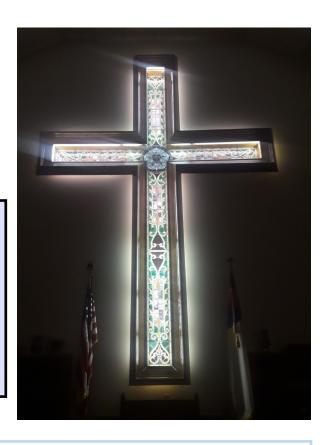
CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2024

MISSION STATEMENT:

As members of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, we strive to grow in faith, care for each other, and support the needs of the community as Jesus Christ has taught us.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...

Spring is an incredible time of the year to think about growth, joy, and the many blessings we have. Punxsutawney Phil has predicted that spring will come early. I sure hope that he is correct. Spring is also the season of Easter, planting crops, and thawing out from the winter months. It is a time to look ahead to the path God has prepared for us.

The greatest promise of hope, however, is that of Easter. While the season of Lent focusses on stories of personal temptation, of sacrifice, and on being prodigal and squandering opportunities to be responsible and caring, Easter in all of its glory, brings us full circle to redemption, forgiveness, and restoration. We travel through the challenges and darkness of our own Good Fridays to the joy and brilliance of resurrection and relationship with our Savior and that is certainly something to celebrate!

During this Lenten season many people give up something that they enjoy as a sign of sacrifice and to test their self-discipline. Christians believe that this is to represent Jesus Christ's sacrifice when he went into the desert to pray and fast for 40 days before his crucifixion. Maybe you can try something different this Easter Season. Add prayer to your day; having a conversation with God is an easy way to become closer to Him. Try to do something special for someone you know once a week. Attend Lenten services either in person or online. Read a devotion and the Bible each day.

I am working on a Scripture Jar. It will have 25 coded Bible verses designed to provide guidance and inspiration. If I had some help with this it would be a way for each of you to read the Bible during Lent. Find in the Bible, verses that talk about: wisdom, healing, thankfulness, purpose and forgiveness. Most study Bibles have in the back, an Index and Concordance that you can find where in the Bible topics are found. And, when all else fails, Google it. I look forward to seeing what you have found and I am excited to fill the jar with verses that each of you picked out.

Terry Fry
President of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Council

A Wholehearted Return

Joel 2:12 ... Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart...

Each Lent I hear the phrase" return with all your heart" – and I gulp. Surrendering one's whole being to God is quite a challenge. Every Lent I look again into my heart to discover those places that have not yet returned to the One who calls me. This is the wisdom behind having a Lenten journey each year. Knowing that I will be re-invited to return to God keeps me from being discourages as I struggle to give more of my whole self to this loving Creator.

What does it mean to "return"? Re-turning indicates that I have been there, that I am making a shift, turning around and heading there again. I cannot re-turn to a place where I have not already been. I find this thought very comforting because I know that if I go to the very depths of my being, I belong totally to God. Some places of my heart have strayed and lost their way, but I know they can return to God. Lent is a time to go looking for those places. Lent is also a time to remember that God's invitation stands forever. Always God waits for us to return with all our heart.

Let us this Lent return to God, return with all our heart.

See you all in church!!!!
God's Blessing,
Your Pastor and Servant,
Pastor Bob



Pastoral Visits or Emergencies

The pastor is available to visit both in the home and at the hospital, but he needs to know about that need. If you know in advance of a hospital stay or surgery you can also give him a note on Sunday morning and he will do his best to be there for you. All contact information is located below.

Church office:

Salem UCC (610) 689-5106
Christ ELCA (610) 689-5424
Home Phone (610) 944-1286
Cell phone (717) 802-2099
E-mail salemucc@dejazzd.com
celchurch325@outlook.com
rwitmyer@ptd.net
pastorbob@dejazzd.com
Web Pages www.salem-oley.org
www.christlutheran325.org

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS/MEETINGS

<u>Lutheran- Council</u> The Council will be meeting on the Second Tuesday of the month. In March, we will be meeting Tuesday the 12th and in April on Tuesday the 9th at 7PM. All members should attend.





