

Readings for January 2021

January 3rd:
Second Sunday of
Christmas
First Reading
[Jeremiah 31:7-14](#)
Psalm
[Psalm 147:12-20](#)
Second Reading
[Ephesians 1:3-14](#)
Gospel
[John 1:\[1-9\] 10-18](#)

January 10th:
Baptism of Our Lord
First Reading
[Genesis 1:1-5](#)
Psalm
[Psalm 29](#)
Second Reading
[Acts 19:1-7](#)
Gospel
[Mark 1:4-11](#)

January 17th:
Second Sunday after
Epiphany
First Reading
[1 Samuel 3:1-10 \[11-20\]](#)
Psalm
[Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18](#)
Second Reading
[1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#)
Gospel
[John 1:43-51](#)

January 24th:
Third Sunday after
Epiphany
First Reading
[Jonah 3:1-5, 10](#)
Psalm
[Psalm 62:5-12](#)
Second Reading
[1 Corinthians 7:29-31](#)
Gospel
[Mark 1:14-20](#)

January 31st:
Fourth Sunday after
Epiphany
First Reading
[Deuteronomy 18:15-20](#)
Psalm
[Psalm 111](#)
Second Reading
[1 Corinthians 8:1-13](#)
Gospel
[Mark 1:21-28](#)

JERUSALEM JOURNAL

"As followers of Jesus, we serve our neighbors locally and globally."

January 2021

PASTOR'S PONDERABLES

JANUARY 2021

Dear Disciples:

"His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans, and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He is brilliant, kind of profound and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college.

Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students but are not sure how to go about it.

One day Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt, and wild hair. The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now, people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer to the pulpit, and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. By now the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick.

About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. A godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy.

The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of a man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breath-

ing. The minister can't even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone.

Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister gains control, he says, 'What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget.'

Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever read."
(this story was shared with me by a family member August 21, 2008; source unknown).

May we all be the only Bible some people will read in this New Year of 2021.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Bonnie Oplinger

Thank you

Dear Jerusalem Lutheran Church,

Last week I received a surprise in the mail—a check for \$150.00 and a sweet note from Pastor Oplinger thanking me for training Shelby.

I never expected to be reimbursed for helping the new Office Administrator after I started my new job.

Thank you for the gift and I really appreciate my (short) time with you.

Merry Christmas,

Tracy Lagaza

Lititz-Warwick Community Chest Food Bank

Donations for the month of **January:**
liquid dish soap (to do dishes in the sink)

**shampoo and conditioner (2 in 1 products are
fine)**

toothbrushes - adult and child.

Items can be placed in the collection box in the
narthex.

THANK YOU!



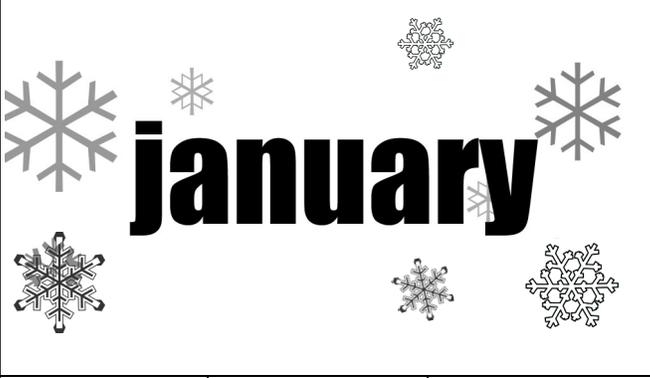
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Roger L. Kurtz

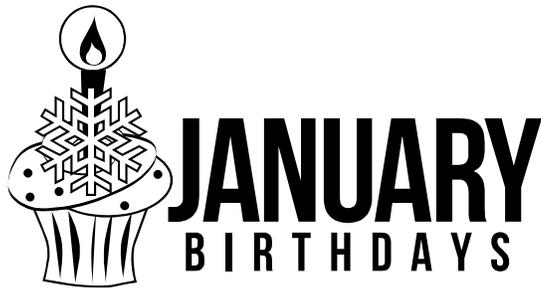
On January 6, the Christian Church will observe Epiphany, a feast day celebrating the manifestation of God to the world through the human form of his Son, Jesus Christ. One of the oldest feast days on the Christian calendar, Epiphany was introduced into Western Christianity in the 4th century. The term “epiphany” comes from a Greek word meaning “appearance” or “revelation” and is linked with the visit of the wise men to the Christ child (Matthew 2:1-12). It was through the Magi that Jesus revealed himself to the Gentiles.

