

† The Rod and the Staff †

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

✠ September/October, 2026 ✠

Vol. 2026, Issue 5

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ASTOR'S CORNER

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

September is a month where we begin again some of the learning opportunities at Shepherd of the Hills. The Sunday School year for 2026–2027 will begin on September 13th. We will also begin our Confirmation classes and begin a brand new year of Bible Study sessions. The Word of our Lord is alive and available for all at Shepherd of the Hills. We also have other opportunities to experience the Word of our Lord—each week there is a daily devotion distributed to many members by e-mail and Daily Reflections on God's Word can be found Monday through Thursday at 7PM on Facebook and on our website. The Bible or the Word of our Lord is important to each one of us as children of God.

Shepherd of the Hills provides many opportunities to experience the Word of the Lord. Come and Hear His Word on a Sunday morning, and on Thursday morning at our Morning Prayer Service, come and read and discuss His Word in Sunday School and Bible Study. May the Word, the Bible be your favorite book in your life.

In Christ's Love,

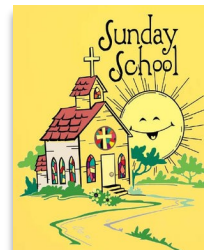
Pastor Schlegel

THRIVENT GRANTS

Each month Shepherd of the Hills receives a deposit into its Operating Account on behalf of the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Thrivent Choice program. By directing designated Choice Dollars through Thrivent Choice, eligible members recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable outreach grant dollars.

Sunday School resumes on Sunday

September 13th 10:15 AM!



Everyone is invited to come and learn of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We have Sunday School classes for all individuals from 3 years old through high

school.

Please come and join us as we learn together.



We are celebrating Youth Month in the month of September. We are rejoicing in our Lord for all the many young people who are a part of our family at Shepherd of the Hills. **During the month of September there will be envelopes on the table in the Narthex for our Youth Memorial Fund. This fund sponsors our youth to the ELCA Youth Gathering . Please support our youth at Shepherd of the Hills.**

This issue of The Rod and The Staff is given in honor of Sunday School and Youth Group members and leaders by Todd and Melissa Sassaman. This issue of The Rod and The Staff is given in honor of the wedding anniversary of Michelle and Jason Lesinski by Mom and Dad Gantz.



I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

Jean D. Reinert entered into eternal rest on August 7, 2026. We commend Jean into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to her family.



Linda Heinzelman entered into eternal rest on June 7, 2026. We commend Linda into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to her family.

William J. Schlener entered into eternal rest on May 31, 2026. We commend William into the hands of Almighty God. We offer our sincere sympathy to his family.

Celebration
of the
Sacrament of Baptism



On August 10, 2026, **Rylee Kay Reichard**, the daughter of Jarret and Ashley Reichard, was welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We wish all of God's many blessings on Rylee, her family and her sponsors, Kelly Jenkins and Tony Culp.

On August 9, 2026, **Elena Jean Giarizzi**, the daughter of Nicholas and Megan Giarizzi, was welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We wish all of God's many blessings on Elena, her family and her sponsors, Matthew Saraceno and Brittany Saraceno.

On June 20, 2026, **Kade Lewis and Ivan Lewis**, the sons of Curtis and Brittany Lewis, were welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We wish all of God's many blessings on Kade and Lewis, their family and their sponsor, Katelyn Cuciti.

On June 20, 2026, **Lillian Marie Cuciti**, the daughter of Daniel and Katelyn Cuciti, was welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We wish all of God's many blessings on Lillian and her family.

On June 20, 2026, **Lucas James Barlip**, the son of Dylan Barlip and Harley Ann Scheetz, was welcomed into the Family of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We wish all of God's many blessings on Lucas, his family and his sponsors, Donna Corider and Devlin Winters.



