

March Newsletter 2023 [Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

A Letter of Welcome:

“for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Gen 3:19

It is that time of year again to remember the ultimate sacrifice of Christ's love for us. Ash Wednesday is February 22nd and is a day that marks us as God's people and prepares us for six weeks to remember the reason Christ lived, died and rose again for us. We will gather at 10 am and 7 pm to worship and receive ashes. When the ashes get placed on your forehead and those words are said, we are reminded that God made us from what was created and that we go back to that same stuff when our humanness is gone and leaves us with our heavenly self.

Too often, we forget that we are made from God and created to be God's mission in this world. The church sets this time apart to help us refocus on God's purpose and plan. God came down in human form as Christ so that we could better understand the WORD, the story God needs us to hear, so that heaven can be the way of the world. Jesus gave his life for us so that we could be freed from sin, brokenness and stumbling in ways that lead us away from God. And at the end of this Lenten journey, we will celebrate the new life in the resurrection – when Jesus rises from the grave and comes back to help us know that God is, was and always will be part of us.

Lent is a time of heavy thinking and sometimes filled with a little sadness or deep questions. Often times we are asked to give something up so we can remember what God has sacrificed to give us grace, mercy and forgiveness. However, I like to live in the hope. Taking these six weeks to pray, ask, listen and see God active in all the everyday things of our lives. Let's add something for God such as daily prayer, serving others, forgiving or repairing a broken relationship, learning something new about God's story and responding to the way God cares for all of creation...including us.

To help us in this Lenten journey, we have a few ways to gather with us or with your own family and friends to make this Lenten connection to God.

Lent In A Bag: Alex is preparing Lent In A Bag that will contain 6 weeks of things to do as a family. Although it is geared for children, we encourage people of all age to take a Lent In A Bag and build the altar to make a special place to pray. She will lead the Children's sermons during lent to help us know the Lenten theme for the week and encourage us to learn with the kids.

Wednesday Worships:

10 am in chapel: Pr Molly will lead us in the theme of Christ's Tool Belt for our Midweek Morning Lenten service. We will explore ways to live into our faith with tools that are used in the Bible and through the ministry of Jesus.

7 pm in Café: Pr Elaine will lead us in the spiritual practice of prayer. There are many ways for us to pray which can help us in a deeper relationship with Christ.

Ministry Moments:

Each week, Pr Molly will record a short reflection on a scripture reading with a meditation. The young adults have asked for a quick way to hear the word and know how to be called into action in our faith. How do we do church in the world and what does that mean to each of us as we are guided by the Spirit?

Paint, Play & Pray:

We will gather after church on March 26 @ 11:30 am to share a meal and paint the Good Friday story. There will also be activities for all ages around prayer, lent & the Easter season. No experience is necessary and it is for all ages! We will take the readings of the stations of the cross and express them on canvas using paint, paper, chalk or what ever supplies help us tell this story! These paintings will be used at our Good Friday services.

Holy Week Schedule:

Palm Sunday: Sunday, April 2 at 10 am in sanctuary A re-enactment of the biblical story

Maundy Thursday: April 6 at 7 pm in Luther Hall. Sedar Meal with Bnai Jacob Synagogue (readers & cooks needed)

Good Friday:

10 am Traditional Service in Sanctuary.

7 pm The Passion through Art: Telling the story in sanctuary

Easter Vigil: St Michael's Lutheran Church, Harrisburg 8 pm

Easter Sunday:

10 am in sanctuary

Peace and joy,
Pr Molly

TOGETHER Y.O.U.T.H Needs your help!



TOGETHER
Change through Community

We are looking for people to be onsite Monday- Friday from 3pm to 4pm for homework help. All the kids range from 5th Graders to High schoolers. Please contact Alex Mabee at 832-752-6833 with any questions or willing to help.

UPCOMING EVENTS

What's new in worship?

As some of you have noticed up front there are some new things happening. We are making a pray-ground for young children and their families. A Pray-Ground is a designated place in the front of the sanctuary where young children can experience worship through age-appropriate worship materials and tools that will help keep them engaged in what is happening — materials such as children's altar and books, coloring/drawing materials, soft toys, pipe cleaners and other manipulatives. This area is to tell families that we welcome them and their families.



Children joining in the worship experience!



Lent in a Bag

Lent in a bag is geared to families and is a take home bag that has items in the bag to guide you through the 6 weeks in Lent. We invite families to join us each week in worship and then do their Lent in a bag at home with each other. Contact Alex Mabee if you have any questions.