Anticipating our celebration of the Christmas season, information was included in the December newsletter regarding the background of “O Little Town of Bethlehem” and its ties to Pennsylvania. The author of another popular carol appropriate for Epiphany also had connections to our commonwealth. “We Three Kings of Orient Are” is the best-known hymn written by John Henry Hopkins Jr. (1820-1891). The carol is not included in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, but Hopkins’ one-stanza communion hymn “Come with Us, O Blessed Jesus” can be found on page 501. Hopkins composed both the text and tune of “We Three Kings of Orient Are” in 1857 as part of a Christmas pageant for his nieces and nephews. The carol was first published in the author’s *Carols, Hymns and Songs*, 1863. Hopkins originally intended the hymn to be sung by three male voices, with each representing one of the three wise men. The first and last stanzas were to be sung by all three as “verses of praise,” while the intermediate stanzas were to be sung as solos, with each king explaining the gift he was offering the baby Jesus.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1820, Hopkins was the eldest son of pioneer parents. His father was born in Dublin, Ireland, and his mother in Hamburg, Germany. Hopkins’ father enjoyed success in an amazing number of diverse occupations: ironmaster, school teacher, lawyer, and clergyman. His career in the priesthood culminated in appointments as the first bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont and the eighth Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Like his father, Hopkins Jr. eventually settled on a career in the ministry. After graduating from the University of Vermont, he spent time as a journalist, law student, and tutor before attending General Theological Seminary in New York City, where he became the school’s first instructor in church music. Hopkins founded and edited the *Church Journal* from 1853 to 1868. During this time, he composed a number of hymns, anthems, and service music settings, and became a leader in the development of hymnody in the mid-19th century Episcopal Church. After serving as rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Plattsburgh, New York, Hopkins became rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1876. He remained in this position until his retirement in 1887. One of the greatest honors of his life was delivering the eulogy at the funeral of President Ulysses S. Grant in 1885.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
						
3 2nd Sunday After Christmas	4	5 3:00pm Finance Committee Meeting	6 	7	8	9 National Human Trafficking Awareness Day
10 Baptism of Our Lord	11 <div style="border: 2px solid black; background-color: #00FF00; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Deadline for Committee reports for the Annual Report </div>	12	13	14	15 	16 Lititz-Warwick Community Chest Food Bank Dona- tions for the month of January: liquid dish soap, shampoo and conditioner, adult and child tooth- brushes. Thank you!
17 2nd Sunday After Epiphany	18 	19 7:00pm Congregational Council Meeting	20	21	22	23
24 3rd Sunday After Epiphany	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 4th Sunday after Epiphany						

JANUARY CELEBRATIONS



January Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 - Scott Kopp | 14 - Eryn Murphy |
| 5 - Janice Styer | 14 - John David Wissler |
| 6 - Kari Zimmerman | 22 - Allison Clubb |
| 7 - Timothy Sweigart, Jr. | 27 - Lisa Sweigart |
| 7 - Harry Scheid | |

January Wedding Anniversaries

Kenneth & Janet Craley celebrate 54 years on January 6th
Charles & Joy Ackley celebrate 61 years on January 30th



