

# † The Rod and the Staff †

A bimonthly publication of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Whitehall (Egypt), Pennsylvania

† May/June, 2026 †

Vol. 2026 Issue 3

## PASTOR'S CORNER

**He Is Risen! He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!**

Dear Sister or Brother in Christ,

He is Risen! Recently, we gathered to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord. He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia! We rejoice that Jesus Lives and because He lives we will live also. The bondage of sin and death has been broken. This is wonderful news for each one of us as a child of God.

We witness each day the earth and nature coming alive again as we continue in the season of Spring. The trees budding and the birds singing remind each one of us of the Glory of God. God sent His Son into the world, die on the cross, and rise from the dead that if we believe in Him, we will not perish but have everlasting life. What wonderful and joyful news for each one of us. our Lord lives and because He lives, we can face tomorrow.

We continue to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and may we always remember that Jesus Christ our Lord is present with us each and every day. I wish for you a joyful and peaceful Easter season. He Is Risen! He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!

In Christ's Love,

Rev. James W. Schlegel

Pastor

### AT A GLANCE:

May 7

**National Day of Prayer.** Please join Christians throughout the world as they join together in prayer.



May 10

**Mothers' Day**



May 17

**Last day of Sunday School and Confirmation classes.**

May 24

**Pentecost (wear red)**



May 31

**We will honor all the Sunday School teachers for the 2025-2026 Sunday School Year.**



*Thank You and May God Bless You for taking time to Serve Our Lord and our children.*

June 7

**Anniversary Celebration!**

Our church will celebrate 50 years in our current building.



We will **honor all of the graduates** in our congregation. We will celebrate their accomplishments with them.



June 21

**Fathers' Day**



June 28

**Vacation Bible School Presentation**



*This Issue of the Rod and The Staff is given to the glory of God by Joe Ebner & Sharon Bodor.*

*This Issue of the Rod and The Staff is given in honor of my grandson, Ben's birthday by Rozelle Higgins.*

**Please Keep in Your**



**Thoughts And Prayers:**

- A.** Betty Ackerman, John Acuna, John Ammon
- B.** Carletta Bartholomew, Michelle Beck, Bill and Rosalie Beidleman, Janis Beidleman, Kim Beidleman, Carol Bennecoff, Paul Blankenhorn, Marianne Blocker, Dylan Bold, Ann Borell, Jacob Braido, Angela Bressler, Sandra Bressler, Bonnie Brown, Janice Buckwalter, Pat Budd, Mark Buresh
- C.** Beth Cherry, Charles Church, Jim Church, Nick Cihylik, JoAnn Coppola
- D.** Marge Deutsch, Ray Deutsch, Nancy Dietz, Donna Detweiler, Lillian Dotter, Kelly Durst, Mike Durst
- E.** Jim Early, Kimberly Eastep
- F.** Beverly Fekula, Gloria Fischl, Donald Fister, Diane Flahart, James Forand, Annie and Paul Frack, Cheyenne Frankenfield and family, Kay Fronheiser
- G.** Maxine Gantz, Ronald Gerlach, Teri Gerney, Carol Gilbert, Jason Greiss, Rebecca Gross
- H.** Ronald Hacker, Shelley Hanson, Toby Harbst, Cyndee Hart, Mike Hart, Dot Hartman, Brandon Heichel, Al Herman, Harold Hoffman, Betty Hontz, Barbara Horvath, Elsie Huber,
- K.** Jake Kaligis, Alex Katana, John Kotze, Keith Kramer, Russell Kramer, Barbara Kuhns, Zoe Kuchera, Bruce Kunkle
- L.** Carlotta Lambert, Scott Lazarus, Wayne Lazarus
- M.** Shirley Mack, Leonard Makovsky, Heather Markulics, Randy Marushack, Diane Masonheimer, Cindy Meitzler, Terry Messinger, Carole Mickley, Carole Miller, Doris Miller, Richard Miller, Christopher Moakley, Al Mosser, Kevin Moyer, Christine Murray, Russell Myers,
- N.** Cathy Nelcoski and baby, Marjorie Nelcoski, Ava Nolan
- P.** Mary Peters, Sandra Phillips
- R.** Scarlet Randolph, Corey Rapchak, June Reifinger, Reynold Reifinger, Jean Reinert, Aida Reinhard, Debbie Reinhard, Jan Reinik, Wayne Remaly, Lorraine Ritter, Jean Roth, Tonie Rothdeutsch, Mary Royer, Carolyn Ruch
- S.** Ruth Saadi, Michael Saraceno, Rick Sarmir, Nancy Scheidt, Glen Scheirer, Jr., Irene Scherr, Gloria Schmidinger, Linda Schock, Michael Schwentner, Corey Seese, Helen Sefcik, June Sell, Sylvia Seregelyes, Wayne Serfass,

