

The Transformer

March 2011

717-866-4910

Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Church, 301 W. Washington Ave., Myerstown, PA

Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1).

Lent is a time of repentance, self-examination, and confession. It's an intentional time set aside for us to consider how worldly forces woo us and tempt us to place our loyalties and passions where they don't belong. Beginning on March 9 (Ash Wednesday) we will begin this spiritual journey through Lent with the cross of ashes on our forehead making our way towards the bright light of Easter morning (April 24).

We begin with the temptations of Jesus and how he resisted those temptations. Every week in worship we will meet a new character who also faced similar temptations and through it all lives were changed by Christ. Just as Jesus confronted the temptations of the evil one, we are faced with temptations too, including; power, prestige, and possessions. We are confronted everyday with the ultimate temptation to place our trust in anything but Jesus. **Question:** *Who or what do you put your trust in? Why?*

Jesus is dripping wet with the water of his baptism and is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus walks out of the river Jordan and heads right into the wilderness. This same Spirit that filled him in the waters of baptism now goes with him into the wilderness – leading the way. Jesus wasn't alone.

The Spirit leads the way for Jesus into whatever awaits him and wherever he goes. What a great image for us to ponder. Those of us who are baptized are also led by the Spirit. We are not alone. **Question:** *Do you believe the Spirit leads the way for you to follow into whatever awaits you wherever you go every day? Why or why not?*



The season of Lent offers a way for us to reconnect with the Spirit of Jesus and to resist the devil's temptations. The disciplines of Lent (fasting, prayer, and solitude), are the disciplines that Jesus practiced and they carried him through those 40 days. We are called to practice those same disciplines to carry us through these 40 days of Lent preparing us for the devil's temptations. Jesus faced the same temptations that make us vulnerable today: physical needs (4:3-4), personal acclaim (4:5-7), power and prestige (4:8-11).

Lent is a great time for us to take a look at those things in our lives which distract us and tempt us to take our eyes off the Savior and the work of the Spirit in our lives. **Question:** *How might we confront the temptations in our lives and, by the power of the Spirit, make choices that lead to a better life for one and all?*

May your Lenten journey this year strengthen you and keep you in God's grace! Amen!

Peace,
Pastor Miller

LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS are available in the narthex and fellowship hall. You can also download a color copy from our church webpage, www.flcmysterstown.com.



To Pastor Miller, Members of Friedens and friends,

A sincere and heartfelt thank-you for your prayers, cards, phone calls and other considerations following my surgery and recovery. Your thoughtfulness was indeed humbling. Again, thank you.

Dean Moyer

SHUT-IN BIRTHDAYS

March 8

Mrs. Verna Miller
353 W. Carpenter Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

March 13

Mrs. Margaret Fessler
Spang Crest
945 Duke Street
Lebanon, PA 17042

March 14

Annie Haag
7 W. Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

March 21

Mrs. Helen Morris
StoneRidge Poplar Run
450 E. Lincoln Ave.
Assisted Living, Rm. 247
Myerstown, PA 17067

March 28

Mr. Eugene Miller
450 E. Lincoln Avenue
StoneRidge Skilled Care, Rm. 141C
Myerstown, PA 17067

BASKETS OF PROMISE PROJECT

In this season of Lent, Lutheran World Relief invites you to join Lutherans throughout the United States in prayer and service on behalf of some of the world's most vulnerable people.

LWR Quilts and Kits reach people coping with war, disaster, disease, poverty. The needs around the world continue to grow. In 2011, we anticipate a 15% increase in requests for Quilts and Kits around the world. We need your help to fulfill those requests!

Join LWR to assemble Kits and offer these gifts, symbols of God's sacrificial grace and love, this Lent!



MARCH 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 6:45 PM—Praise & Worship Band Rehearsal 7 PM-Adult Choir	3	4 	5
6 9 AM- Contemporary Worship 10:30 AM- Traditional Worship	7 6 PM— Confirmation Class—Kerry's house	8 6 PM- Heavenly Metal Handbell Choir 6:30 PM-Finance Team 7 PM—Property Team	9 9 AM—Women Sew 7:30 PM—Ash Wednesday Worship	10	11	12
13 9 AM- Contemporary Worship 10:30 AM- Traditional Worship	14	15 6 PM-Heavenly Metal Handbell Choir	16 6:30 PM-Soup & Bread 7:00 PM-Lenten Worship	17  6:45 PM—Church Council	18	19
20 9 AM- Contemporary Worship 10:30 AM- Traditional Worship	21 Deadline for Transformer articles 7 PM-Women of ELCA	22 6 PM-Heavenly Metal Handbell Choir	23 6:30 PM-Soup & Bread 7:00 PM-Lenten Worship	24	25	26
27 9 AM- Contemporary Worship 10:30 AM- Traditional Worship	28	29 6 PM-Heavenly Metal Handbell Choir	30 6:30 PM-Soup & Bread 7:00 PM-Lenten Worship	31 7 PM— Anniversary Team		



DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP

Our LIFE group is studying the Holy Spirit and I must admit it has been a challenging subject. There is a lot written about the Holy Spirit and His purpose in our lives. You're probably familiar with the book *The Little Engine That Could*, in which the small engine keeps repeating the words "I think I can." By using sheer willpower, she pulls an entire train over the mountain. That's a nice children's story, but the truth in a Christian's life is very different. In the real world our efforts and determination often fall short. Only by walking in the power of the Holy Spirit can a godly life be achieved. Throughout the Old Testament God's Spirit would temporarily come upon people for a particular work. However, after Jesus ascended to heaven, He sent the Spirit to dwell permanently within each believer. Do you realize what this means? If you're a Christian, God is living inside you, available to help you by providing guidance, comfort, and empowerment. As we go deeper in our study together as a group we are also realizing that obedience to Christ is too difficult for anyone relying on his or her own strength. Trying to discern what to do in any given situation is far too complicated for our minds. For some reason though, Christians often try to live their lives by depending on their own strengths. We are coming to see that defeat and failure are unavoidable without his power in our lives. We need the Spirit in order to live faithfully. But we *also...* need one another as we work out our faith.

Christ's Peace Valerie



Youth Retreat

ATTENTION PARENTS AND YOUTH, ages 6th grade – 12th grade

Please mark your calendars for our Spring retreat at Camp Kirchenwald scheduled for May 20th – 22nd, 2011. There will be an informational letter sent out to parents with all the details for our retreat.

**LUTHERAN CAMPING CORPORATION**

On Sunday, March 27, Zach Weiss from the Lutheran Camping Corporation will be visiting with us during our fellowship time immediately following our 9 AM service. He will have information about the summer camping ministry at Camp Kirchenwald and Camp Nawakwa. This is your chance to learn about the great programs



If you are interested in ordering lilies to place in the church for Easter, now is the time to do so. To order, please use the envelopes provided on the narthex bulletin board and place it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. The cost is \$6.00 each. The last date to order will be **MARCH 13.**



Consider joining Friedens' Mission Team this June for **an abundance** of work, fun, and good will in Middle Tennessee. Plans are being made for a "work week", June 12-18. Our work will involve restoring homes damaged by heavy flooding in 2010.

A signup sheet can now be found on the bulletin board in the hallway leading to the Fellowship Hall.

Interested parties, ages 15 and older, can find out more about Friedens' Mission program by speaking to a veteran mission member or simply placing a yellow pew card in the offering plate. Include your name and phone number/email address and you will be contacted.

Our team is constantly changing, with new personalities welcomed to join us when moved by the Spirit.



BEGINNING Wednesday, March 16, Friedens will be hosting a soup and bread dinner in the fellowship hall. We are planning to serve soup/bread each Wednesday evening throughout the Lenten season, 3/16-4/13. Dinner will begin at 6:30 P.M.-7 P.M. followed by worship which begins at 7 P.M. in the sanctuary. This year we will be studying characters of the Bible during our worship time. We encourage you and your family to join us for our Lenten evenings of fellowship, worship and study. **BYOB**—Bring your own Bible.



March 13



On Sunday, March 6, food will be collected for the Lebanon County Food Bank. All gifts are welcomed. There is a need for instant mashed potatoes, canned potatoes, cold cereal, 18 oz. jams & jellies, 5 oz. canned chicken, 12 oz. Spam, toothpaste, toothbrushes and toiletries.

Forgiveness BRACELET

Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins, and he tells us to forgive other people, too. Make and wear this craft as a reminder that you are forgiven — and should be forgiving.

What you need:

- Clear plastic bottle (about 16 oz.)
- An adult to help
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Permanent black marker
- Glue or clear tape
- Thin ribbon or yarn
- Small hole punch

What you do:

1. Remove any label from the bottle. Have an adult help you cut the bottle in half, width-wise. At the middle, cut out two identical half-inch-wide strips.
2. Cut out paper the same size as the plastic strips.
3. On the paper, write "Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37, NIV).
4. Place the paper between the two plastic strips.
5. Cut and glue the ribbon or yarn to run along the top and bottom of the verse, framing the words.
6. Punch a hole at each end, through all three layers.
7. Tie the bracelet to your wrist with ribbon or yarn.

PANDAMANIA IS COMING SOON!

Vacation Bible School
June 19th-23rd
6-8 PM



It will be an exciting week of faith building with music, dramas, crafts, games and so much more!

If you are interested in sharing your talents and faith with the youth of our church and community, before or during the week of VBS, please speak with Amber Miller 866-0447 or amiller70@comcast.net.

