ORELAND

Seed swap event set

By MediaNews Group

ORELAND » Oreland Evangelical Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a seed swap for all area gardeners. Drop in and connect with gardeners in the community on Saturday, March 4 from 9 a.m. to noon in the Oreland Evangelical Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall. Bring seeds and swap seeds. Plants are welcome, too. The event is free and open to the public. Kids' activities are available. You don't have to bring seeds to participate. Reach out to the church office with any questions: office@orelandpres.org or 215-887-7002. Oreland EPC is located at 1119 Church Road, Oreland.

FAITH MATTERS

Dust, the invitation of Lent

By Rev. Nancy Raabe

Lent is my favorite season of the church year. I think this is because its inwardness is so different from what we find around us in our daily lives. There is nothing wrong with daily life, but aren't we all here because we are seeking something deeper? Lent takes us there. Having put away our Alleluias until Easter, we spend these weeks pondering the journey of Jesus to the cross and cultivating the yearning deep within us to return to God with our newly cleansed hearts.

Rev. Nancy Raabe

And yet all is not somber and slow. There is joy in Lent. It is just a different kind of joy than we find in the celebratory seasons. Many years ago, as he was preparing for Ash Wednesday services in the monastery, Thomas Merton wrote that "In a minute we will go barefoot to get ashes on our heads to remember, with great relief, that we are dust. The source of all sorrow is the illusion that of ourselves we are anything but dust. God is all our joy and in him our dust can become splendor."

Remember that you are dust. These treasured words on Ash Wednesday lead us into this season. Lent is a time of letting go of all that obscures or drowns out our essential dust-ness.

We may not fully succeed, but Lent invites us to practice letting go of who we pretend to be, who we think others want us to be, who our parents always told us we should be, who we always hoped that one day we might become.

We may not fully succeed, but Lent invites us to practice letting go of who we pretend to be, who we think others want us to be, who our parents always told us we should be, who we always hoped that one day we might become. Whatever your age, the measure of time becomes irrelevant. Instead, Lent calls us to look in the mirror and say, "This is who I am, I'm doing the best I can." We lift our essence to God as an offering of dust from the universe and hear the reply: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

You turn us back to the dust and say, "Turn back, O children of earth. For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night." (Psalm 90:3-4)

What are some ways you can let go of that which obscures your essential dust-ness?

Instead of listening to music in your car, simply observe the world around you and (when it's safe) especially the sky.

Stop complaining so much and, whatever the object of your complaint, be grateful that you have it in the first place.

Declutter your main living area to showcase what's really important to you.

Stifle whim to impulsively shop online and try to make do with what you have.

Never use your phone at the dinner table; instead, focus on those who you are fortunate enough to share a meal with.

Pray with the conviction that God always responds: "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it." (Mark 11:24)

Don't hold grudges; instead, chalk up the offending behavior to experience and get on with life.

Study the stars at night on those rare clear evenings. Learn their names, their progression across the sky, and greet them regularly: "Hello, Sirius; hello, Procyon."

Let your dust be that of the splendor of the stars.

Rev. Nancy Raabe is pastor of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hatfield.

UKRAINE

Zelenskyy defiant on anniversary of Russian invasion

By John Leicester, Hanna Arhirova and Samya Kullab
The Associated Press

KYIV, UKRAINE » Ukraine's leader pledged Friday to push for victory in 2023 as he and other Ukrainians marked the somber anniversary of the Russian invasion that upended their lives and Europe's security.

It was Ukraine's "longest day," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, but the country's dogged resistance a year on has proved that "every tomorrow is worth fighting for."

On a day of commemorations, reflection and tears, the Ukrainian president's defiant tone captured the national mood of resilience in the face of Europe's biggest and deadliest war since World War II. Zelenskyy, who has become a symbol of Ukraine's refusal to bow to Moscow, said Ukrainians proved themselves to be invincible during "a year of pain, sorrow, faith and unity."

"We have been standing for exactly one year," Zelenskyy said. Feb. 24, 2022, he said, was "the longest day of our lives. The hardest day of our modern history. We woke up early and haven't fallen asleep since."

Ukrainians wept at memorials for their tens of thousands of dead — a toll growing inexorably as fighting rages in eastern Ukraine in particular.

Although Friday marked the anniversary of the full-scale invasion, combat between Russian-backed forces and Ukrainian troops has raged in the country's east since 2014. New video from there shot with a drone for The Associated Press showed how the town of Marinka has been razed, along with others.

Killing continues

Russian shelling killed another three civilians and wounded 19 others in the most recent 24-hour spell, Ukraine's presidential office said.

Around the country, Ukrainians looked back at a year that changed their lives and at the clouded future.

"I can sum up the last year in three words: fear, love, hope," Oleksandr Hranyk, a school director in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, said.

Lining up in the capital, Kyiv, to buy anniversary commemorative postage stamps, Tetiana Klimkova described her heart as "falling and hurting."

Still, "this day has become a symbol for me that we have survived for a whole year and will continue to live," she said. "On this day, our children and grandchildren will remember how strong Ukrainians are mentally, physically, and spiritually."