WinterFest Weekend



Last weekend I attended not only my first WinterFest, but also my first church retreat ever. Because I just became a member of the church this year, I wasn't sure what to expect. At first I struggled with getting use to the atmosphere of the festival as someone who had no grown up in religion. I however quickly started to have fun

and do so many great things. Some of my favorite parts of the trip were the praise bands that would wake you up and energize you with faith inspired music. I was able to take two elective work shops of my choosing. My first elective was on different methods of pray to feel closer with god and creation. My second elective was a conversation on continuing faith after high school. I found this conversation really insightful because St. Peter's has become my spiritual home in the two years, so I know it will be a struggle when I leave for school next year. I had such a great time at WinterFest with Pastor Micheal and Alex. I had many insightful conversations with different youth leaders from the synod about not only running youth ministry, but even just answering questions about God and religion. I don't think I had ever thought more about God then in those 72 hours, but I know it was for the bettering of my understanding of my religion. I wanted to thank the congregation for allowing me to have this experience and to give me these opportunities to grow in this beautiful religion that I am able to call mine now.

-Jade

Join us!

TOGETHER AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

NOW 5 DAYS A WEEK

Sign up your child for the TOGETHER after-school program, held at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Middletown, PA. Join us FREE for fun activities, snacks, and homework help.

Program begins January 9th, 2023. Schools provide transportation to the church but children need to be picked up by 5pm.

Students must be in 5th grade or above.

To register, click our link on our TOGETHER Facebook page or give us a call.

717- 944- 4651

**121 N. Spring Street,
Middletown, PA 17057**



stpetersmiddletown.org

Spread the word about our TOGETHER After-School program! As always, the program is free and available to students in 5th grade and above in the Middletown School District (students may still register from other school districts, but transportation cannot be provided). The new season started January 9th! We will be holding the After-School program Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in January and each weekday starting in February. Find us at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Middletown for fun activities, snacks, and homework help. Our goals are to promote leadership skills in young people, encourage cultural awareness, and to teach the importance of service to the community.

Students will be picked up from school by bus or by adult volunteers. Students will need to be picked up by their parents or guardians at 5pm. To register or request additional information, please click this link found on the TOGETHER Facebook page: <https://forms.gle/qqVZHfYKLjS26HH89> or give us a call at 717-944-4651. St. Peter's is located at: 121 N. Spring Street, Middletown, PA 17057.

TOGETHER HELP NEEDED!

The TOGETHER program needs volunteers! We are seeking transportation from Reid Elementary School in Middletown to the church. We are also seeking volunteers to help with tutoring. If you have the ability to help with both or either need, please email Alex Mabee at amabee@stpetersmiddletown.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The TOGETHER kids need your help! We are looking for adults to provide transportation for students from Reid Elementary School to our church. We are also looking for tutors.

Please email Alex at:
amabee@stpetersmiddletown.org



The program began January 9th, 2023 and will occur Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday until 5pm. In February, the program expanded to each weekday!

Save the Date

Join Us on Sunday, March 12 at 2:30 PM for a lecture on "The Need for Holocaust Education in an Era of Rising Antisemitism"

Dear Friends,

Join us and area education leaders, the clergy, and the community on **Sunday, March 12, 2023 at 2:30 pm** for an important presentation on "The Need for Holocaust Education in an Era of Rising Antisemitism."

Professor Boaz Dvir, Director of the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Education Initiative at Penn State, will discuss the need for Holocaust education in K-12 education in a time of unprecedented rising antisemitism in our country.

The program, **hosted by Historical B'nai Jacob Synagogue** ([220 Nissley St., Middletown, PA](#)), is funded through The Jewish Community Foundation of Central PA, Lipsett Philanthropic Fund.

Professor Dvir will be speaking to the area clergy, educators, and community leaders for an hour, including Q & A. A light kosher dessert reception will follow the presentation.

Please note: While there are no mask or vaccination regulations currently required, we would encourage all attendees to be currently vaccinated, test COVID free 24 hours before the event and feel free to wear a mask while in the Synagogue.

Seating is limited, please RSVP by registering below by March 1, 2023.

[*Click Here to Register for this Event*](#)

The Need for Holocaust Education in an Era of Rising Antisemitism

with Professor Boaz Dvir,
Director of the Holocaust, Genocide and
Human Rights Education Initiative at Penn State

