mary Karpa

Joyce Mauchline Rex Miller

ROBESON LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL is now accepting applications for the 2022-2023 school year. Please contact the preschool for an application and/or tour of the school. 610-856-7613 or preschool613@dejazzd.com.

TREASURER'S REPORT: 2021-2022

November Income:	\$13,025.15
November Expenses:	\$14,146.19
December Income:	\$15,287.77
December Expenses:	\$20,334.95
January Income:	\$10,887.88
January Expenses:	\$13,143.69

Unpaid Bills as of 1/31/22: none

Checking Account balance 1/31/22: \$51,226.59

-Dorothy Martin, Treasurer

SPECIAL FUNDS REPORT: as of 1/31/21

Checking Account balance: \$43,462.89

-Kay Good, Treas. Spec. Funds



THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE SIGNED UP FOR E-GIVING. E-giving is an ongoing service offered here at Robeson Lutheran and was especially helpful during our Covid building shut-down. In addition to your regular giving you can now give to the Youth or Endowment Fund as well. You can continue to access the egiving site at members.myeoffering.com or through our website, www.robesonlutheranchurch.org and look for the **“Donate Now”** button. Thank you for considering this giving opportunity that allows you to be good stewards of God’s gifts even when we are unable to hold services.

**RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES:
HELP YOUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY:**

Please bring in your used **ink cartridges** (any kind) and we will recycle them at Staples earning \$2 each for the church. These are very much needed in order to get our \$40 worth of free supplies each month.

Cell phones, eyeglasses, and hearing aid batteries also continue to be collected for local ministries.

PLEASE NOTE: The Paper Recycling Bins located at the rear of Hoeffler Hall continue to accept your **newspaper, magazines, office paper, “junk” mail, and cereal type boxes smashed flat.** Please no plastic; take your paper out of the plastic bags before you throw it in the bin. Thanks for your help!

DID YOU KNOW? We have wheelchairs, potty chairs, shower chairs, canes, crutches, and walkers to loan out to anyone who might need one for a time. Please call the church office (610-856-7242) to make arrangements for pick-up of items.

THE HOPE RESCUE MISSION has a collection container on our back lot. They accept men's, women's, and children's clothing and shoes, and pretty much any household goods that are sellable condition (toys, kitchen wares, home decor, etc.). Sellable condition means no rips, stains, broken or missing pieces, and generally working the way it is intended to work. There are a few more guidelines on their website - www.hopeoutlet.org.” Please support the Hope Rescue Mission by bringing your donations to the little blue bin on our back parking lot. They will be appreciated and used to clothe the guests at the mission or sold at their stores to provide finances for the Mission.

Indoor worship for Robeson Lutheran resumes

Beginning Ash Wednesday, March 2, at 4:00 p.m. we will be holding in person worship again. Sunday worship time will be held at **10:30 a.m.** so that we are able to continue online services with the other four churches at **9:00 a.m.** In order to keep everyone as safe as possible during the Covid pandemic, masks, vaccinations, and social distancing are required at all worship services.

In Person Worship Update

Worship Services—Every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

With HOLY COMMUNION on the 1st & 2nd Sundays.



Ash Wednesday Service—March 2, at 4:00 p.m.

PALM SUNDAY - April 10, 10:30 a.m. in person worship with palms. If you are interested in sponsoring the palm branches please contact Debbie at the church office. Cost this year is \$40.



EASTER will be held on **April 17th, in person worship at 10:30 a.m.** We plan to adorn our sanctuary with a variety of flowers again this year. Please watch for further information or call the church office after March 15th if you wish to order flowers for Easter as a memorial or gift.



US forces withdrew from Afghanistan. If you would like more information or to offer further help to this important project, you can contact the ASCGRA team via email afghancircloreading@gmail.com or call the hotline (hosted by our very own Roger and Joyce Mauchline) 484-336-0935. (Please see fundraising information on page 7.)

Our Joint Midweek Zoom Lenten Services will be from 7:30-8:30pm on Wednesday evenings.

Here is the topical Listing for our Wednesday Lenten Evenings:

March 9th – Faithfulness

March 16th – Mercy

March 23rd – Compassion

March 30th – Forgiveness

April 6th – Love

We hope you will join us for this special Lenten Season!

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Michael

Thank You!

