

HOPEFUL TIMES

A Publication of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church - Reading, PA

We are...

**Hope Evangelical
Lutheran Church**
Hope For the Neighborhood

601 N. Front St.
Reading, PA 19601
610-374-2071
www.icishope.org

All Are Welcome!

Pastor: The Rev. Mary Wolfe
Music Director: Scott Schaeffer
Secretary: Margaret Wunder
Sexton: David Troche

Belated February Birthdays

Brandon Kegerize.....Feb. 7
Avery Jones.....Feb. 8
Louise Petroski.....Feb. 10
Peter FisherFeb. 14
Patti Rose.....Feb. 14
Sue Epler.....Feb. 21
Mike Wolfe.....Feb. 23
Ernie Price Jr.Feb. 29

March Birthdays

Kennedy Kegerize.....March 3
Tarin Dugan.....March 10
Delani Walker.....March 11
Anita Evans.....March 12
Ben KnoxMarch 18
Judy SchaefferMarch 20

**Rejoice in hope,
be patient in suffering,
persevere in prayer.**
(Romans 12:12 NRSV)

Dear Hope Members and Friends,

As I write this, the outdoor temperature is supposed to go up to close to 60 degrees! The daily Covid case count is only 2 figures, down from 4 figures just weeks ago! Spring is only a month away! Does it feel like we are finally nearing the end of this long, wearying journey? I suspect our ancestors in the faith, the Israelites, felt this way as they journeyed in the wilderness, looking back on their days of suffering and looking forward to their days of rejoicing. That's really what Lent is all about. We look back on our past shortcomings, and anticipate the future celebration of our forgiveness and release. By God's grace we are promised a bright future.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, March 2. We will gather (in person and on Zoom) at 7:00 pm for a service of Evening prayer with Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes. We begin the journey this way as a reminder that without God we are but dust. At the same time we remember that with God, all things are possible. The first Sunday of Lent falls on March 6, and we will be returning to the sanctuary for worship! Zoom will continue as well. Each subsequent Wednesday in Lent we will gather in the fellowship hall (and on Zoom) at 6:00 pm for a service of evening prayer. Our Lenten Bible Study, *A Way in the Wilderness* will be held on Zoom each Wednesday morning at 10:00. Please join us for these opportunities to deepen your relationship with the God who led the Israelites through the wilderness to the Promised Land, and leads us now out of our own wilderness into abundant life.

Café News

Café Esperanza is continuing to thrive! Many of you have come in and enjoyed breakfast or lunch with us. We are excited to serve folks from all walks of life: neighbors, church members, business folks, people experiencing homelessness and community leaders. We held a beautiful poetry reading last month and are planning a gallery opening featuring the work of local photographers. Please come in during March to enjoy that work honoring local Black women. We are planning our grand opening celebration for late April. Look for an announcement of the time and place soon. If you want to visit, we are open from 7:00 to 3:00 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Come, eat and pay what you can!