<u>UCC- Consistory</u> The Consistory will be meeting on the third Monday of the month. In March, we will be meeting Monday the 18th and in April on Monday the 15th at 6:30PM. All members should attend.

Men's Breakfast The men of Salem and Christ Lutheran we continue to have our monthly Breakfast meeting. Right now, we are going to a local dinner for breakfast. We plan to meet on Saturday, March 16th and April 20th, at 8AMat Creekside Diner in Pleasantville. Men of the church come out and join us for fellowship, prayer and good food. Please join us.





<u>Worship Committee</u> The Worship committee will be meeting on Saturday, March 16^{th} , at 9:30AM and Saturday April 20^{th} , at 9:30AM. All members should try to be at this meeting so we can continue to plan for the Lent/Easter and Pentecost/Summer services.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

<u>Stewardship</u> Please during this time continue to give to the church. We know that these are hard times both personally and for the church. The church continues to be the church, worshiping, reaching out to those in need both in physical and spiritual needs. You can continue to support the church by sending your offerings and tithes to the church. Give as you can. Thank you and God's Blessings.



Monthly Food donations for Local Food Pantry The Food pantry is in need of food during this desperate



time. (we are collecting Chef Boyardee products for the month of March and 1 and 2 pound bags of rice for the month of April.) They are serving more families than ever. If you cannot bring in our food offerings for the month during our Sunday worship, I would encourage anyone who can, to send money donations to the Food pantry. Donations can be sent to Oley Valley Food Pantry, Friedens Lutheran Church, 1076 Memorial Hwy, Oley, PA. 19547. Any little bit can help right now.

OGHS Offering — " Give and change the world---It really is that simple" On Sunday, March 10, we will join with Christians in nine other denominations in receiving our One Great Hour of Sharing offering. Did you know One Great Hour of Sharing responds to disasters on average every 2.5 days, while it changes lives 365 days each year? Your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing is hard at work in 138 countries, including the U.S. When you make a gift to the offering you become a partner in the refugee, disaster relief, and community development efforts of the United Church of Christ. Through One Great Hour of Sharing, our gifts meet compelling needs, while also bringing the blessing of compassion into our own lives. The current economic situation is challenging for many of us. For many others, it has pushed beyond challenging to be life-threatening. I intend to increase my gift this year, and encourage you to consider doing so, also. Let us come on April 3rd with a generous, even sacrificial, gift for One Great Hour of Sharing. Sharing your resources, you'll change lives — including your own. " Give and change the world---It really is that simple."

WORSHIP ITEMS

Regular Schedule of Worship

The Shared Ministry board as well as both governing church bodies has decided on the following Worship Schedule. The Schedule will be: Sunday School would be at 9AM and Worship would begin at 10:15AM. The 1st and 3rd Sundays the worship will be at Christ ELCA at 10:15AM, the 2nd, 4th and 5th Sunday's worship will be at Salem UCC at 10:15AM. There will also be an 8AM Service twice a month and it will be held at Salem on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the Month. It will be about 45 minutes in length, it will include communion and we will sing the two acapella hymns. We will adjust the schedule as conditions dictate as we go forward.

(cont.)

WORSHIP ITEMS (cont.)

Worship online (Face Book/You Tube) We will continue to record the service each week and post it on the Internet platforms so folks can worship at home. We will also record special services as well and post them. Continue to look for the emails containing the You tube links or look on the Facebook pages of Christ Lutheran or Salem UCC to watch and worship.



<u>Communion</u> Communion will be held the 1st Sunday of the month at Christ ELCA and the 4th Sunday of the month



at Salem UCC. For those worshipping in person in the Sanctuary we will come forward to receive the bread from the pastor and the cups of wine/juice from the assisting elders. For those worshipping on Facebook and YouTube Communion will be in the form of Virtual communion, that means for those worshiping at home over the internet we suggest having elements of bread or cracker and juice ready as they worship. We can all partake of the elements where we are at the

appropriate time in the service.