A BIG THANK YOU to two of our long-time volunteers who have recently resigned their positions. **Diane Morlock**, Outreach chair and Redner receipts coordinator, has moved to her new home out of the area. We wish Diane well and will miss her! **Lori Sifford** has resigned as our Financial Secretary and Joyce Mauchline has accepted this position (thank you, Joyce). Thank you Lori for serving in this time-consuming, behind the scenes role.

We would like to thank everyone for your gifts to Robeson Lutheran Church through 2021. We have received thank yous from some of the ministries which you have supported. They are most grateful and include:

ELCA Global Mission—missionary work
Reading Pride Celebration
St. Vincent de Paul Society
Local Food Banks

We look forward to supporting these ministries and others in 2022 as we share God's love with others.



THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS:

Our sincere thanks to those members/friends of the congregation who have designated Robeson Lutheran Church as the charity of choice for their Thrivent Choice Dollars. If you have received a letter from Thrivent indicating that you are eligible for this plan, please consider our congregation as you help direct Thrivent Financial's charitable funds.

We are very thankful for the continued contributions in Thrivent Choice Dollars thanks to our members and friends. We have recently received an additional \$143 thanks to John Lauer, Chris Leister, and the Gerace family.

THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS: How can you help organize a fund-raising event and receive \$250 in start up funds? It's easy for Thrivent members if you form a **Thrivent Action Team!** If you would like more information about forming a team for a fundraiser in our church or your community please contact John Lauer (610-286-5986) or the church office (610-856-7242).

REDNERS RECEIPTS:

We thank those of you who continue to use your Redner's cards and mail or drop off your Redner's tapes. Checks for November and January totaled \$173.35. Don't forget to use your Redner's card or put in your phone number linked to the card or we will not receive credit for your receipt. Also, make sure we receive the entire receipt including the 1% save a tape amount at the bottom. Thank you to everyone who saves their tapes and to Diane Morlock for submitting them! **We are looking for someone to take over this fundraiser since Diane has moved and will no longer be submitting the tapes.** Please call Debbie if you would like more information about processing and delivering Redner tapes, 610-856-7242, 610-856-7386, or ddemarco@dejazzd.com.



Robeson Evangelical Lutheran Church

1770-2020

Celebrating 250 Years!

“Keep the Light Shining”

Capital Campaign & Anniversary Celebration
Update



Since Covid-19 has turned our lives and plans upside down, we at Robeson have decided to postpone our Official 250th Anniversary Celebration until **2022** so that we can plan events and celebrations throughout the year. Our two-year Campaign is now a four-year Campaign. That said, I encourage you to join together with me in extending your special endowment offering through E-giving or mail in/drop off offerings as you are able through **October 2022**, when we will hold our big celebration on Reformation Sunday.

This will also provide more time to allow our members to participate in the anniversary book. Lucille Freeman, who works with Reick’s printing, is in charge of this project. She is still working with members who would like to purchase and create their own page / advertisement with pictures or a caption for the anniversary book. Please contact Lucille if interested: Phone—**610-856-7349 or 484-219-0596**;
Email: lfreeman@riecksprinting.com



THE LITTLE LIBRARY: Thank you to Bonnie Lauer for continuing to coordinate the Little Library. Our free little community library (located next to the church and parsonage), continues to provide books for young and old. Take a book, donate a book.

Connect with Us via Zoom

Sunday Worship, 10:30 am

(Advent bulletin & hymns included in this mailing.)

Wednesday Evening Bible Study, 7:30 pm

By Phone (Landline or Cell), please dial:

1. +1 (929)-436-2866 This is a long distance call to New York
U.S. Toll-free: (877) 853-5247 or (888) 788-0099
reserved for people who do not have a phone plan that covers the cost of long distance calls
2. When prompted, dial Meeting ID^o: 593 216 546#
3. When prompted, enter meeting password^o: 1224#
4. You now have joined the meeting.
5. You will be automatically muted. *Please remain muted, unless you want to speak.*
To unmute, dial *6. To mute again, dial *6.
6. To leave the call, simply hang up.

Video Conference:

Download Zoom App

Join Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID^o: 593 216 546

Password: 1224

Zoom Opportunities: (See page 6 for more details.)

Weekly Sunday Worship at 9:00 a.m.