January Anniversaries of Baptism

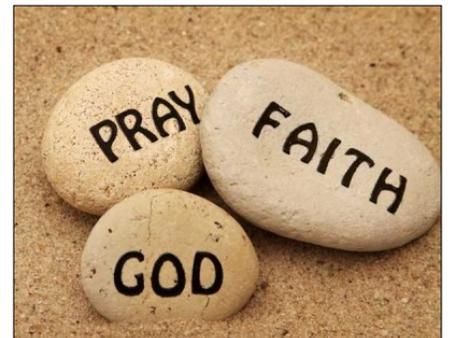


- Cheri Kurtz - January 3, 1954
Lance Morgan - January 9, 2011
Patrick Morgan - January 9, 2011
Janet Craley - January 12, 1958
Brenda Fetter - January 30, 1949
Pastor Bonnie Oplinger - January 30, 1943

Best wishes to those celebrating in January. If your special day was missed, please contact Shelby in the church office - (717)626-8972

PRAYER CONCERNS

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING: Charles Ackley, Chrystine & Andy Anderson, Nate Barnica, Lynn Beard, Tyler Cassel, Spencer Ehrhart, Brenda Fetter, Jacob Garman, Weston Hertzler, Alma Hollingsworth, Lillian Logeman, Ken Martin, Lucille Martin, Mae Maxwell, Doug Michael, Florence Morgan, Norma Rhoads, Lisa Riley, Sandy Irwin, Gerald Styer, Charles Sweigart, Trista Winquist, Evelyn Wissler, Wyatt Wolfe and Craig Young. Be with Military Personnel, First Responders, Healthcare Workers and the helpers and the residents at Nursing Homes.



COVID CORNER

Jean Slaymaker shared her experiences with Covid-19, answering three questions:

1. *What have you learned about yourself during this pandemic?* I have learned how much I miss the in-person contact with both my immediate family and my church family. Before the pandemic, I visited my Mother at Luther Acres every day and sometimes even twice a day. I often think of how lonely she must have been sitting in her room all day and night the last 3 months of her life, and it is hard to accept that I could not be there with her or even have a funeral for her in the church she attended her whole life. For the past two months I have been walking daily on the Lititz to Ephrata Rail Trail, and have found it to be calming and healing.

2. *What have you learned about other people during this pandemic?* I have learned how deeply the pandemic has affected so many others, such as my granddaughter who could not have her college graduation at Lebanon Valley, a close friend who struggles mentally and emotionally afraid to go anywhere, and those who have lost jobs and struggle to keep their businesses afloat. I am thankful for close friends and family who care and keep in contact with me.

3. *What have you learned about God during this pandemic?* I have learned that God is there for me always. He is there to listen to my concerns, and it is reassuring to know God is there.

Lisa Riley shared her experiences during this COVID-19 pandemic:

1. *What have you learned about yourself during this pandemic?* I learned to be very resourceful, and accept what is needed to get through it.

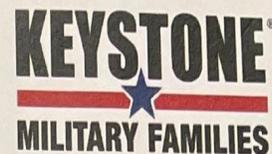
2. *What have you learned about others during this pandemic?* I learned that there are two sides to people. Some understand to get through this to help out. Others do not accept the situation. They are no good to themselves or anyone else. It's amazing that people don't take this seriously.

3. *What have you learned about God during this pandemic?* We go into depth in classes here. Strength and prayer to God gets stronger. You have a better sense of security. Others blame God. God did not create this. Go back to Genesis. God sacrificed his only Son. God doesn't create illnesses or famine. God is there 24/7 and is there for you to talk to and listens. God will get true believers through this.

Love your neighbor

Wear A mask!





Ephrata Office

804 Academy Heights Ave.

PO Box 150

Ephrata, PA

17522

331 Main Street

2nd Floor Rear

Shoemakersville, PA

19555

Dear Stockings For Soldiers Supporter,

As our 11th year of partnering with Keystone Military Families' *Stockings For Soldiers* initiative comes to a close, we want to say **thank you** for your support.