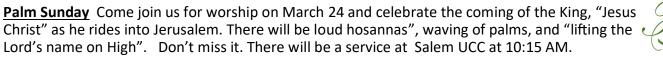
LENTEN AND SPECIAL SERVICES

Bread, Bowl and Bible This Spring we'll participate in the Oley Cluster's return of Bread, Bowl and Bible (3PM-6PM Sundays in March). The dates are Sunday, March 3^{rd,} and Sunday, March 10th. The theme for this years is; "Biblical Storytelling: Seeing Our Story in God's Story". Our presenter will be The Rev. Dr. Eugene Zaiser. The Oley Cluster congregations will take turns providing soup & bread meals for this time of Faith Formation, Fellowship and Food! This 2-part series will be hosted at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1749 S. Main St. Bechtelsville, PA 19505.



<u>Soup & Word</u> This year, I would like to again offer an opportunity for those who would like to spend some time in a Lenten devotional journey. The last several years, we have had a good response to this event. This year, it will again be held every Wednesday during Lent, starting with March 1st. Those attending would meet from 11:30AM to 12:30PM for Soup, Bread and the Word. If you can only come to one or two sessions, please come

Lenten Daily Devotional During Lent Pastor Bob will be again posting on YouTube and Facebook a daily Lenten devotional following themes "Creation to Salvation" from "Marci Alborghetti". Look for an email in your email box with the You tube link or check on Facebook on Salem's or Christ Lutheran's pages for the daily devotional. I hope these will be helpful as we journey together this Lenten Season.





Maundy Thursday March 28th will be our celebration of Maundy Thursday. The service this year will start at 6PM at Christ ELCA with the celebration of a Seder meal and the Last Supper at 7PM. See Cindy Richard for tickets at \$5.00 each. The meal includes lamb, potato filling, lettuce with hot bacon dressing, roll and fruit salad. A small amount of roast beef will be offered if you do not care for lamb. Please come out and celebrate the Lord's Supper as we journey with Jesus to the cross this Lent.

Good Friday Prayer Vigil The vigil will be held Friday; March 29th and it will begin at 5AM and last till 3PM. We

need people to sign up for half hour time slots. The purpose is to have someone praying during the hours that Jesus would have been suffering and dying on the cross. We will have the Sanctuary at Salem UCC open during this vigil. The time slots will begin at 5 AM in the morning the next time slot is 5:30AM, 6AM, 6:30AM and so on until 3PM. The signup sheet will be posted on the bulletin board in the hall way in Salem. Even if you don't get to sign up you can come and spend a half hour in prayer if you want, we just want to have each slot covered by someone.



Please consider spending just one-half hour in sacrifice for the one who gave his life so you could have life.

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<u>LENTEN AND SPECIAL SERVICES</u> (cont.) <u>Good Friday Service</u> will be held on Friday March 29th, at 7PM. This service is an appropriate way to end our Len-

ten journey. So many Christians tend to ignore Good Friday, the day Christ was crucified, or they want to jump right into the Easter Celebrations. Friends, please remember we cannot have the resurrection of Christ without His crucifixion. This is an important day for the life of the church, and we should take time to be in worship and prayer sometime during Good Friday. This year the service will be held at Salem UCC, and it will also be recorded and posted online for you to worship by. The service will be a light

to darkness service.

Easter Dawn Service This year we will hold an Easter Dawn service. It will be held in the Cemetery area in front of Salem UCC at 6:30AM. The service will be about 30 minutes in length with some singing (acapella) we will not have communion at this service.

Easter Sunday March 31st there will be two services, an 8AM service at Salem UCC and 10:15AM at Christ ELCA. Let us celebrate together the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We will also record the service and post it for you to worship on Facebook and YouTube. We will have communion on this special day at both the 8AM and 10:15AM services. For those who wish to participate in communion who are worshipping online should set their table prior to worship with some bread or a cracker and some juice.

<u>Cancer Awareness Sunday</u> - Sunday April 14th will be Cancer Awareness Sunday. On this Sunday we will be centering on the theme of "Cancer". We will remember all those who have been touched by this disease. During this service we will light candles, lift up our prayers and remember the survivors as well among us. The worship committee has purchased silk daffodils that folks can sponsor in memory or honor of loved one. The daffodils will be used in the worship and all the money will be given to the cancer society. The daffodils will remain at the church so we can reuse them on future Cancer Awareness Sundays. Doing the daffodils in this manner will mean all money used to sponsor a bunch can be sent to help fight cancer instead of only a portion. The sponsor form will be in the bulletin closer to the date. I hope all can attend this special service. It has been a very meaningful service in the past and I'm sure this year will be no different.