A. John Ammon

B. Carletta Bartholomew, Wendy Bauer, Michelle Beck, Bill Beidleman, Rosalie Beidleman, Carol Bennecoff, Paul Blankenhorn, Marianne Blocker, Ann Borell, Jacob Braido, Angela Bressler, Sandra Bressler, Bonnie Brown, Janice Buckwalter, Pat Budd, Mark Buresh

C. Jim Church, Nick Cihylik

D. Nancy Dietz, Marlin Doyne, Michelle Duffy, Kelly Durst

E. Kimberly Eastep, Jamie Elmore

F. Beverly Fekula, Gloria Fischl, Donald Fister, Annie Frack, Paul Frack, Kay Fronheiser

G. Rhonda Genovese, Ronald Gerlach, Teri Gerney, Carol Gilbert

H. Ronald Hacker, Steven Hanson, Cyndee Hart, Mike Hart, Dot Hartman, Brandon Heichel, Al Herman, Betty Hontz, Barbara Horvath, Susan Huber, Quinn Hughes

K. Jake Kaligis, Alex Katana, John Kotze, Keith Kramer, Barbara Kuhns, Bruce Kunkle

L. Carlotta Lambert, Scott Lazarus, Wayne Lazarus, Baby Lily

M. Shirley Mack, Baby Madelyn, Leonard Makovsky, Heather Markulics, Diane Masonheimer, Barbara Matuczinski, Lucy Messinger, Terry Messinger, Carole Mickley, Richard Miller, Christopher Moakley, Cathy Mounds, Kevin Moyer, Russell Myers

N. Cathy Nelcoski, Ava Nolan, Deborah Nogerol

P. Ed Palansky, Maryann Paluch, Sandra Phillips,

Q. Linda Quinn

R. Scarlet Randolph, Corey Rapchak, Keith Rapchak, June Reifinger, Reynold Reifinger, Aida Reinhard, Debbie Reinhard, Jan Reinik, Austin Roth, Toni Rothdeutsch, Mary Royer

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COMMITTEE PAGE

THE SERVICE TEAM



Whitehall Coplay Hunger Initiative

- ⇒ Toiletry items: No longer collecting adult and baby diapers.
- ⇒ Breakfast items: cereal
- ⇒ Vegetables: canned corn
- ⇒ Starches: spaghetti noodles, 1 lb bags of rice
- ⇒ Miscellaneous: spaghetti sauce (can/plastic jar), condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo)

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.

THE WITNESS COMMITTEE

Visit our web page at www.sothlc-egypt.org or our Facebook page to find out what's happening at our church.

Our email addresses are pastor@sothlc-egypt.org and secretary@sothlc-egypt.org. Daily devotions are sent out by e-mail. If you would like to receive the devotions, please e-mail us. A Daily Reflection is posted on the church's Facebook page Monday through Thursday at 7 PM. It includes God's Word, a reflection, and ending in prayer.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE Assistance Fund

Our Church has an Assistance Fund to help those in our congregation who need assistance. There are envelopes in the Narthex to give toward those in our church family. As we end the Summer and begin the Fall and Winter, the need is more prevalent. Please give so those in need in our Church Family may not go hungry or cold.

THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE MORNING PRAYER: Each **Thursday morning at 9:30 AM** 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.

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
 Tara Henry-Morrow, Service
 Lisa Kroboth, Youth
 Denise Smith, Worship
 Tara Henry-Morrow, Learning
 Ian Bordenick, Youth Representative

Rev. James W. Schlegel, Pastor

Prayer List– Continued from Page 2

S. Ruth Saadi, Michael Saraceno, Nancy Scheidt, Irene Scherr, Bonnie Schneck, Michael Schwentner, Steve Schwoyer, Corey Seese, June Sell, Sylvia Seregelyes, Jim Shope, Grace Siegel, Sue Sill, Sean Skelonis, Brian Smith, Sherry Smith, Barbara Stangle, Cindy Steckel
T. Michelle Taylor, Rosemarie Thrash, Susan Trumbauer, Brad Tully
U. Paul Unger
W. Bill Weighknecht, Diane Weiss, Jennifer Wentling, John Wexler, Jim Wick
Y. Lindsay, Adam and Baby Ellie Young
The Family of Jean Reinert
The Family of Gloria Schmidinger





As the children begin a new school year we will bless their backpacks. Please bring all backpacks to our worship service.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS AUGUST 30th AT 9 AM



To acknowledge the important role that pets play in people's lives, **we will have a special service to bless these important animals September 6 at 9 AM.** This will take place on our front lawn. (Remember to bring a lawn chair.)

