

The Fellowship

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Ebensburg Presbyterian Church

March 2024

**Ebensburg
Presbyterian Church
PO Box 327
200 N. Center Street
Ebensburg, PA 15931**

Mission Statement:

*"Ebensburg Presbyterians are
Christians giving help and hope to
all by sharing God's love."*

Church Contacts

ebgpresby@gmail.com

814-472-6920

Worship Service

Sunday Worship 11:00 AM

Church Staff

Church Treasurer
Kristine Segear

Clerk of Session
Jim Stratton

Custodian
Don Buterbaugh

Organist
Melissa Douglas

Web page:

www.ebgpresby.org

Facebook page:

www.ebgpresby.org

In everything give thanks:

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

"Counting our blessings," is an interesting phrase that carries an unfathomable depth of spiritual riches. In the American cultural setting, we set aside a National Day of Thanksgiving in November for everything that God has given us in the past twelve months. And although it's March right now and we're well into the Lenten Season, I am finding myself in a mood akin to that of Thanksgiving Day!

However, as I begin to transition to a different ministry, I need to pause, look back, and reflect on the blessings you've showered us with in the last four years since my family "began to share this community's journey of faith. These blessings are countless and beyond measure. As someone has said, "counting our blessings helps shift our perspective and bring gratitude into our lives." We are grateful for your kindness, generosity, and support.

As we look back, we reflect on the promises of God (our relocation to Ebensburg), acknowledge the abundant grace in our life (our stay with you), even in challenging times (Covid and other challenges that we went through as a family). Your continued support and prayer for our family has helped us refocus our attention to God's promise and our calling when anxiety sneaked in and got on our nerves, yet we managed to turn to prayer and seek the face of the almighty God for strength and intervention into our crisis. You have surrounded us with love and helped us refocus our attention away from worries and troubles, mostly when my son went through a challenging season. You did not judge us but supported us in many ways. You empowered us to move forward with hope in ministry and social engagements. We acknowledge respectful moments, no matter how small, because each positive exchange fuels resilience. We are blessed!

We cannot finish counting all the blessings we've received from our Lord: We have been captivated by your warm hearts and inspiring welcome, and the will to walk with us. As such, the Lord blessed our family with a little gift for Easter of 2021. BeenyJwok has been a lighted candle in our dark moments and restored our joy ever since. At Central Cambria, Ojha became a soccer player and a noted figure for his sprint skills. Bo is now a weekly contributor for CES NEWS (Central Cambria Elementary School NEWS). Thank you to Laura McGill for keeping me in the loop by sending me weekly news segments posted on YouTube. MarJwok anchors us in Ebensburg until she finishes high school, because of her love for CC. While Ojha is away at Geneva College in Beaver Fall, and continuing to play Soccer, Ammauel fights on and commutes to Saint Francis University from home.

Moreover, Apay went through the naturalization process and passed her test on February 20th for citizenship. Her ceremony and oath of citizenship will occur as soon as the immigration office determines the date of the ceremony. Personally, you've cultivated me and nurtured my faith. For this reason, I finished my Doctor of ministry and wrote a book while I was with you. Now I am an author. Can you imagine? All this couldn't happen without you; your love for us and your support helped us soar over our limitations and challenges.

What can I say? How many blessings can I count? It was a great time to be part of your believing community. You've helped us remember that God is faithful and trust that he knows what is best for us as we transition to Grace Community Church. I extend to you my appreciation and gratitude from the depth of my heart. I pray that this gratitude breeds hope in our relationship beyond this time. Hope encourages us to keep moving forward, knowing that God's grace is abundant. Thank you, Ebensburg Presbyterian Church, you've provided a space for me and my family to call home.
Thuru paar—See you soon!

Happy Easter
Pastor Owar

KID'S EASTER EGGSTRAVGANZA
SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2024
10:30 AM—NOON

KIDS FROM AGES 1—11 WELCOME!!



Please reserve your space by contacting the Church Office
(814-472-6920 or e-mail ebgpresby@gmail.com) by Wed., Mar 27

Please invite family and friends to join the fun
including: Crafts, Games and concluding with an
Easter Egg Hunt

**** We are accepting monetary donations and donations of small wrapped candy
that will fit in plastic eggs. Please bring to the church by
Sunday, March 24**

One Great Hour of Sharing

The OGHS offering will be collected on Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024. If you took a fish bank, please bring it in then. Envelopes will also be available for donations.