Although China on Friday called for a cease-fire, peace was nowhere in sight. Ukraine previously rejected a pause in the fighting for fear it would allow Russia to regroup militarily after bruising battlefield setbacks.

Zelenskyy gave qualified support to China's new pronouncements about the cease-fire and peace talks between Ukraine and Russia in a vaguely worded proposal released Friday.

"China has shown its thoughts. I believe that the fact that China started talking about Ukraine is not bad," the president said during a wide-ranging news conference. "But the question is what follows the words. The question is in the steps and where they will lead to."

A 12-point paper issued by China's Foreign Ministry also urged an end to sanctions that aim to squeeze Russia's economy.

That suggestion also looked like a non-starter, given that Western nations are working to further tighten the sanctions noose, not loosen it. The United Kingdom and U.S. imposed more sanctions Friday.

More aid

Ukraine is readying another military push to roll back Russian forces with the help of weaponry that has poured in from the West. NATO member Poland said Friday that it had delivered four advanced Leopard 2A4 tanks, making it the first country to hand the German-made armor to Ukraine.

The prime minister of Poland said on a visit to Kyiv that more Leopards are coming. Poland's defense minister said contributions from other countries would help form Ukraine's first Leopard battalion of 31 tanks.

"Ukraine is entering a new period, with a new task — to win," Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov said. "It will not be easy. But we will manage. There is rage and a desire to avenge the fallen."

Air raid alarms didn't sound overnight in Kyiv, alleviating concerns that Russia might unleash another barrage of missiles to pile yet more sadness on Ukraine on the anniversary.

Still, the government recommended that schools move classes online, and office employees were asked to work from home. And even as they rode Kyiv's subway to work, bought coffee and got busy, Ukrainians were unavoidably haunted by thoughts of loss and memories of when missiles struck, troops rolled across Ukraine's borders and a refugee exodus began a year ago.

WORSHIP NEWS AND NOTES

Send Items for Worship News to religion@thereporteronline.com. Address questions to Nancy March, editor, at nmarch@thereporteronline.com. Deadline is noon Thursday to appear in the Saturday Worship News and Notes.

The Chancel Choir at **St. John's United Church of Christ** will sing "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley" by John Ferguson at the 10:15 a.m. service on February 26. There is also an 8 a.m. service. Later the service is available on St. John's Facebook page, website and YouTube channel:youtube.com/stjohnsucclansdalepa. The church is at 500 W. Main St., Lansdale. Call 215-855-5489 or visit www.st-john-ucc.org.

St. John's United Church of Christ will hold a **Lenten Book Study** on "Freeing Jesus" by Diana Butler Bass every Wednesday in Lent, beginning March 1 and continuing through April 5 at 7 p.m. The weekly study will meet in person at the church with a hybrid Zoom option available. For information and to register call the church office at 215-855-5489 or e-mail office@st-johns-ucc.org The church is at 500 W. Main St., Lansdale. Call or visit www.st-johns-ucc.org

Grace Lutheran Church, 40 N. Main St., Hatfield, and Pastor Nancy M. Raabe will hold Sunday Lenten services from February 26 through March 26 at 8 and 10:30 a.m. With the churches of Hatfield, Grace will host a midweek Lenten service on Wednesday, March 1, at 7:30 p.m., with Rev. John C. Nguyen (Fr. Chung) of St. Maria Goretti preaching. The Sunday 10:30 worship services are streamed live under "Online Worship" at gracelutheranhatfield.org. For more information, call 215-855-4676.

Indian Creek Mennonite Church, 647 Harleysville Pike, Telford, services are Sunday school, 9 a.m.; worship service, 10:15 a.m. Questions? Call Kevin Moyer (215) 721-9127.

Gwynedd Square Presbyterian Church PC(USA), 837 Sumneytown Pike, Lansdale: Please join live in the sanctuary or live online via Zoom with an internet-enabled device or by telephone. Sunday Worship is at 10 a.m. and Early Worship is at 8:30 a.m. For web links or dial in numbers, visit www.gwyneddsquare.org. Weekly Bible Study meets at 10:30 a.m. in the pastor's study and on Zoom and will meet every Wednesday at this time. See a separate column for information on the new series the Adult Form will be offering. Email office@gwyneddsquare.org or call the church office at 215-699-9159.

Gwynedd Square Presbyterian Church **Lenten Soup Suppers** continue from Wednesday, March 1, throughout Lent with the final one on March 29. The suppers begin at 5:30 with plenty of homemade soups provided by members of the various committees of the church along with bread. The suppers will be followed by a Lenten study program entitled "Love God, Neighbor, Enemy" lead byS GPC's Pastor Wonjae Choi. Pease contact Pastor Wonjae to purchase an adult reflection guide if desired at office@gwyneddsquare.org or 215-699-9159. The church is at 837 Sumneytown Pike, Lansdale.