All animals are welcome, provided they are friendly and under physical control (leash, harness, bridle or crate).

In case of inclement weather, we will meet in Fellowship Hall.

Pastor Schlegel will be on vacation **September 13-19.**

If you are in need of pastoral care during that time, please contact the church office.



- ☺ **to Michelle Lesinski, Diane Masonheimer, Jan Masonheimer and Tracy Tacker** for donating their July Thrivent Choice Dollars.
- ☺ **to Jacob Molchany and Cheryl Tully** for donating their August Thrivent Choice Dollars.
- ☺ **to all who donated life-saving blood** during the July 8th Whitehall Lions Club/Miller-Keystone Blood Drive. Thirteen units of blood were donated. *Each unit of blood can potentially save up to 3 lives. Thank you to everyone who participated!*
- ☺ **to those who donated their time and/or baked goods** to the July 21st Community Meal.
- ☺ **from Whitehall Lions Club to Church Council:** *for allowing the Whitehall Lions to host a Miller-Keystone Blood Drive at your church on July 8th.*
- ☺ **from Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative:** *Thank you, for your generosity in providing 335 pounds of food for those in need in Whitehall and Coplay. And thank you for holding a free Community Meal on July 21st.*



Our Harvest Home service is September 20th. We are looking for **non-perishables for the food bank.** These can be brought to the church any time before the 20th.

If anyone is interested in helping to set up the display, please contact Denise Smith 610-554-4500.



I Grew Up in Egypt PA Reunion

Saturday, September 26, 2026 10 AM-6 PM

Egypt Memorial Park

For more information, visit the *I Grew Up in Egypt PA* Facebook page. Registration forms are available at the church on the table at the top of the stairs. Online registration is available at:
<https://form.jotform.com/261614127296155>

Back-to-School Blessings



Remember to stick close to Jesus this year through prayer and reading your Bible.



Color your school year bright by letting the light of Jesus shine through you.



Write HisStory in your life this school year by doing what Jesus would do and making wise choices.



Use this notebook as a Gratitude Journal. For each day of school, write down things you are grateful for.



Use the bookmark to mark your favorite Bible story or favorite verse.



Use this Back-to-School Prayer Journal to write out your prayers to God.



Enjoy this sweet treat and remember that Jesus makes your life sweet!



COME AND JOIN US!

LEARN THE WORD OF THE LORD

Come and join us in September as we restart our Bible Study programs.

Wednesday, September 9 at 10:00 AM

Monday, September 21 at 10:00 AM

Place the dates in your calendar and come and join us.

SOTHLC Signs of Our Faithfulness

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"

End of Prior Month (as of July 31, 2026)

Monthly Stewardship Income: \$12,156 YTD: \$120,879

Monthly Operating Expenses: \$17,454 YTD: \$145,067

Stewardship Income includes Benevolence Envelopes:

July	\$308	YTD: \$3,059	(Budget for 2026—\$19,412) (Sent \$9,706)
June Electric	\$393	YTD: \$7,972	

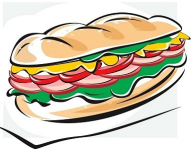
The monthly Treasurer's Report is available at the top of the stairs.



Several Ways to God's Word

We are offering several ways to God's Word. Monday through Thursday at 7 PM there is a Daily Reflection on the Church's Facebook page which includes God's Word, a reflection, and ending in prayer. We also have a Daily devotion via email, which is sent out almost every day. If you would like to receive the email, please contact the church office.





