

2026



March

Unity Lutheran Church Newsletter

1500 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12203
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Dear Friends of Unity Lutheran,

Lent is upon us. For 40 days each year the church invites us to journey through self-reflection and repentance as we make our way to the joy of Easter morning. The Lenten season typically takes place near the end of winter. For most of us, the thrill of the season has gone. We grow sick of the snow. The cold has seeped into our bones. When the temperature hits 45 degrees we will begin to see people venture out of their homes in shorts or without a jacket. As if they are urging the spring season to come sooner. We are sick of winter. It is in this mindset that the Lenten journey takes place, and it is so appropriate.

In this season of self-reflection each one of us can find areas of our life that need attention. Like the weather, our hearts can grow cold. Compassion, kindness, patience. It is so easy for these to slowly fade. We begin to see our family members, neighbors, and co-workers with less love and more annoyance. Our daily habits can reflect the season as well. When it's warm we get outside and garden or walk to make our home and heart more welcoming and stronger. In the winter we stay inside. Our time looking at screens tends to grow longer. Like the weather, we are ready for a change.

This change can come through a commitment to prayer. Perhaps we rekindle our love for searching God's Word. Instead of more time looking at our phone we could give more time to helping a neighbor in need. Jesus has called us to "love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us". Maybe now is the time to commit to this seriously. The wonderful part of self-reflection and repentance is that the Holy Spirit promises to walk with us on this journey. He guides us. He highlights the areas of our life that need attention, change, and growth. He gently corrects. Sometimes, the gentleness can feel like a 2 x 4 to the back of the head, because that is what we need. The Lenten journey can be cold, tiresome, and difficult. However, we know where it ends!

It ends at the cross and the empty grave. It ends with victory. It ends with the defeat of death. It ends with the salvation Jesus has won for us through His death. It ends with forgiveness. It ends with a joy that surpasses all the failures and losses of this life. It ends with peace and the ability to look in the mirror and be proud of what we see. Not because we have striven and conquered, but because God has for us. We know how this season ends.

So I invite you to join me again this Lenten season on the journey. I look forward to seeing you in worship.

Your Brother in Christ
Pastor Jim Dornier



HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY, March 30, 2026
PALM SUNDAY
WORSHIP 10:00 AM**

**April 2, 2026
MAUNDY THURSDAY
SERVICE WITH HOLY COMMUNION
7 PM**

**April 3, 2026
GOOD FRIDAY
SERVICE OF THE TENEBRAE
7 PM**

**April 5, 2026
EASTER FESTIVAL WORSHIP
10 AM**

Hello everyone!

Snow and Ice and Sleet, oh my! Despite the cold, February has been a great month for the Unity Lutheran Afterschool Program. The kids have enjoyed playing in the snow, sipping hot chocolate, and devouring their Valentine's Day candy. They have also been expanding their creativity this winter and taking advantage of their artistic abilities during the bitter cold days. I have seen them create wonderful things such as bracelets, short stories, large collages, beautiful pictures, and some odd concoctions. Their creativity and energy know no bounds (and neither does my caffeine budget). I want to express my gratitude to all of you who donated gloves, hats, socks, and other clothing items to our program. Without these items many children would not have been able to participate in our outdoor activities. Your contribution means a lot and I am very grateful for your support.

While I'm sure the children will miss the snow, we are all excited for the coming of Spring and the new possibilities, opportunities, and beauty to come. I am hopeful we will soon get to see the children take their creativity and energy outside as we can take full advantage of our great campus. I am personally excited to get the basketballs back out but that might just be because I can sniff March (Madness). Thank you again for your continued support and I wish you all a very blessed month.

Sincerely,
Jack Verhayden
Afterschool Program Director



**After-School
Program**



In each of our lives, we experience losses. Friends, parents, children, spouses. Transitioning to life without someone can be difficult for even the strongest person. This grief does not need to be managed alone. Our Grief Share program meets at 6:30 each Monday evening here at Unity . It is free, all you need to do is register at griefshare.org (search Albany and look for Unity Lutheran Church). Please consider joining or sharing this information with a friend in need.

Each Wednesday during Lent, we will meet at Unity for a Soup supper and Vespers. Supper is at 6:00 PM. If you would like to make a soup, salad, or bring some bread please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.



Shelter Dinners - Can You Help?

Thank you, thank you, thank you Sheryl Baum and Sue Meyer for preparing & delivering dinner to the homeless shelter at First Church in February! The men enjoyed

a delicious meal of chicken & pasta, green bean and corn casseroles and brownies for dessert. It was much appreciated by those who rely on the shelter & food provided by the local community.

Our last scheduled dinner is on Tuesday, April 14, and the sign-up sheet is completely open. Can you help? A meal usually includes: an entree, vegetables or salad and a dessert. Because of dietary considerations, the shelter does ask that there be no meals with pork or fish. Meals for 25 men should be completely cooked and in disposable pans. Dishes can even be prepared ahead of time and arrangements made for delivery. Any questions, please contact Sheryl Baum at 518-312-5177. Thank you.



THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE HELPED IN OUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS HERE AT UNITY:

- ◆ CLINK BOTTLE RETURNS. (\$179 IN THE PAST 2 MONTHS!) GRAB A GREEN BAG IN THE NARTHEX, FILL IT UP, RETURN IT TO UNITY OR TAKE IT TO HANNAFORD AND SCAN THE LABEL ON THE BAG .
- ◆ HOFFMAN HELPING HANDS. SIGN UP ON HOFFMAN HELPING HANDS.COM AND WE RECEIVE 50% OF THE CAR WASH FEE.



The Unity Women's Group will meet on Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 10 am. Please join us as we plan projects for Unity.





March

- 1 SUSAN VANACKER
- 9. ED REISS
- 15. KEVIN BEAUDOIN
SUSAN WILLIS
- 20. ALYSSA MCCOY
- 27. SHAREN DOMBROWSKI
- 28. LINDA CALAMARAS
- 28. JAMES WELTER
- 31. BOB HALLENBACK



ELDER
Daniel Long



Food Pantry

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ARE DONATING TO THE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION THAT WE HAVE. PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHECK THE EXPIRATION DATES ON THE FOOD ITEMS. THE FOOD PANTRY CANNOT ACCEPT EXPIRED ITEMS,

DON'T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD ON MARCH 7th. SPRING IS COMING!!




VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please check the sign up sheets in the Narthex. There are still blank spaces that need to be filled in.

DATE	FLOWERS	READER	SERVICE STEWARD	COFFEE HOUR	ALTAR
3/1	The Kingstons in celebration of Thom's Birthday	Lorraine Urbano	Lori Seim	Mayra Vega	Alida Boshea
3/8	Linda and John O'Keefe in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary	Leonard Ahders	Mark Simmons		Sylvia Grimes
3/15		Dina Lee	Sue Meyer	Pot Luck	Suzanne & John Brockley
3/22	Sue Meyer in memory of husband Ron	Chelsea Dorner	Nick Alexander	Len Ahders	Sylvia Grimes
3/29	James Welter in memory of his father, Joe Welter		Debbie Boomhower	Debbie Boomhower	Sylvia Grimes

Lent
is
spring
training.
Easter
IS OPENING DAY!