Gwynedd Square Presbyterian Church's Adult Forum meets on Monday nights at 7 p.m. via Zoom. During Lent, the Adult Forum will switch gears from the Great Courses video series to a six-part series titled "Faithful Citizenship: An Adult Lenten Study" that will focus on Lent as a time of growth in community outreach and in our social vision. Please send an email to office@gwyneddsquare.org or call the church office at 215-699-9159 for the link to attend and to receive the participant handouts for the Lenten series.

Montco Bible Fellowship, 160 E. Main St., Lansdale, holds virtual services accessed via website (www.montcobf.org) or in-person each Sunday. Adult Sunday School begins at 9:30 a.m. and worship services at 10 a.m., along with Children's Church at 10 a.m. Virtual Bible Study on Wednesdays at 7:20 p.m. Call 215-855-0899 for the Bible Study Zoom link.

Faith Lutheran Church, 615 Cowpath Road, Montgomeryville, continues to worship in the sanctuary as well as on Zoom at 10:30 a.m. Sunday School is held Sundays from 9:45 to 10:25 a.m. for ages 3-11. Nursery will be provided for the 3- to 5-year-olds during the 10:30 a.m. service. Pastor Ethan Doan will be preaching and leading worship. All services will also be uploaded to Facebook. Find that at www.faithmontgomerville.org and click on "Connect on Facebook." For the Zoom link or more information, please email faithmont@verizon.net

The Church of the Holy Spirit of Harleysville (Episcopal), 2871 Barndt Road at the corner of Sumneytown Pike, Upper Salford, holds Holy Communion services in-person at 8 and 10:15 a.m. on Sundays. The church also live-streams the 10:15 a.m. services on Sundays on the church website and Facebook page, Church of the Holy Spirit, Harleysville. Church school for preschool through adult classes begins at 9 a.m. Services are led by the Rev. Kathryn Andonian, rector. A Lenten study, "Finding Rest When You are Busy and Burned Out," will be held noon to 1:30 p.m. on Sundays, Feb. 26 to March 26, based on the book, "Sacred Rest, Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy and Restore Your Sanity," by Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith. The series gives a unique look into the physical and spiritual sides of rest. For more information, call the church at 215-234-8020 or visit www.churchoftheholyspirit.us.

The Horsham Interfaith Coalition through its participating congregations, will be collecting new (and very gently used) children's clothes sizes 6 months to children's size 12 during Lent. Collection boxes will be at St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Riverside Community Church, and the Horsham Library. No stuffed animals or blankets, please.

RELIGION DIRECTORY
Your Local Guide to Religious Services

Sound Assistance Available | Sign Language Worship Aid | Special Greeters | Large Print Worship Aids Available

BAPTIST
Bethlehem Baptist
Penllyn Pike and Dager Road
Spring House, PA 19477
Ph: (215) 643-4977 • Fax: (215) 643-4474
www.bbc4Christ.org
Worship: 9:00 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.
Sunday Bible Study (Church School) 9:00 a.m.
Midweek Bible Study-Wed. 11:00 a.m. & 7:15 p.m.
Pastor Charles W. Quann

LUTHERAN
TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
1000 West Main Street, Lansdale
INDOOR WORSHIP
Sat. 5:30 pm, Sun., 8:30/10:45 am
LIVESTREAM: Sundays, 8:30 am
Facebook, YouTube, trinitylansdale.com
RADIO: 97.1 FM - Sundays,11 am
FEAST COMMUNITY MEAL
Every Monday, 5:00-6:00 pm
trinitylansdale.com

PRESBYTERIAN
Gwynedd Square Presbyterian, PC(USA)
837 Sumneytown Pike,
Lansdale, PA 19446
215-699-9159
office@gwyneddsquare.org
Sunday Worship 10:00 am
Sunday School at 9:00 am
Youth Fellowship Sundays at 7:00 pm
"Growing Spiritually through Service"
For details and program information
GwyneddSquare.org

Join Us In Prayer

PRESBYTERIAN
Lansdale Presbyterian Church
450 Oak Park Rd.
Hatfield, PA 19440
Ph: (215) 368-1119
www.lansdalepres.org
Sunday School for all ages 9:15 am
Worship Service 10:30 am
Nursery Care is available
Children Ministry, Jr & Sr High Youth Groups
Small Groups, College & Career
MOPS & Active Senior Adults Group

METHODIST
Lansdale United Methodist
300 North Broad Street, Lansdale, PA 19446
Ph: (215) 855-8364
www.lansdaleumc.org
Worship Schedule
Join us online at our website
www.lansdaleumc.org each Sunday morning.
Announcements and Music at 8:45 a.m.
Worship at 9:00 a.m.

EPISCOPAL
Church of the Messiah
1001 Dekalb Pike,
Lower Gwynedd, PA 19002
215-699-9204
office@messiahgwynedd.org
www.messiahgwynedd.org
Sundays Holy Eucharist at 8 am & 9:30 am
Nursery Care & Church School begin @ 9:15
(Children join services @ Communion)
Refreshments follow both Services
Wednesday Rector's Study at 11 am & 7 pm

For information about this directory call 215-648-1140 or hpolak@adtaxi.com
Deadlines: Wednesday at 4 p.m.