Midweek Lenten Services,
Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

Youth and Young Adults Bible Study
& Hang Out Time on the fourth Saturday of the month
at 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, March 9 – BINGO on Zoom at 10:30 AM

Fun & Fellowship along with the chance to win a small prize. Contact Robin at 610-375-9216 if you need a Bingo card or instruction on how to log in.

Online Zoom services and activities (continued)

Midweek Lenten Series 2022 — Turning Toward God's Abundance —



Lent is a season of repentance, turning to God and asking for God's goodness to wipe away our sins and show us how to live anew. Lent also turns us toward Easter and the abundant life God will offer us through the Three Days.

This Midweek Lenten Service turns us toward God's abundance by focusing on five divine attributes drawn from the Gospel texts for Lent: faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and love. Each service is designed for sustained reflection on the gospel in the context of contemplative prayer, readings, silence, and song.

Wednesdays

**March 9; March 16; March 23; March 30; April 6
from 7:30 to 8:30 PM**

Connect through Zoom — Meeting ID: 593 216 546
Password: 1224

**Youth & Young Adult
Bible Study and Hang Out Time
Continues with Pastor Michael**

**4th Saturday of the Month
Feb. 26 & March 26, 11:00 am — 12:00 noon**

Join us for a 30 minute Bible Study
and 30 minutes to catch up on life.
All are welcome!

*For 6th grade through
College Level*

*If you are interested in being part of this group,
please email revmikeware@gmail.com for the Zoom meeting
information. You are welcome to join at any time!*



**PLEASE HELP ROBESON
LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL by
supporting these Family Meal
Popups!**

Take the night off of cooking dinner and help support the preschool at the same time – it's a win, win!

We had such positive feedback from the meal pop up we hosted in December which benefited the Children's Home of Reading, that we have decided to hold one on **March 16th with Mimmo's (deadline to order is March 15 at 9 p.m.) and one on April 13th with Gourmand Café** to benefit our preschool this time. This is such a great way to support the preschool with a fundraiser, support a locally owned restaurant, a local charity and the bonus is that you don't have to cook dinner that evening – it's already done for you. The preschool will receive between 10 & 15%, which will all go towards things for the preschool classes (curriculum materials, new toys, games, classroom upgrades, etc.).

Meals can be picked up here in the church parking lot between 5:15 and 5:45 the day of the meal pop up. Online ordering makes it easy and pickup was very smooth at our last one.

Please share this with family & friends. The more meals sold benefits many children, a locally owned business, a charity, and so much more in our community.

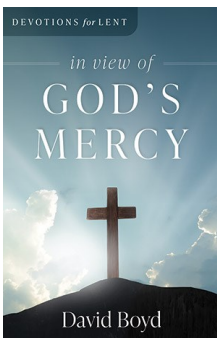
Order by going to **www.DoItLocalBerks.com**

- Click on Family Meal PopUps
- Use the online calendar to find the December PopUp for Robeson Lutheran Church and Preschool on March 16 and April 13 and click on those events.
- Choose your meal(s) and check out (preorders only!)
- On your popup date, you will get a reminder for pickup email. Simply drive to Robeson Lutheran Church and your meal will be ready for you! Easy, Fun, and Quick Curbside Service! (No need to get out of the car)

Thank you for supporting our preschool and Family Owned Businesses of Reading!

Lenten Information:

Flowers for Easter: We will again adorn our sanctuary with a variety of Easter plants purchased from Spring Garden Farms. Prices and more information will be available in the near future....stay tuned!



Devotions for Lent will be available at the church beginning on Ash Wednesday. This year's booklet is titled *In View of God's Mercy* by David Boyd. In these devotions we take a look at our lives in view of God's mercy toward us through the sacrifice of his Son for us on the cross. Jesus helps us to see and experience the richness of God's mercy in his life, death, and resurrection.

We, in turn, are called by God to be living sacrifices for him, displaying our commitment to him in word and deed. These devotions help us to set our sights on what is meaningful and holy in our faith walk with God.

Offering for Lent: A Lenten Offering envelope is included with this mailing. As indicated in Pastor Michael's Lenten letter, this year's offering will be shared with the **Afghan Sponsor Circle of Greater Reading Area (ASCGRA)** to help resettle an Afghan refugee family in our area. These refugees were there to help our troops, now we are in a position to help them. Please give what you are able. Every gift will be greatly appreciated.