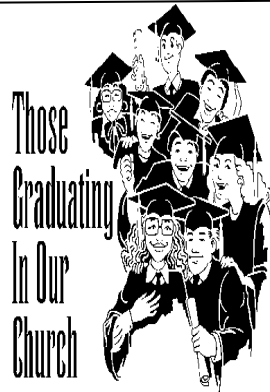
- Pam Shaffer, Martha Shafnisky, Joan Shook, Jim Shope, Grace Siegel, Sue Sill, Sean Skelonis, Leroy Smith, Sherry Smith, Barbara Stangle, RJ Stoudt, John Strawbridge
- T.** Robert Tacker, Michelle Taylor, Rosemarie Thrash
- U.** Paul Unger
- W.** Cathy Weaver, Chloe Weaver, Keith Weaver, Linda Weber, Bill Weighknecht, Jennifer Wentling, Melissa Woodruff
- Y.** Mary Lou Young

*The Families of:*  
 Adele M. Kunkle  
 Garrett Nicholas  
 Barbara I. Rapchak

**PRAYER**

is the fastest thing on earth...  
 it reaches God before you even say it.  
 That's powerful.

**Attention Graduates**



We would like to recognize **you** in our July/ August Newsletter!

If you are graduating from high school, college, graduate school, nursing school, or any other school, please notify the church office (610-262-1600) to include **your name** in the next Newsletter.

**The Times News Advertising for May** is sponsored to the glory of God by Carol and Paul Balascki.



**The Times News Advertising for June** is sponsored in memory of our fathers, Karl Sassaman and R. Michael Reno by Todd and Melissa Sassaman.

**SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS:**

**True North Vacation Bible School will be held June 22-26, 2026. Register your child by May 25th.**



*Early Reminder . . .* Our **church picnic** will be **July 26**. We will need desserts for the covered dish picnic lunch.

### 2026 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- Tracy Tacker, President
- Jan Masonheimer, Vice President
- Melissa Sassaman, Secretary
- Drew Null, Treasurer
- Carl France, Financial Secretary
- Mary Lou Young, Witness
- Gary Easton, Support
- Barry Wexler, Service
- Lisa Kroboth, Youth
- Denise Smith, Worship
- Tara Henry-Morrow, Learning
- Ian Bordenick, Youth Representative
- Rev. James W. Schlegel, Pastor

### SOTHLC Signs of Our Faithfulness

*"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"*  
**End of Prior Month (as of March 31, 2026)**

Monthly Stewardship Income:	\$26,420	YTD: \$60,005
Monthly Operating Expenses:	\$17,927	YTD: \$57,273
Stewardship Income includes Benevolence Envelopes:		
March \$386	YTD: \$1,180	(Budget for 2026—\$19,412)
February Electric	\$2,083	YTD: \$5,544
Snow Removal	\$684	YTD: \$3,488

The monthly Treasurer's Report is available at the top of the stairs.

## Reflections

You can find Pastor Schlegel's **Daily Reflection** on God's Word Monday through Thursday at 7 PM on our Facebook page and on our website. If you would like Daily Devotions emailed to you, please contact the church office.



*On March 1, 2026 we welcomed Myla Marie Christine into the church family by the Sacrament of Baptism. We wish God's many blessings on Myla and her parents.*



*On April 12, 2026 we welcomed Peyton June Benscoter and Tristen Brienne Kremsner into the church family by the Sacrament of Baptism. We wish God's many blessings on Peyton and Tristen and their parents.*



*On April 19, 2026 we welcomed Paisley Renae Ehst and Landon Grey Ehst into the church family by the Sacrament of Baptism. We wish God's many blessings on Paisley and Landon and their parents.*



St. John's UCC Fullerton is sponsoring a bus trip to Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster to see their new production of "Joshua" on Wednesday, June 3, 2026. The cost is \$150 and includes the chartered Perkiomen bus, downstairs reserved seats at the show and lunch buffet at Yoder's Restaurant in New Holland. For more information call Tom Moyer 610-432-3372 or St. John's Church office 610-264.8421 or email [tommoyer54@gmail.com](mailto:tommoyer54@gmail.com).



**Adele M. Kunkle** entered into eternal rest on February 10, 2026. We commend Adele into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to her family.

**Barbara I. Rapchak** entered into eternal rest on March 14, 2026. We commend Barbara into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to her family.



**Conrad and Janice Abelovsky** were joined in Holy Matrimony on June 10, 1972. They renewed their vows on February 15, 2026. May God continue to bless their lives together.