Even in the midst of a pandemic, the generosity of community members like you contributed to another successful *Stockings For Soldiers* effort. This year, we are pleased to announce that we:

- surpassed \$22,000 in monetary donations (to help purchase items needed and cover shipping costs)
- collected 3,000 pounds of stocking stuffer donations (including food, hygiene, and other requested items)
- received over 17,500 signed cards with personalized Christmas greetings showing support to our military personnel

Your participation and support means so much to our military men and women stationed around the world who will not be home for the holidays and may not otherwise get to appreciate the Christmas season.

Once again, we offer our heartfelt thanks for assisting us in supporting KMF's *Stockings For Soldiers* and making this Christmas a special time for our troops.

Sincerely,

Cindy Mellinger

BRC Marketing/Community Relations Coordinator / Stockings For Soldiers Central PA Project Coordinator

cmellinger@brctv.com 717.733.6006 ext. 2551



P.O. Box 148
LITITZ, PA 17543
(717) 627-0770
lwcommunitychest.org

November 29, 2020

Jerusalem Lutheran Church
36 Church Street
Lititz, PA 17543

Dear Jerusalem Lutheran Congregation Members,

On behalf of the board members of the Lititz Warwick Community Chest, I would like to thank you for your recent donation of 32.2 pounds of nonperishable food items plus 343.8 pounds of potatoes to keep the food pantry well stocked. The donation will be used to help local families through a difficult time. We are grateful to be part of a generous and caring community.

Our volunteers continue to deliver nonperishable food from our pantry stock along with fresh meats and perishable vegetables. The Lititz Warwick Community Chest delivered food to 50 families in the month of October. The total number of deliveries for 2020 year to date is 448. We appreciate your support in meeting this need. If you would like to have your donation acknowledged on the LWCC Facebook and Instagram pages, please contact Chrissy at lititzwarwickcommunitychest@gmail.com.

Covid-19 update: the volunteers at Lititz Warwick Community Chest are working hard to support our neighbors in need in this national emergency. We have streamlined the grocery delivery process, and are delivering food to those requesting it. We are grateful for the many donations of food and money from individuals, businesses, churches and organizations. Together, we will get to the other side of this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Beth Trachte, Pantry Coordinator
Lititz Warwick Community Chest
www.lwcommunitychest.org

“NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS”

HOME COMMUNION MEMBERS *A call, dropping a card, or a visit...*

Willis Beam

411 A East Main Street
Leola, PA 17540
(717) 203-4941
Birthday: October 7

Jacob Garman

United Zion Ret. Community
722 Furnace Hills Pike,
Room 130
Lititz, PA 17543
Birthday: April 1

Alma Hollingsworth

Room 602, Muhlenberg Lodge
300 St. Mark Drive
Lititz, PA 17543
Birthday: September 21

Norma Rhoads

149 Owl Hill Rd.
Lititz, Pa 17543
Birthday: September 24

Evelyn Wissler

321 Meadow Valley Road
Lititz, PA 17543
Birthday: April 14

Lisa Riley

WSM - 210 Prince St.
Lancaster, Pa 17603
Birthday: December 25

Lillian Logeman

Keystone Villa, Room 321
100 North State Street
Ephrata, PA 17522
Landline (717) 738-5821
Cell (717) 888-0371
Birthday: August 31



A Thank You to The Congregation at Jerusalem Lutheran Church

Despite all that is seemingly wrong with the world—the scourge of systemic racism, the authoritarian regimes that ruthlessly oppress their people, and the virus known as COVID-19 that has vastly altered how the world, including our church, functions—I am still amazed at how much warmth and benevolence human beings are capable of showing.

I was conferred this kindness when, to my surprise, the congregation at Jerusalem Lutheran Church sent me a gift card. More importantly, perhaps, they wished me well in my continued pursuit of a higher education. (For those who are curious, my first year at Penn State University is going well!) To all members of the church, thank you for not only the gift, but for your unflagging support and kindness. Every time I enter the church, I am bathed in a brilliant mixture of warmth and hospitality, and upon exiting, I invariably feel better than when I entered. This is a testament to not only the power of community through religion, but the power of this congregation. The world may appear to be filled with bad, but, with this congregation—including Pastor Oplinger—I never have to look far to find the good.