Will You Be Part of This Fundraising Event of The Afghan Sponsor Circle of Greater Reading Area (ASCGRA)

Tuesday, March 8, 4:00-8:00 pm

In case of severe winter weather, the date will be changed to Thursday, March 10, 4:00-8:00 pm

The ASCGRA is hosting a fundraising meal at the Wyomissing Family Restaurant and Bakery, 1245 Penn Avenue, Wyomissing, PA 19610. The Wyomissing Family Restaurant and owner Hamid Chaudhry are generously sponsoring this fundraising dinner, and will donate 100% of the proceeds to our group to assist an Afghan family resettle in our area by getting them situated with housing, furniture, food, transportation, and other basic needs.

The menu for dinner that evening will include an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner of:

Fried Chicken	Fish
Lemon Herbed Chicken	Cheeseburgers
Mashed Potatoes	Pasta & Vegetables
A variety of desserts & soft drinks.	

It is your choice whether you eat at the restaurant or pick-up a meal curbside.

Tickets for the meal are \$20 each and can be purchased:

- ♦ Online through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/afghan-refugee-family-benefit-dinner-tickets-262375430977?aff=ebdsoporgprofile> (a processing fee of \$1.72 per ticket will be applied)
- ♦ By emailing afghancirlereading@gmail.com to purchase tickets by check or cash
- ♦ Don't have a computer or smart phone? Contact Kathy Yenser at 610-301-2191 to purchase tickets.

Want to provide a monetary donation for the work of ASCGRA?

- ♦ Donate through the Thrivent Action Team of Robeson Lutheran Church at <https://thrivent.cotribute.co/events/613832/detail>
- ♦ Write a check with "Afghan Circle" on the envelope and/or in the memo line and mail to Robeson Lutheran Church, 3520 Plow Road, Mohnton, PA 19540.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Pastoral Reflection

“No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great.” — John Chrysostom (4th Century Bishop of Constantinople)



As we enter into the month of March, we will be leaving the church season of Epiphany, and with the festival of Ash Wednesday on the 2nd, we will officially enter into the season of Lent.

Truth be told, Lent is one of my favorite seasons of the church year as it provides the opportunity and encouragement, perhaps more than any other church season, to focus on spiritual discipline and repentance; in the hopes that we will seek to grow and mature in our Christian walk. Unfortunately, there are often two particular misunderstandings about this special season in the church year that can get in the way of such spiritual growth.

Misunderstanding 1 – Lent is solely a time of sorrow and sadness.

While the season of Lent certainly has a penitential character to it, in the ancient church, Lent was a time of intensive preparation for those who were soon to be baptized into the Church during the upcoming celebration of Easter.

The true purpose behind such penitence and confession was to help the candidates focus on the teachings of the faith and to better understand what it meant to become part of the church through the waters of baptism. This is one of the reasons that in our day, the church recognizes Lent more as a season of baptismal renewal rather than simply a time for penitence and sorrow.

Misunderstanding 2 – Lent is all about giving something up for forty days.

Once again, in preparation for baptism, the candidates in the early church often fasted as part of their spiritual journey. The Christians of the time saw fasting as something which added fervor to their prayers, as well as made room for the reception of the Holy Spirit. However, the early church recognized that such fasting was never to become a matter of formality (see Isaiah 58:1-14 and Matthew 6:16-18 in reference to fasting.)

Now fasting can be a very helpful practice, however, if it does not somehow seek to lead to growth in spiritual formation or practice, then such fasting falls outside the true purpose of Lent. Indeed, as some in the ancient church argued, if fasting didn't make you a better neighbor to others, then perhaps it was better not to fast at all, but rather to perform charitable works.

To that end, it might be a more beneficial practice in Lent to take on a spiritual discipline rather than to give something up. In other words, instead of giving up chocolate or alcohol or meat for forty days, rather devote yourself to regular prayer for your neighbors, or reach out to those in need around you and offer forty days of service and kindness. (Another great option which our congregations are working on this Lent is to help sponsor bringing an Afghan family into our local area – a truly neighborly act!) After all, our Lenten goal is to grow deeper in our faith through greater understanding of the gift we have in the waters of our baptism, and through living out our faith in the world.

And so, dear friends, I pray that this may help you to understand a little better what Lent really means for us in the Church, and that you may be encouraged to focus on what it will mean for you to live into your baptism and practice your faith during this wonderful season of Lent.

Pastors Rob, Bill, Burl, Sonja and Michael