*In Loving Memory*

*Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church gratefully acknowledges memorial donations given in memory of Adele Kunkle by:*  
*Rozelle Higgins*

*Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church gratefully acknowledges memorial donations given in memory of Barbara Rapchak by:*

- Wayne Kincaid*
- Frances Worman*
- Dennis and Ellen Knauss*
- Leonard and Judy Makovsky*
- Norma Hrozencik*
- Marge Deutsch*
- Mary Ann Weiss*
- Kimberly Nicholson*
- Charles Church*
- Jeanette Holtzhafer*
- Charles Caton*
- Rebecca Strongowski*
- Jayne Frantz*
- John and Donna Seagreaves*
- Paul and Carol Balascki*
- Glenn and Beverly Hacker*
- Robert Tacker*
- Barbara Scheirer*
- Joseph Ebner and Sharon Bodor*



**YARD CARE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Doesn't it feel good when you come to church on a Sunday and the church grounds look beautiful?

Your help is needed. Sign up for a two-week period beginning April 28 until the end of summer to keep the church flower beds, walkways and perimeter free from weeds as well as deadhead the geraniums. You choose the day and time you work during the two-week period you chose.

Please sign up outside the church office or contact Gary Easton at 484-725-7387.

**We will be planting geraniums on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 At 6:00 pm.**

Volunteers will be needed. Bring your **shovels, trowels and watering cans.**

**RAIN DATE: The next sunny day at 6:00 pm!**



# COMMITTEE PAGE



## SERVICE TEAM



Reaching out in God's Love  
Support the Food Pantry  
*Whitehall Copley Hunger Initiative*

- ⇒ Toiletry items: baby/adult diapers, feminine products
- ⇒ Soups: chicken noodle, tomato, vegetable, creamed
- ⇒ Breakfast items: oatmeal (pouches or boxes), pancake mix, syrup, cereal
- ⇒ Starches: macaroni and cheese, ravioli, Spaghettios, canned/boxed potatoes, 1 lb bag rice
- ⇒ Canned fruit: low sugar or light fruit syrup
- ⇒ Miscellaneous: gravy, peanut butter, spaghetti sauce (can/plastic jar), tuna, pet food

Please reach out in God's love to those in need. *God's Work, Our Hands*. Please place your donations on the table in the narthex.



**Morning Prayer:** Each **Thursday morning at 9:30 A.M.** we are meeting in the church sanctuary to pray to the Lord. Come and join us as we gather together in the House of our Lord.



## Witness Committee

Each day there is a devotion of scripture and prayer sent from the church via email ([pastor@sothlc-egypt.org](mailto:pastor@sothlc-egypt.org)). If you have access to email and would like to receive the daily devotion, please email us your request with your address.

Geraniums  
For  
Pentecost Sunday  
May 24, 2026

Please check the category below and fill in the necessary information. Please use a separate form for each plant ordered. No orders will be taken without payment. Return the form along with \$11.00 for each plant in the offering plate or give to the Church Office.

**Deadline for orders is May 17, 2026.**

All geraniums will be planted around the outside of the church as living memorials.

\_\_\_ In Memory of Loved Ones

\_\_\_ In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Plant given by \_\_\_\_\_

Envelope # \_\_\_\_\_





- ✿ . . . to Cheryl Reisinger, Michael Saraceno, Melissa Sassaman, Barbara Scheirer, James Shope and Cheryl Tully for directing Thrivent Choice Dollars to SOTHLC in March.
- ✿ . . . to Bonnie and Wayne Fogle, Donald and Maxine Gantz, Jay Hill, Norma Hrozencik, Jason and Michelle Lesinski and Cathy Weaver for directing Thrivent Choice Dollars to SOTHLC in April.

**We received thank you notes from:**

- ✿ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America thanking SOTHLC for the gifts of \$590 toward World Hunger and \$5,205.34 for Lutheran Domestic Disaster Response received in November 2025.
- ✿ Thrivent for \$3,055 received from SOTHLC members through the Thrivent Choice program during 2025.
- ✿ Northeastern PA Synod, ELCA for SOTHLC's \$38,055.34 contributions during 2025. "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Helen Keller.
- ✿ Wayne and Bonnie Fogle: "Thank you... to all the ladies who gave of their time and talents to make the beautiful prayer shawl. It was greatly appreciated."
- ✿ Tonie Rothdeutsch (Debbie Klinger's mother) thanked us for the cards she received. She pins them on her bulletin board.
- ✿ Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative for 16.4 pounds of incontinence products donated by SOTHLC members in March 2026.



## YOUTH GROUP



Our **hoagie sale** made a profit of \$480.25. **Thank you** to everyone who ordered hoagies!

On **February 15**, one youth member and 2 adults went to the **Caring Hearts thrift store** at the South Mall. We helped the organization sort and reorganize the bags of donations they had that were going to their store in Walnutport. This is the free store and the clothing, toys and other items are given to those in need at no cost.