Earth Sunday On Sunday April 21st we will be celebrating Earth day during our worship time. We will be uplifting the need to conserve our recourses as well as other concerns. There will be a special time with the children with Jeremy Deysher leading that part of the worship. Please be apart of this special worship as we celebrate God's wonderful creation.

OTHER REPORTS

Chapters and Verses Book Club After many book suggestions and a vote on a group of those books, there were several possible options, which thus allows for several options for future reading as well. At this point, the next book for the group will be Lessons in Chemistry by Elizabeth Zott. The book club will meet once again in April; please save April 10th, 17th, and 24th for possible meeting dates at 7PM at Christ ELCA. The definite dates will be determined soon and will be listed in the bulletin. Lessons in Chemistry focuses on a very intelligent female chemist in the early 1960's as she struggles to overcome the stereotypes held about women during this era. The novel, which has been made into a movie as well, is described as laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and poignant, so it should prove to be a great read! Everyone is welcome to join us for our discussion. Please let Michele Witmyer know if you plan to join us in person or via zoom.

Family Fun Night at Christ Lutheran It will be held on Friday, March 8th from 6PM to 8PM. We will be serving supper for the children at 6PM followed by an Easter Story, Easter craft and games. Ice cream will be served at the end of the night.

Offering Envelopes The 2024 offering envelopes are here. You can pick up your envelopes anytime. Often over the years many of our folks forget to pick up their envelopes. If you know of a family member who has not picked up theirs please see that they get them. Your help will same us time trying to track them down.

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OTHER REPORTS (cont.)

Property Committee Nothing to report.

Flower/ Bulletin Sponsor Book Our sponsor book has been updated for 2024. If you sponsor flowers/bulletins for a Sunday service at Salem UCC, the flowers will be delivered to Salem UCC and the sponsoring information will be forwarded to Salem UCC.

Oley Valley Community Benefit Association The annual Pot Pie Benefit Dinner is on Sunday, March 10th (Snow date is Sunday, March 17th) at the Oley Valley Elementary School. Please mark your calendar. For additional information contact Nick Blank 484-650-5376, Jay Roberts 610-781-0192, Tom Hoch 610-921-2162, or Jim Brady, 610-207-7278.

Covered Bridge Sunday School Order forms for "Raise Right", formerly Shop with Scrip, are on the Narthex table.



The order is due on Sunday, March 10th. Please keep in mind Easter, Mother's Day and graduations when ordering. Thank you for your continued support with our fundraiser. The next order form will be included in the July/August issue of the church newsletter.

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, March 30th at 10:30AM. Registration forms with more details are on the Narthex table. Please return the registration form by Sunday, March 24th.

Please contact Tammy Eckert 610-367-2930 if you have any questions or concerns about Sunday School.

LUTHERAN LECTIONARY READINGS

MARCH

Sun Mar 3rd — 3rd Sunday of Lent 1st-Exod 20:1-17 Psalm 19 2nd-1 Cor 1:18-25 Gospel-John 2:13-22

Sun Mar 10th—4th Sunday of Lent 1st-Num 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 2nd-Eph 2:1-10 Gospel-John 3:14-21

Sun Mar 17th—5th Sunday of Lent 1st-Jer 31:31-34 Psalm 51:1-12 2nd-Heb 5:5-10 Gospel-John 12:20-33

Sun Mar 24th—Passion/Palm Sunday 1st-Isa 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16 2nd-Phil 2:5-11 Gospel-Mark 14:1-15:47 OR Mark 15:1-47

Thurs Mar 28th—Maundy Thursday 1st-Exod 12:1-14 Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 2nd-1 Cor 11:23-26 Gospel-John 13:1-17, 31b-35



Share God's Word

Fri Mar 29th—Good Friday 1st-Isa 52:13-53:12 Psalm 22 2nd-Heb 10:16-25 OR Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9 Gospel-John 18:1-19:42