Easter Flower order forms are available at the church and they will be on our website also. The donation this year is \$17 /plant. **Orders and payment must be received by Sunday March 10th.**



Lenten Reflections

From Bob Sheehan

The Season of Lent began on Ash Wednesday, continues through Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and ends with the Celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord on Easter. While we're supposed to use this season for opportunities for reflection, spiritual growth and renewal, quite often many of us see it as a liturgical season to dread focusing on "What am I going to give up?" "How long can I live without whatever it is I am going to give up?" "How many more days before I don't have to give up whatever it is that I'm giving up?" Who wouldn't dread a liturgical season with such a narrow focus?

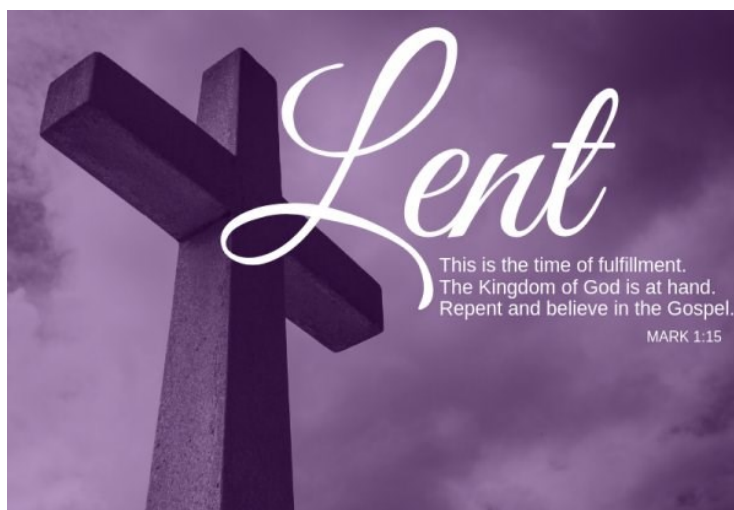
We're all encouraged to begin reflecting anew on the real purpose of Lent, the power this season can be for us, and the real potential for a deeper commitment to our faith, and most important, a deeper communion of love with God. Such a deeper understanding could give us a new attitude for Lent.

Lent is a time for every one of us to do more than simply deny ourselves; we need to welcome God into our lives in greater ways so that when we get to Holy Week and Easter, we have an even greater appreciation for the sacrifice that Christ made for us.

Who needs Lent? We all do. It's an invitation and not an imposition. It's a gift and not a burden. That is, it can be if we enter into it with our entire being, Lent can draw us into a deeper experience of the power of the Resurrection. Lent focuses on prayer, practices of piety, abstinence and a call to "turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel". When we fully understand the Season of Lent it can open us to a new experience of freedom. It's a necessary reminder of our own mortality -- "Remember you are dust and to dust you will return".

Lent is a time for spiritual preparation for Easter. And it's important to remember that God loves us whether we make Lenten changes or not. At the same time, Lent provides us an opportunity to make God a greater part of our life, and to take our faith to new levels. We can practice stewardship, a way of living that, above all, acknowledges God's presence in all we do.

As we continue in the Season of Lent in 2024, we receive the advice of Peter in 1st Peter 4:12-13 and 5:8-11. "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen."



Farewell
Rev. Dr. Owar Ojulu
May God Continue to Bless Your
Ministerial Journey.



We had a nice turn-out for our farewell dinner for Rev. Owar and his family, with lots of good food and even better fellowship.

Commissioned Ruling Elder **Bob Sheehan** will be filling our pulpit again for the month of March.
Please give him a warm welcome.

We continue to collect plastics to donate to the **Women's Help Center in Johnstown**. The plastics are recycled to make benches for their garden. They have received one so far and are working on a second bench.

Clean, dry plastics, free of food and organic residue are accepted. These include produce bags, store bags, ice bags, reclosable bags, cereal box liners, case overwrap, bread bags, newspaper sleeves, dry cleaning bags, bubble wrap, and plastic e-commerce mailers.

What's Happening...

The February 12th Session meeting opened with Pastor Owar reading from Psalm 13:1-6, reminding us that God is with us in our darkest times. Prayer followed.

After the agenda and minutes were approved, the treasurer's report was received. Then we heard from the committees.

Discipleship reported on plans to visit shut-ins and preparations for the Easter Eggstravaganza.

Family Life discussed plans for the Ash Wednesday service and a farewell dinner for Rev. Owar on February 25th.

Mission: Several thank you notes were received from recent gifts and a donation of \$200 was sent to the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. There is interest in continuing the Cambria-Gambella Collaboration even after Pastor Owar departs .

Property Management reported that a second bid will be sought for tree trimming, and an organ speaker may need to be repaired.

Worship: Communion is scheduled for Sunday March 3rd and Maundy Thursday March 28th (7 pm service).

All of the committee reports were accepted.

In New Business: It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the General Assembly statistical report as prepared. It was MSP to approve the use of the church by Rev. Alice Tondora for a 4-week course on Forgiveness. The course will take place on Thursday evenings Feb. 29, Mar. 7, 14, and 21.