On **February 22**, we had a meeting and discussed the importance of how our words can hurt or build up people, which lead to some very interesting conversations.

On **March 15**, we ventured to **Itty Bitty Kitty cat shelter**. We fed, watered and cleaned up after the cats and then played with them. We finished with dinner at Smashburger.

The youth group sold nut rolls, strudels and sticky buns and made a profit of \$409. **Thank you** to everyone who bought a baked good!

We are planning to have a **used book sale in fall 2027**. Gather and **donate your used or new books, puzzles, games (no toys), CD's, DVDs, and vinyl records**. We will not be accepting textbooks, technical manuals, encyclopedias, reference books, medical books, self-help, diet, Reader's Digest Condensed Books, VCR tapes, cassette tapes, or magazines. Please - no items that have mildew or mold. Place your donations in the vestibule or in Fellowship Hall now through August 2027.

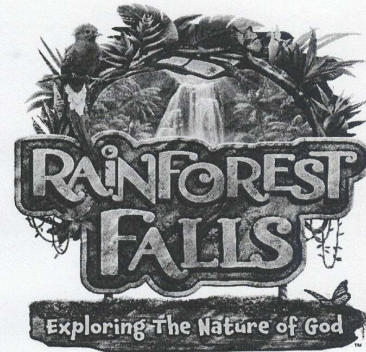
Spring is here and with it comes spring cleaning!! Don't forget **the clothing drive will continue through June 2027**.

Please bring any bags of clothing and put them downstairs in the last Sunday School room on the right. Make sure that all shoes are bagged separately. We are collecting new or gently used men, women and children's clothing, shoes, purses, belts, bed and bath linens, and stuffed animals. The clothing that is collected is distributed to local thrift shops and in areas in need of clothing. The clothing will NOT be shredded!!! All clean wearable clothing and shoes are reused by less fortunate people and families. The clothing does not end up in landfills which helps to keep America green and clean.

**Thank you** for your continued support of the youth group!

## Get your kids ready for a Vine time!!

At **RAINFOREST FALLS VBS**, kids explore the nature of God!



**RAINFOREST FALLS VBS** is filled with awesome Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, and touch! Hands-on science experiments, team-building games, unforgettable Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. Plus, we'll help kids discover how to see evidence of God in everyday life—something we call God Sightings®.

Your kids will also participate in a hands-on mission project, through a program called Operation Kid-to-Kid™, allowing our kids to help purchase life-giving fruit trees for families in Central America.

**RAINFOREST FALLS VBS** is great fun for children from ages 3 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade (entering 7<sup>th</sup> in the fall).

Mark these dates on your calendar: **June 22-26, 2026**

The fun starts at **6:00** and ends at **8:30**.

To register, go to <https://vbspro.events/p/soth> and register your child today

OR scan QR code



OR fill out a registration form and drop it off in the church office/mail it to the church at 4331 Main St, Whitehall, Pa 18052

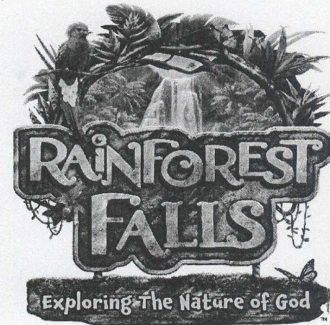
By Memorial Day, May 25th.

Any questions, please email [sothvacationbibleschool@gmail.com](mailto:sothvacationbibleschool@gmail.com).

# REGISTRATION FORM

One per Child

**REGISTER BY MAY 25!!**



Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M / F

Parent's name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_

Would your child like a RAINFOREST FALLS T-Shirt: Y / N?

Choose size: XS (2-4), S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16), Adult S, Adult M, Adult L, Adult XL, Adult 2XL

In case of emergency, contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies or other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Note: Anyone signing up after the deadline of May 25 will NOT be guaranteed a shirt.

\*Please return to church office. Address is 4331 Main St, Whitehall, 18052\*



**MILLER-KEYSTONE**  
BLOOD CENTER

*spring into* **Saving Lives!**



**Whitehall Lions Club Blood Drive  
at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church**

**4331 Main St., Egypt**  
**Wednesday, July 8, 2026**  
**9 AM - 2 PM**

If you would be willing to donate blood, please sign the sheet on the table at the top of the stairs or call the church office at 610-262-1600. Miller-Keystone Blood Center will contact you to schedule your appointment.

**APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED**

All donors must present valid ID with:

- First & Last Name
- Photo &/or Signature

Veterans, ask your coordinator about our complimentary MKBC Military Challenge Coin.



GIVEaPINT.org | 800-B-A-DONOR | 