Sun Mar 31st—Easter Day 1st-Acts 10:34-43 OR Isa 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 2nd-Rom 6:3-11 OR 1 Cor 15:1-11 OR Acts 10:34-43 Gospel-John 20:1-18 OR Mark 16:1-8 OR John 20:1-18

 $\frac{APRIL}{\text{Sun Apr 7}^{\text{th}} - 2^{\text{nd}}} \text{Sunday of Easter}$ 1st-Acts 4:32-35 Psalm 133 2nd-1 John 1:1-22 Gospel-John 20:19-31

Sun Apr 14th—3rd Sunday of Easter 1st-Acts 3:12-19 Psalm 4 2nd-1 John 3:1-7 Gospel-Lue 24:36b-48

Sun Apr 21st—4th Sunday of Easter/ **Good Shepherd Sunday** 1st-Acts 4:5-12 Psalm 23 2nd-1 John 3:16-24 Gospel-John 10:11-18

Sun Apr 28th—5th Sunday of Easter 1st-Acts 8:26-40 Psalm 22:25-31 2nd-1 John 4:7-21 Gospel-John 15:1-8

Covered Bridge Sunday School Fundraiser

This is the Sunday School's fundraising program. The program is "Raise Right" formerly "Shop With Scrip." On the order form is a list of businesses and the amount of gift card(s) available. You pay the amount of the gift card and you will receive it to

either use by yourself (like cash) or give as a gift. Sunday School will receive a percentage of the amount purchased. Percentage amounts differ with each company.

Please plan ahead. We plan for the next order form to be in the Jul/Aug Sprechen.

This order is due on Sunday, March 10, 2024.

Payment is due with order. Please make check payable to "Salem UCC Sunday School." This is an ongoing fundraiser. I have added Visa gift cards to help you support any local businesses that are not on the list. Please contact Carolyn Eckert (610-367-6433) if you have any questions. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Name				
Address				
Phone #				
Company	\$ Amount	# of cards	\$ Total	Rebate %
Visa Gift Card	\$50.00			1.25
Visa Gift Card	\$100.00			1.25
Ace Hardware	\$25.00			4
Amazon	\$25.00			1.7
Amazon	\$100.00			1.7
Applebee's	\$25.00			8
Arby's	\$10.00			8
Barnes & Noble	\$10.00			8
Barnes & Noble	\$25.00			8
Barnes & Noble	\$100.00			8
Bath & Body Works	\$10.00			12
Bath & Body Works	\$25.00			12
Best Buy	\$25.00			4
Best Buy	\$100.00			4
Boscov's	\$25.00			8
Cabela's	\$25.00			10
Cabela's	\$100.00			10
Carter's	\$25.00			10
Children's Place	\$25.00			12
Claire's	\$10.00			9
Cracker Barrel	\$10.00			8
Cracker Barrel	\$25.00			8
CVS Pharmacy	\$25.00			6
Dairy Queen	\$10.00			6.5
Dick's Sporting Goods	\$25.00			8
Domino's	\$10.00			8
Dunkin' Donuts	\$10.00			3.5
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Total - this page Total - front page

Grand Total of order



EASTER EGG HUNT

The Covered Bridge Sunday School will hold their annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30th, 2024 at 10:30AM at Salem UCC. The egg hunt is open to all children up to sixth grade. We will also have an egg hunt for Jr/Sr high school students and adults in attendance. Older children, parents and grandparents are welcome to come and watch the egg hunt and share in the lunch that will be served following the egg hunt. The Sunday School will provide hot dogs and beverages for the lunch and we are asking those who attend to bring ONE item for the lunch. (See form below) Please complete the form below and return to a Sunday School teacher, Judy Dautrich, or Tammy Eckert by March 24th. Please remember to bring a basket for your child.

vve will ac	tend the I	Easter Egg	g Hunt on S	Saturday M	arch 30 th at	10:30AM
Names of	children A	Ages/Scho	ool Grade			
 		 				
# of adults	and olde	er children	who will	attend	 	
will dona	ite the fol	llowing ite	em for the	lunch follo	wing the egg	g hunt: (circle on
	Chips	Pretzels	Cookies	Cupcakes	Brownies	Other
Other:						

JUST FOR LAUGHS

Three doctors are waiting in line at the Pearly Gates. St. Peter walks out and asks the first one, "What have you done to deserve entrance into heaven?"