Communications from Presbytery: Judy presented her report from the January Presbytery meeting, talking about a small church in our Presbytery, on the brink of closing, that has become a growing, vital congregation.

In the Moderator's Report, Rev. Owar discussed his transfer to Grace Community Church. He continues to visit and contact members of the congregation until the end of February.

The next meeting of the Session is scheduled for March 11, 2024.

From the Mission Committee:

From the Mission Committee

A load of plastic bags and films was delivered to the Women's Help Center in Johnstown. It will be recycled into benches for the garden at the Center. We continue to collect the plastics for them.

Thanks to our generous congregation, a donation is going to the St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry in Ebensburg.

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will be collected on Palm Sunday, March 24th. Bring your fish banks or place an offering in the OGHs envelopes.

Restoring hope, feeding the hungry, empowering the oppressed.



Boy Scout Troop 2095 of Patton is hosting a craft and vendor show March 23. Vendors that are interested in more information should send an email to

bsatrop2095@gmail.com.



March 5

Jeff Vietmeier

March 13

James Estep, Jr.

March 15

Leif Vietmeier

March 20

Debra Shamble

March 21

Mara Vermillion

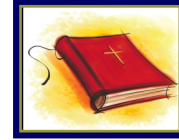
March 25

Samuel Wheeler

March 27

J. Gregory Stratton

Sunday Scripture Readings



March 3, 2024 Third Sunday in Lent

Color: Purple
Exodus 20:1–17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18–25
John 2:13–22

On Mount Sinai, God gives the Ten Commandments to Moses. The law of the Lord is perfect; God's commandments are clear. The message of the cross reveals God's wisdom and strength. Before Passover, Jesus chases the money-changers out of the temple.

March 10, 2024 Fourth Sunday in Lent

Color: Purple
Numbers 21:4–9
Psalm 107:1–3, 17–22
Ephesians 2:1–10
John 3:14–21

God instructs Moses to use a bronze serpent to save the people. Give thanks to the Lord, who forgives, heals, and delivers us. By the gift of God's grace we are saved through faith. Like Moses' serpent, Jesus will be lifted up as a sign of salvation.

March 17, 2024 Fifth Sunday in Lent

Color: Purple
Jeremiah 31:31–34
Psalm 51:1–12
or Psalm 119:9–16
Hebrews 5:5–10
John 12:20–33

God says: I will make a new covenant, writing my law in your heart. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new spirit within me. I seek you, O Lord, with my whole heart; I treasure your word. Jesus Christ, our high priest, is the source of eternal salvation. Jesus says: Now I will be glorified; I will die and be lifted up.

March 24, 2024 Palm/Passion Sunday / Sixth Sunday in Lent

Color: Red and/or Purple

Liturgy of the Palms

Mark 11:1–11
or John 12:12–16
Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29

Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey; the people shout: Hosanna! Waving palm branches, a great crowd greets Jesus in Jerusalem. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Liturgy of the Passion

Isaiah 50:4–9a
Psalm 31:9–16
Philippians 2:5–11
Mark 14:1–15:47
or Mark 15:1–39 (40–47)

The Lord God helps me; who will declare me guilty? Be gracious, Lord; my enemies assail me; my life is in your hand. Seek the mind of Christ, who was humble, but exalted by God. After the Passover meal, Jesus is betrayed, tried, and crucified. [abbreviated reading] Jesus is tried and crucified.

March 28, 2024 Maundy Thursday

Color: Purple (Until Church is Stripped)

Exodus 12:1–4 (5–10) 11–14 Before the Exodus, the Lord gives instructions for the Passover.
Psalm 116:1–2, 12–19 What shall I return to the Lord? I will lift the cup of salvation.
1 Corinthians 11:23–26 Paul recounts and interprets the tradition of the Lord's Supper.
John 13:1–17, 31b–35 Jesus washes the disciples' feet and gives a new commandment

Sunday Scripture Readings (continued)

March 30, 2024

Great Vigil of Easter

Colors: White and Gold

A minimum of three Old Testament readings should be chosen; Exodus 14 is always included.