Michael Votano

THANK YOU - Thank you for the generous gift card! It will certainly come in handy while I travel & settle in at my first duty station at Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Thanks again and happy holidays!

Joey Hoover



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

October 7, 2020

Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church
36 Church St
Rothville, PA 17543

Dear Friends at Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church,

As you all know, some of your congregation's Mission Quilts were in the port of Beirut awaiting customs clearance when the devastating August 4 explosion took place. As that situation has continued to evolve, I want to make sure you have the full picture of the situation to share with those in your congregation who are involved in this critical ministry of love.

Six days before the blast, a shipment of three containers containing 22,500 Mission Quilts, 3,500 School Kits, 19,500 Personal Care Kits, and 2,250 Baby Care Kits arrived in the port of Beirut. Immediate reports from the port authority following the explosion indicated that the containers could not have survived.

A fourth container had been separated at the port in the United States and was still on the water at the time of the explosion. It was rerouted to the port in Tripoli.

News of the destruction of the three containers generated our first call to you, as we wanted to be able to personally share the news. As we joined in our shared lament, we were deeply inspired and humbled by the determination of all of our quilters and kit-makers to keep going, keep creating, keep serving, keep sharing your love with our neighbors all over the world.

On the morning of August 26, LWR staff received an urgent update from our partner, Anera: they had been given access to the port, and against all odds, the containers appeared to be intact! LWR staff continued to raise concerns that the quilts and kits would need to be assessed for damage and chemical contamination. This incredible news spurred our second call to you, even as we awaited final information about the status of the items.

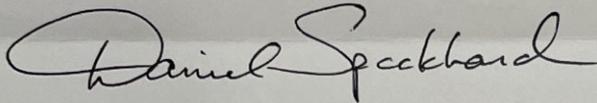
Finally, we learned on September 22 that, upon closer inspection and despite the magnitude of the blast, the seal of the container containing the LWR Mission Quilts and Kits was not broken. The placement in the port, inside a concrete storage building and surrounded by other shipping containers, protected the containers enough to even prevent chemical contamination.

As we awaited this last piece of information, the fourth container cleared customs in Tripoli and travelled over land to join the other three in Anera's Beirut warehouse, once again bringing the full shipment together.

We give thanks to God that the love of hundreds of Lutheran congregations contained in this shipment will be able to be shared with more than 24,000 of our neighbors in Beirut and across the country of Lebanon – many refugees from across the region, and now also those affected by the blast in the heart of Beirut. From the ashes rises a beautiful ray of hope: your love, intact and powerful, in just the right place, at just the right time.

I continue to be inspired by your love, faithfulness and brilliant witness, in countless ways. May God continue to bless your ministry in your community and around the world.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Speckhard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Ambassador Daniel V. Speckhard
President and CEO

PS: Please take a look at the newly designed congregational section of our website at lwr.org/congregations. We have beautiful resources that we hope will make your ministry a little bit easier, and help your congregation see how far their love is reaching!

MARKED FOR LIFE!

Join us for the next few months to study the Gospel of Mark since this is the focus for Year B in the Revised Common Lectionary. This study was developed by Dr. Mark Vitalis-Hoffman, the Greek, Gospels and Epistles professor at the United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg. We will only do one section each month.

An Introduction to the Gospel of Mark

For Openers:

What are some events that have caused the biggest changes in your life?

What one thing in your past do you wish you could change?

If you were able to change one thing in this world, what would it be?

For Your Information:

Read Mark 1.1.

"The beginning..." - It could also be translated, "A beginning..." Compare this phrase to Genesis 1.1.

"The good news" - This Greek word, *euangellizo*, may also be translated as "gospel." Like our English word, "evangelize," which comes from it, It has to do with announcing the good news of salvation and peace. See Isaiah 52.7.

"Christ" - This is a Greek word which is translating the Hebrew word "Messiah" which means "anointed."

