



# The United Presbyterian Church of New Kensington

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## March 2026 Newsletter



### Our Mission

is to serve God by:  
Preaching God's Word,  
Teaching God's Love,  
Healing God's People

### Our Staff

The Rev. Becca Siddle    Covenant Pastor  
[pastoroffice@tupcnk.org](mailto:pastoroffice@tupcnk.org)

Holly Lightner    Organist/Choir Director

Mary Ellen Hicks    Secretary  
[churchoffice@tupcnk.org](mailto:churchoffice@tupcnk.org)

Lynn Crumley    Custodian  
Bob Berisko    Custodian

Deacons    Food Bank

### Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday  
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Regular Worship Hours:

10:00 am Sunday School  
11:00 am Worship



Grace and peace to you, friends!

As we make our way through this holy season of Lent, I'm always curious about how different people observe this time as it is set apart on the Church calendar. For some, it's seen simply as the precursor to Spring and warmer weather; once Lent starts, we know there can't be too many more wintry days. For others, it's the reminder to get serious about shopping: for chocolate bunnies, new pastel dresses, and of course, the perfect spiral-cut ham for that special Easter dinner! Still, for many people, particularly if they grew up in the Roman Catholic tradition, Lent is primarily about sacrifice. The discipline of giving up something for Lent is intended to help us turn our hearts and minds back toward God.

To be perfectly honest, I've viewed Lent through all of the above lenses - and many others, I'm sure of it. Lent during that first year of the pandemic, for example, certainly held a different meaning than it did during the years I had young children at home. THIS year, I've been very aware of one particular Scripture verse that keeps presenting itself to me in myriad ways and seems to be shaping the way I'm observing Lent:

*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit (John 12:24).*

This verse is, of course, a metaphor for the entire journey of Holy Week that Lent is preparing us for. More than that, it's metaphorical for the life, death, and resurrection of Christ AND it's metaphorical for so much of the living-dying-living cycle that surrounds us daily, on all sides!

But most of us, I'm convinced, do not typically seek, expect, or even look for signs of new life after death! Read that again. Now ask yourself...how can Christians really be who we claim to be if that expectation is not sincerely part of our worldview?? We'll pick up with Part 2 of this conversation next month. But for now, I encourage you - as a dynamic way to observe Lent - to be on the lookout all around you for examples of new life emerging from the old. Look in unexpected places. Look into routines, personalities, finances, relationships, nature, neighborhoods, the church, the community, etc. And write down what you observe - because you're not going to want to forget what you've seen!

May God bless you and yours during this holiest of seasons,

*Becca*

Pastor Becca

A **GIANT THANK YOU** to everyone who made our Souper Bowl Sunday not only successful but FUN. We brought in 117 units of food and also raised \$220.73 for our food bank!! The Seahawks may have won the real Super Bowl, but according to our table-top football game, the Steelers (of course!) won with \$102.73 donated, the Seahawks earned \$99 and the Patriots brought in \$19. All of these donations help support our Emergency Food ministry coordinated by our Deacons.



### 2026 Easter Remembrances

The Board of Deacons is accepting monetary gifts in memory and/or in honor of loved ones during this holiday season. You may place your order form and gift in the offering plate on Sundays or call the church office **NO LATER THAN, SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026**. Please make checks payable to: **The Board of Deacons**.

Also, the Worship Committee will be offering lilies & tulips (yellow or pink) as a way of remembering or honoring loved ones. Lillies are \$12.00 and tulips are \$8.50. You may place your order form and payment in the offering plate on Sundays or call the church office **NO LATER THAN, SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026**. If you are paying by check, please make it payable to: **The United Presbyterian Church of New Kensington**.



(Note: order forms are available in the church narthex.)

### ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING (OGHS)



Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The work done in support of the causes supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees — serves individuals and communities in need. This work provides people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Programs supported are the Presbyterian Hunger Program, the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-

Development of People, and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. This Offering, which we will receive during Lent, **March 1 through March 29<sup>th</sup>**, helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. Envelopes will be available in the pew racks. Thank you for prayerfully considering your giving to the OGHS.

***IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!***

# The Bulletin Board



## REQUESTS FOR PRAYER

- Bobby Long\*
- Lou Ann Burford\*
- Mildred Wagner
- Alyssa Pistininzi
- Cyndi & Mark Bondra
- Jackie & Gary Chickerella
- First responders
- Military personnel
- Foster families

- Carl Schultz (brother of Randy)
- Marianne Irwin (friend of Bob Thomas)
- Nora Pastrick (Bob Thomas' sister)
- Casey (niece of Robin Sorch)
- Oliver (Casey's newborn baby)
- Richard Vigrasse (Karen Grillo's brother)
- Adam Veino (Friend of Robin Sorch)
- Michelle Samios (Friend of Robin Sorch)

\*Denotes those who are home bound or nursing home residents.



### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- David Capo 3/1
- Karlee Thimons 3/2
- Steve Powell 3/5
- Addison Johnson 3/8
- Aleigha Johnson 3/8
- Jennifer Williams 3/11
- Amy Grillo-Dameron 3/12
- Kelly Conte 3/13
- Charlotte Claypool 3/13
- Jordan Alexander 3/20
- Thomas Binder 3/20
- Cherilynn Mosley 3/25
- Matthew Yeamans 3/25
- Donna Williams 3/29

**Note:** Jacquelyn Montgomery 2/27 and Kathryn Whitacre 2/28, were inadvertently missed from the February birthday list. Happy Birthday!



### College Boxes



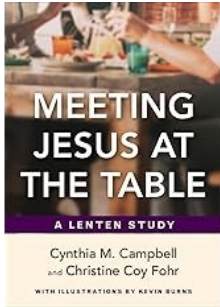
Our Deacons are packing boxes to send to our four college students. If you would like to help with this special project, we would be grateful. Donations can be left in the church office or in the basket in the Narthex. Please be sure to mark the items "College Boxes." Individually wrapped suggestions include; potato chips, corn tortilla chips, Fritos, salsa, pretzels, crackers, cookies, Swedish Fish, Hershey's Chocolate, Snickers, M&M's, etc. **We will collect up to and including Sunday, March 8th.** Thank you for helping us remind our students they are loved!

### Mark your calendar for these upcoming April dates:

- Wed., April 1, 1:00 Shawl Group
- Thurs., April 2, 9:00 Food Truck Delivery
- Thurs., April 2, 6:30 Maundy Thursday Service
- Sat. April 4, 9:00 Food Bank Distribution
- Sun., April 5 Easter Sunday
- Mon. April 13, 6:30 Session
- Tues., April 14, Deacons Deacons
- Wed., April 22 Earth Day



### New Bible Study for Lent



This conversational Bible Study will meet each Wednesday through Lent. We will gather in the chapel each week at 4:00 pm. and would love for you to join us! The weekly lessons are not built upon prior ones, so joining at any point will work.

The *Prayer Shawl Group* is meeting **Wednesday, March 4 at 1:00** in the church library. If you've ever wanted to learn how to knit, now's the time!

We knit but we also enjoy fellowshiping. Come, bring a friend, and let's enjoy some treats together!

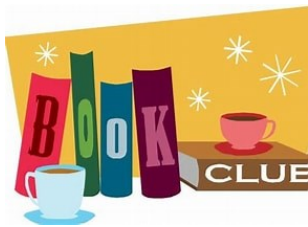


### Food Bank Schedule

- Mar. 5, 9:00 - Food Truck Delivery
  - Mar. 7, 9:00 - Food Bank Distribution
- Volunteers are always appreciated!**

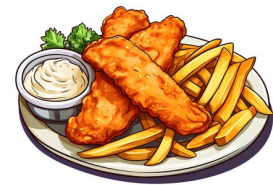
### Adult MeetUp for March

There will be no MeetUp in March. Please enjoy some of the many fish fry's offered in this area during Lent. Look for more information on the next MeetUp in the April newsletter.



Join us in the library for great conversation!

March 25 *Big Stone Gap* by Adriana Trigiani



We hope you will make plans now to be a part of this unique Holy Week Service in the sanctuary. Recall, Maundy Thursday is the evening that commemorates Jesus' final meal with his disciples. We will share a special Table Communion together, then - through dramatic readings and song - witness the symbolic darkness that always comes *before* the light and joy of Easter morning. This service will be **Thursday, April 2 at 6:30 pm.**

**February Session Meeting Summary**

**Community Outreach & Engagement**

- We will prepare and serve the meal for the Feb. 19 meeting of the Communities of Transformation (COT) group we've been supporting for the past nearly two years (at Central Pres in Tarentum)
- In initial planning phase of an "Over 65" Joint Spring Fellowship Meal with Grace Presbyterian Church and Logan's Ferry Church – to be hosted by TUPCNK
- We plan to host the Slow Roll Bicycle Independence Day Celebration again (similar to past two years)

The **"Congregational Care"** Sessional committee has been renamed Congregational Life and Education will now fall under this committee as a sub-committee.