"I am an obstetrician and have brought babies into the world."

"Good enough to enter the gates," replied St. Peter, and in the obstetrician goes. The same question is asked of the second doctor. "I am a general practitioner and go to developing countries three times a year to cure the poor."



St. Peter is impressed and allows her through the gates.

The third doctor steps up in line and, knowing the question, blurts out, "I am the director of an HMO."

St. Peter thinks about this for a while, then says, "Okay, you can enter heaven...but only for two days."

[Reprinted with permission, Church Chuckles, Tickling Your Holy Funny Bone]



COVID-19 UPDATE

At the time of this printing, the use of personal protective items are not mandatory in Pennsylvania. However, everyone is encouraged to use their own discretion to wear a mask, use hand sanitizer, staying 6 feet apart, etc. Please bring a mask from home. Hand sanitizer is available on the Narthex table and/or in the back of the sanctuary.

Please note that the schedule could change due to weather conditions and health conditions in the community and recommendations by health officials.

MARCH 2024 *Sunday, March 3rd—3rd Sunday of Lent 8AM Worship/Communion—Salem UCC 10:15AM Worship/Communion—*Christ Lutheran* 3PM Bread, Bowl, and Bible—Trinity Lutheran Church, Bechtelsville, PA Theme-"Biblical Storytelling: Seeing Our Story in God's Story" Part 1 Wednesday, March 6th—Soup, Bread and Word—Theme—"Woman Here is Your Son...." 11:30 AM—12:30 AM Salem UCC *Sunday, March 10th—4th Sunday of Lent 10:15AM Worship/Salem UCC 3PM Bread, Bowl, and Bible—Trinity Lutheran Church, Bechtelsville, PA Theme—"Biblical Storytelling: Seeing Our Story in God's Story" Part 2 Wednesday, March 13th—Soup, Bread and Word—Theme—"My God, My God....." 11:30AM—12:30PM Salem UCC Saturday, March 16th 8AM Men's Breakfast at Creekside Diner, Pleasantville. 9:30AM Worship Committee meeting at Salem UCC *Sunday, March 17th—5th Sunday of Lent 8AM Worship/Communion—Salem UCC 10:15AM Worship/*Christ Lutheran* Wednesday, March 20th—Soup, Bread and Word—Theme—"I AM Thirsty" 11:30AM—12:30PM Salem UCC *Sunday, March 24, 2024- Palm Sunday/OGHS offering 10:15 AM Worship/Salem UCC Wednesday, March 27th—Soup, Bread and Word—Theme—"It Is Finished" 11:30AM—12:30PM Salem UCC *Thursday March 28th—Maundy Thursday 6PM Seder Meal/Communion/Christ Lutheran *Friday March 29th—Good Friday Services Good Friday Prayer Vigil—5AM to 3PM/Salem UCC Worship/Tenebrae 7PM/Salem UCC *Sunday, March 31st—Easter Sunday Easter Dawn Service at 6:30AM in the cemetery in front of Salem UCC Easter Sunday/Communion 8AM Worship/Salem UCC 10:15AM Worship/*Christ Lutheran*

APRIL 2024

*Sunday, April 7th—2nd Sunday of Easter 8AM Worship/Communion—Salem UCC 10:15AM Worship/Communion—*Christ Lutheran* *Sunday, April 14th—3rd Sunday of Easter/Cancer Sunday 10:15AM Worship/Salem UCC Saturday, April 20th 8AM Men's Breakfast at Creekside Diner, Pleasantville. 9:30AM Worship Committee meeting at Salem UCC *Sunday, April 21st—4th Sunday of Easter/Earth Sunday 8:00 AM Worship/Communion—Salem UCC

8:00 AM Worship/Communion—Salem UCC 10:15AM Worship—*Christ Lutheran*

*Sunday, April 28th-5th Sunday of Easter

10:15AM Worship/Communion—Salem UCC

*Worship service recorded for downloading online (Face Book & You Tube)

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church P.O. Box 616 325 Covered Bridge Road Oley, PA 19547-0616

Address Service Requested