Hoagies will go on sale on September 13. The cost is \$7 for a hoagie and \$5 for a sandwich. Delivery will be October 4 after the service.

Our gift card sale will begin October 4. Order forms will be available on the table by the stairs. They should be filled out and turned in with a check by November 29. Or you may go to www.raiseright.com, log in and use the code **L9A248FA33862** to order online. All orders must be received by November 29 and they will be ready for pickup by December 6.

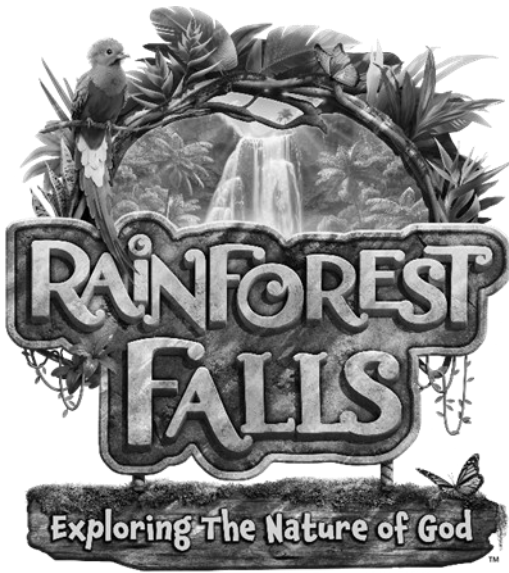


SAVE THE DATE!! **Roast Beef Lunch** returns on October 18. This is a sit down or take out meal. Lunch will include beef, mashed potatoes, 2 veggies, roll and butter, and dessert. Cost TBD-waiting on a meat cost. Tickets will go on sale September 27.

Our **nut roll sale** will tentatively begin on October 18 with a delivery date of November 15. We are waiting for confirmation from Country Cottage about prices and flavors, which will be determined in September.



To order hoagies, nut rolls and/or roast beef lunch tickets or to have a gift card order form mailed to you, call Lisa at 610-533-0161 or email sothlcyouthgroup@gmail.com.



Beginning June 22nd and running through June 26th, 20 children and 18 volunteers participated in RAINFOREST FALLS VBS. They did some cool experiments. They learned that God is our creator, knows everything, is our safe place, is Love and is Forever! They ate an assortment of Rainforest themed snacks and played some fun and wet games. They watched for God and shared their God sightings. Overall, RAINFOREST FALLS proved to be a fun and educational experience!

The children were asked to bring in an item for donation and change every night. These generous children brought in [craft supplies, school supplies, stuffed animals, nonperishable food, and personal care items which will be donated](#)

[to](#) Operation Christmas Child, Whitehall Coplay Hunger Initiative and the Children's Center. They also raised \$100 in loose change. This will be sent to Operation Kid to Kid, who will distribute it [to](#) purchase 11 fruit trees for families in Central America.

*Thank you to all the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends and neighbors who brought the children every night to attend RAINFOREST FALLS. Without you, we wouldn't be able to have a VBS program.

*Thank you to everyone in the congregation who donated food items, supplies or money towards the VBS program. Your support is greatly appreciated.

*And most importantly, a huge thank you to the volunteers who came every night to help, teach, guide and have fun with the children. Without you, this program would be impossible!!

We hope everyone involved had a great time and we hope to see everyone next year,

JULY 12-16, 2027 as we...





**Fall for Saving Lives.
Donate blood this season.**



MILLER-KEYSTONE
BLOOD CENTER

WHITEHALL LIONS CLUB BLOOD DRIVE

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
4331 Main Street, Whitehall, PA



Wednesday, Sept 8th
9:00 AM- 2:00 PM



To schedule your donation:
Call Shari Noctor at 610-730-8067

We Serve

16-year-olds are accepted with signed parent permission slip
Cannot donate on blood thinners.
You are eligible to donate every 56 days

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.



Before you donate, remember to drink plenty of fluids & eat within 2-3 hours of donation.