Remember....
GOD IS WILD ABOUT YOU!



I HAVE LOVED
YOU WITH AN
EVERLASTING
Love...
JEREMIAH 31:3

OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

January 2011

			% of Budget
Current Budget	Goal	\$29,428.00	
\$353,139.00	Rec'd	\$25,440.00	86%
Spang Crest	Rec'd	57.00	
Hunger	Rec'd	525.00	

**Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting
February 17, 2011**

Bob Hauck offered a scripture reading from Daniel: 1 1-21 and a devotional called “The Influence of Our Convictions.”

Opening prayer was offered by Pastor Miller

1. Minutes: January 20, 2011 reviewed. Denise Noll motioned to accept minutes. Jeff Gumpert seconded. Motion carried.
2. Financial Reports: Frank Armstrong motioned to accept financial report. Dottie Kemble seconded. Motion carried.
3. Treasurer Report: Bruce Kauffman motioned to accept treasurer report. Denise Noll seconded. Motion carried.
4. Communications Reports:
Joanne Maurer reported:
 - a. Read report from Property.
 - b. Luthercare say thank you for gift of \$78.00.
 - c. Lebanon County Christian Ministries say thank you for December Food Bank totaling 143 pounds.
 - d. Friendship Community say thank you for being a friend and prayer support.
5. Pastor Miller’s Report:
Shared on his Continuing Education and shared a handout leading Church Council through a choice exercise. Discussion followed.
6. Bruce Kauffman made a motion to accept Memorial Policy. Denise Noll seconded. Motion carried.
7. Open Forum: Discussion occurred.
8. Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM

Respectfully Submitted by:
Joanne Maurer
Congregational Secretary



THE SYMBOLISM OF ASHES

On the first day of Lent, pastors in many churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning palm branches from the previous year’s Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners’ foreheads.

God’s people have used ashes as a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. In the Old Testament, ashes were used as a purification offering. The New Testament speaks of repenting in “sackcloth and ashes” (Luke 10:13, NRSV).

On Ash Wednesday, Christians are pained because our sins — private and public — led to Jesus’ death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing it leads to resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Worship Series for Lent 2011

Lent is a time of repentance, self-examination, and confession. This is a time for us to consider how cultural forces press on us and tempt us to place our loyalties and passions where they don't belong.

We will walk this journey through Lent with a cross of ashes on our forehead toward the bright light of Easter morning. Along the way we will stop and ponder the temptations of Jesus, a man named Nicodemus, a woman at a well, a man born blind, and a dead man named Lazarus brought back to life.



March 9 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
(Ash Wednesday)

Lead Us... Not Into Temptation

When we are tempted to believe we'll live forever, the ashes of Ash Wednesday remind us of our mortality and human frailty. This begins our journey through the Lenten season as we consider those things we need God to lead us away from.

March 13 Matthew 4:1-11

Lead Us... Avoiding the Unavoidable

As the Son of God confronts the temptations of the evil one, we also are faced with the temptations of power, prestige, and possessions. We are confronted with similar temptations every day.

March 20 John 3:1-17

Lead Us... Speaking the Unspeakable

Jesus speaks to Nicodemus about a new kind of living in the Spirit and the Kingdom of God. These words are clearly rejected by Nicodemus' own friends, and he comes at night to have a spiritual conversation. He faces the temptation of conforming to pressure from his peers. We are called to give voice to God's call to Kingdom living.

March 27 John 4:5-42

Lead Us... Loving the Unlovable

This Samaritan woman is tempted to believe she's un-lovable, and she has a trail of failed relationships to prove it. Jesus steps over all kinds of cultural and religious obstacles to offer new hope and life to a woman at a well. God is calling us away from our feelings of unworthiness into a new way of interacting with one another.

April 3 John 9:1-41

Lead Us... Forgiving the Unforgivable

This person born blind is tempted to believe that he's being punished for the sins of someone in his family. He lives in the darkness of his perceptions of an angry God, and Jesus is able to help him step into a new kind of light. Because of the light of Christ, we can be God's agents of forgiveness and healing.

April 10 John 11:1-45

Lead Us... Believing the Unbelievable

The vision of Ezekiel's valley of dry bones parallels the tomb of death in the story of Lazarus. The people of Israel are tempted to believe they are dead in their exile and can never return to life. The family of Lazarus is tempted to believe that once dead, Lazarus can never come back to life. But because of Christ, everything is possible.

April 17 (Palm Sunday) Matthew 26:14-27, 66

Lead Us ... Bearing the Unbearable

As we enter Holy Week, Jesus prays "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The road of suffering and death is before him, and he will not only bear the cross on his way to Calvary, but the weight of the restoration and reconciliation of all of humanity. We are called to bear one another through every temptation and trial.