- A new Bible Study for Lent will begin Feb. 25 (4pm) and meet each week through Lent

**Endowment, Finance, & Mission**

- Session approved the budget for the year 2026
- The per capita rate from the Presbytery increased by \$10 per member for 2026
- Because TUPCNK supports local initiatives with mission monies, we do not commit as much as Redstone Presbytery requests toward Presbytery-wide mission endeavors

**Property, Building, & Grounds**

Using monies donated by members last fall to our Special Projects List, Session approved the purchase of:

- Three digital cordless microphones for the sanctuary (because of ongoing interference with our old mics)
- Three new office computers (the current ones can no longer even accept crucial software updates)

**Worship**

- Ash Wed. will consist of a fellowship meal at 6 pm and transition to a worship service at 6:45 (all in the chapel)
- This year we will have a Holy Thursday service instead of a Good Friday Service (details TBA)

**Other**

Please have your page for the Annual Report completed and submitted by Wed. March 11.

**DEACON'S REPORT**

**February 7th Food Bank**

76 Households: including 7 New, 22 Senior Boxes, 16 Doubles

2 Birthday Bags

We had 17 volunteers, working a total of 66.5 hours.

**March 2026 Food Bank**

Truck Delivery – March 5

Distribution – March 7

**Food Pantry / Cooler Ministry Wish List**

- Potatoes, canned
- Instant Mashed Potatoes (boxed or bagged)
- Cans of Ravioli, Spaghetti O's
- Ramen, Cup of Soup
- Fruit snacks
- Small bags of chips
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly (plastic jar)
- Applesauce (plastic jar)
- Pasta / Spaghetti
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Mac 'n Cheese
- Cereal
- Juice (plastic bottle)

**Funeral Dinners – None**

**Next Deacon Meeting:** March 10, 2026 @6:30pm

Submitted by Amy Grillo Dameron - Deacon Secretary



**March 8, 2026**

# March 2026

March 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship	2 10:00 Care Group 10:00 Garden Club 7:30 AA	3 2:30 Sonward	4 1:00 Shawl Group 4:00 Bible Study	5 9:00 Food Truck Delivery 2:30 Sonward	6 OFFICE CLOSED	7 9:00 Food Bank Clients
8 <b>Daylight Savings Time Starts</b> 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship	9 10:00 Care Group 6:30 Session 7:30 AA	10 2:30 Sonward 6:30 Deacons	11 4:00 Bible Study	12 2:30 Sonward	6 OFFICE CLOSED	14
15 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship <b>Lilly &amp; Tulip order due</b>	16 10:00 Care Group 10:00 Garden Club Board 7:30 AA	17 <b>St. Patrick's Day</b> 2:30 Sonward	18 4:00 Bible Study	19 2:30 Sonward	6 OFFICE CLOSED	21
22 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship <b>Board of Deacons monetary gifts due</b>	23 10:00 Care Group 7:30 AA	24 2:30 Sonward	25 4:00 Bible Study 6:30 Book Club <i>Big Stone Gap</i> by Adriana Trigiani	26 2:30 Sonward	6 OFFICE CLOSED	28
29 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship	30 10:00 Care Group 7:30 AA	31 2:30 Sonward				



# Guide To Holy Week



## Palm Sunday

Sunday before Easter. Celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Observed with palm branches, parades, and celebration.



## Maundy Thursday

Thursday before Easter. Commemorates the Last Supper. Often observed with foot washing, stripping of the altar, and overnight prayer vigil to keep watch with Jesus in the garden.



## Good Friday

Friday before Easter. Most solemn day of the church year. Observes the day Jesus was crucified. Observed by praying the stations of the Cross and three hours of silent prayer while Jesus was on the cross.



## Holy Saturday

Saturday before Easter. Observes the day Jesus was in the tomb. This is a day of somber reflection, reflecting on what we'd miss in a world without Jesus.



## Easter Sunday

Hallelujah! Christ has risen! This day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Sing hallelujahs and celebrate with great joy.