Genesis 1:1—2:4a	The seven days of creation; God rests on the seventh day.
Psalm 136:1–9, 23–26	Give thanks to God, creator of all, whose love endures forever.
Genesis 7:1–5, 11–18; 8:6–18; 9:8–13	The story of the great flood and God’s covenant with Noah.
Psalm 46	Though the earth changes and the waters roar, God is our refuge.
Genesis 22:1–18	Obeying God, Abraham prepares to sacrifice his son Isaac.
Psalm 16	The Lord protects and instructs me; God preserves my life.
Exodus 14:10–31, 15:20–21	Pursued by the Egyptians, the Israelites escape through the sea.
Exodus 15:1b–13, 17–18	Moses sings praise to the Lord, who has delivered the people.
Proverbs 8:1–8, 19–21; 9:4b–6	Wisdom calls out: come, eat and drink; walk in the way of insight.
Psalm 19	The heavens declare God’s glory; the law of the Lord is sweet.
Isaiah 55:1–11	Come to the waters; listen and live; God’s promise will not fail.
Isaiah 12:2–6	Surely God is my salvation; with joy, draw water from the well.
Isaiah 61:1–4, 9–11	The spirit of the Lord is upon me; God clothes me in righteousness.
Deuteronomy 32:1–4, 7, 36a, 43a	I will proclaim the name of the Lord; God will have compassion.
Ezekiel 36:24–28	God will cleanse the people, giving them a new heart and spirit.
Psalms 42 and 43	Like a deer, I thirst for the living God; God is my help and hope.
Ezekiel 37:1–14	In a valley of dry bones, Ezekiel has a vision of hope for Israel.
Psalm 143	My soul thirsts for you, God; answer me, or I will go to the grave.
Daniel 3:1–29	God saves Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the furnace.
Song of the Three 35–65	
Jonah 1:1–2:1	Trying to avoid his call to Nineveh, Jonah is caught in a storm.
Jonah 2:2–3 (4–6), 7–9	From the belly of the fish, Jonah calls out to the Lord for help.
Zephaniah 3:14–20	Sing and rejoice, people of God; the Lord will bring you home.
Psalm 98	Let all creation make a joyful noise to the Lord, who is coming.
Romans 6:3–11	Through baptism, we share in Christ’s death and resurrection.
Psalm 114	The earth shakes and the sea retreats in the presence of the Lord.
Mark 16:1–8	Finding Jesus’ tomb empty, the women flee in wonder and fear.

March 31, 2024

Resurrection of the Lord / Easter Sunday

Colors: White and Gold

Acts 10:34–43	Peter testifies to Jesus’ death and resurrection; Jesus is Lord of all.
or Isaiah 25:6–9	A feast on the day of the Lord; God will swallow up death forever.
Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24	I will not die, I will live; this is the day that the Lord has made.
1 Corinthians 15:1–11	Remember the good news of Jesus Christ, by which we are saved.
or Acts 10:34–43	Peter testifies to Jesus’ death and resurrection; Jesus is Lord of all.
John 20:1–18	At the empty tomb, the risen Lord appears to Mary Magdalene.
or Mark 16:1–8	Finding Jesus’ tomb empty, the women flee in wonder and fear.

If you need to contact Bob Sheehan or the office for any pastoral needs below is the contact information:

Email: bsheehan49@aol.com

Phone: 814-931-1468 (cell phone)

Ebensburg Presbyterian Church: 814-472-6920



EBENSBURG FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Year to Date as of February 4, 2024

Actual Operating Income: \$ 5,885.01

Actual Operating Expenses: \$ 8,471.09

Gain/Loss: (\$ 2,586.08)



2024 Per Capita

2024 Per Capita - Our Per Capita offering, which supports the work of the presbytery, synod and general assembly, has been set at **\$44.00**. We are a connectional church, and we encourage you to submit your per capita as soon as possible! Just mark your envelope or the memo line on your check. We are then responsible for sending this full amount to the Redstone Presbytery. Thank you!

Ebensburg Presbyterian Church

March 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> <i>Boy Scouts 6 –8 PM</i>	4	5 <i>Happy Birthday Jeff Vietmeier</i> <i>Point of Freedom NA Group—6 PM</i>	6	7	8	9
10 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> <i>Boy Scouts 6 –8 PM</i>	11 <i>Session—7 PM</i>	12 <i>Point of Freedom NA Group—6 PM</i>	13 <i>Happy Birthday James Estep, Jr.</i>	14	15 <i>Happy Birthday Leif Vietmeir</i>	16 <i>NA Business Meeting - 9:45 AM</i>
17 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> <i>Happy St. Patrick's Day</i> <i>Boy Scouts 6 –8 PM</i>	18	19 <i>Point of Freedom NA Group—6 PM</i>	20 <i>Happy Birthday Debra Shamble</i>	21 <i>Happy Birthday Mara Vermillion</i>	22	23
24 Palm Sunday <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i>	25 <i>Happy Birthday Samuel Wheeler</i>	26 <i>Point of Freedom NA Group—6 PM</i>	27 <i>Happy Birthday J. Gregory Stratton</i>	28 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> <i>Worship 7 pm</i>	29	30 <i>Eggstravaganza 10:30—noon</i>
31 Resurrection of the Lord Easter Sunday <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i>						

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