The passage like 1 Samuel 10.1 indicates, in ancient Israel, a person was anointed to be made king. Mark 8.29 and 14.61 are two other key places in Mark where this term is used.

"Son of God" - An honorific title denoting a person's relationship to God, especially in view of God's saving actions. Note its use in 1.11; 3.11; 5.7; 9.7; 14.61; and 15.39.

Read Mark 1.2-3.

The quotation is actually a combination of Isaiah 40.3, Exodus 23.20, and Malachi 3.1.

Read Mark 1.4-8.

Compare John the Baptist with Elijah as described in 2 Kings 1.8. Now read Malachi 4.5 and Mark 9.11-13.

Read Mark 1.9-11.

The same word for "torn apart" will be used again in 15.38. Regarding the heavenly voice, see Psalm 2.7 and Isaiah 42.1.

Read Mark 1.12-13. "Immediately" - Note how often this term is used throughout Mark. On Satan, also see Mark 3.23-26; 4:15; and 8.33.

Read Mark 1.14-15.

"After John was arrested..." - See Mark 6.17-29.

Read Mark 1.16-20.

In 1.20 it tells of how James and John left their father. See Mark 10.29-30.

Read Mark 1.21-28.

"Authority" - Also see Mark 11.27-33.

For Your Consideration:

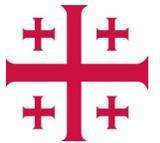
1. Does it make any difference if we do or do not know exactly who wrote this Gospel? Is
2. The two biggest holidays in the church year are Christmas and Easter, but Mark has no birth story and no account of Jesus' resurrection appearances! What is given more attention in Mark? How does this shape your picture of Jesus?
3. As you look at the outline to the Gospel and note the geographical references, what conclusions do you draw?
4. Look at 1.1 again. List all the things you have to presume or know in order to understand what this phrase is saying.
5. What new "beginning" has Jesus made in your life?
6. What is the most significant title you use for Jesus? Why?
7. Read 1.4. How do you explain the relationship between the terms "baptism," "repentance," and "forgiveness"?
8. Compare 1.10-11 with 15.38-39. What is the significance of paralleling Jesus' baptism with his crucifixion?
9. Read 1.14-15. What is so good about Jesus' message?
10. If you knew that the world was going to end tomorrow, what would you do today? Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die! Get all my family and friends together for a final goodbye. Do exactly what I normally do. Plant a tree. Live it up like there was no tomorrow. Start praying to God like there was no tomorrow. Stand on a street corner with a sign saying, "The end is near!"
12. What did Simon and Andrew and James and John know about Jesus before he called them? Why do you think they responded so quickly?
13. How would you describe your steps in following Jesus? Something that happened quickly? Slowly? In spurts?
14. When do the disciples ever fulfill Jesus' promise that they will "fish for people"?
15. What do you think made Jesus' teaching authoritative? What makes it authoritative to-day?
16. Who makes the more profound confession of faith: the unclean spirit or the people?
17. What are the various authorities to which you are subject every day? How would you rank their importance? What do you do when you experience a conflict of or with authority?

For Later:

Be sure to repent of your sins, ask for forgiveness and renewal, and rejoice in the grace and salvation that God has given you through Christ! Consider what things you have left behind to follow Jesus. What things have you gained? Commit both losses and gains to God in prayer. Make a daily remembrance of your own Baptism by making the sign of the cross when you awake.

Remember, you have been marked for life!

Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church
36 Church Street
Lititz, PA 17543



Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church

36 Church Street, Rothsville (Lititz), Pennsylvania 17543

Sunday Morning Worship – 9:00 a.m.

717.626.8972 | www.jerusaluth.org | jerusaluth@windstream.net

Pastor's email: jerusaluthpastor@windstream.net

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm

The Reverend Bonnie M. Oplinger, *Pastor*

Mr. Roger L. Kurtz, *Director of Music*

Shelby Hoover, *Office Administrator*

Joan C. Dull, *Sexton*

Congregation, *Ministers*