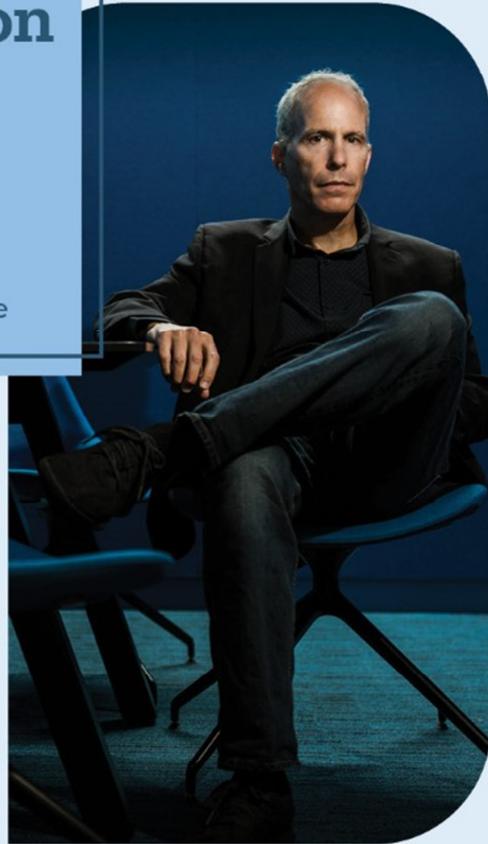
Sunday, March 12, 2023

2:30-3:30 p.m.

with a reception to follow that is
free and open to the public

Historic B'nai Jacob Synagogue

220 Nissley St., Middletown, PA
At the corner of Nissley and Water Streets



This program is funded by the Jewish Community Foundation
of Central PA Lipsett Philanthropic Fund.

Pre-registration is required. Seating is limited. For registration and information
about livestreaming, please contact Ilana De Laney at dean@campusoflife.com

For questions, please contact Samantha Petzold at 570-426-0118 or sampetzold@gmail.com



HISTORIC B'NAI JACOB SYNAGOGUE
Celebrating its 200th Anniversary



Jewish Community Foundation
of Central Pennsylvania



**Holocaust, Genocide and
Human Rights Education Initiative**

With warm regards,
Your Friends at the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Education Initiative, part of Penn State's
Hammel Family Human Rights Initiative

FAMILY LENT EVENT

March 26th at 11:30am

Bring the whole family and join us for brunch and a time to experience the Holy Week stories and new prayer practices.



RSVP to Alex
Mabee at
[amabee@stpeters
middletown.org](mailto:amabee@stpetersmiddletown.org)

FAMILY LENT EVENT

Please join the families at St. Peter's and TOGETHER for a brand new way to experience Holy Week! Enjoy a delicious brunch and learn more about ways we can pray and learn together! RSVP to Alex at amabee@stpetersmiddletown.org

United and Ignited

Learn more about how you can help your church community (and beyond) become more affirming and inclusive to all people in this interactive forum with Region 8. The \$15 registration fee will cover your lunch. To register, scan the QR code with your phone camera. See Pastor Molly for more details!

UNITED AND IGNITED



Kindling Faith
Center for Sabbath
Rest and Formation

Join us for a day of resource sharing, fellowship, and learning about how we can be church to the beloved LGBTQIA2S+ community.

April 15, 2023,

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

ULS Gettysburg
Campus or
livestream

Cost: \$15
includes lunch

To register,
please click
[here](#) or use QR
code provided
below:



A Forum for LGBTQIA+ Ministry Leaders, Affirming Worshipers, and Community Partners

Region 8 invites you to join us for a day of LGBTQIA+ Equipping for Affirming and Inclusion work within congregation and community with participation by representatives from regional community partner organizations. This day of interactive learning, discussion, and resource is also highly suitable and welcoming to lay leaders and congregational teams. Newly revised for 2023, this training includes updated best practice vocabulary for healthy discussions, history of both LGBTQIA+ progress and historical trauma within the church, where to find the most up-to-date resources and how congregations have used them in successful growth and vitality movement, help to have challenging conversations even through resistance, and practical next steps for active allyship including discernment on becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation or living into your RiC designation.

Sponsored by Kindling Faith and the
Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA





Lenten Evening Series

Join Pastor Elaine Dent for a unique Lenten experience each Wednesday evening at 7pm in the cafe!

March 8th: Letting the Lord's Prayer "Out of the Box." We can do the Lord's prayer to music with sign language. We can use our own words. We can pray it outside. Luther suggests letting it be a guide for us to expand upon.

March 15th: Creation Prayer; Do a photo walk of creation pictures from my collection (we use to do this at confirmation camp). Choose a photo that draws us, speaks to our life situation. Sit with it and ask: What do you see? What do you hear? What can you smell? What could you or a creature taste? What does your body feel (breeze, temperature, walking on rocks, something you touch, etc.? What is a word to describe it? How does the photo describe your life.

March 21st: "Song Prayers to Go"

I will briefly talk about prayer offices and my experiment with singing hymns 5 times a day on the trail and the five hymns I chose---one each for first thing in the morning, midmorning, noon/lunch, mid afternoon. evening after climbing into the tent. We take time to explore hymnals, youtube, whatever for each person to choose their own "set."

March 28th: "Prayer around the Cross"

This comes from Holden Village and you may well be familiar with it. The focus is healing prayers.



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