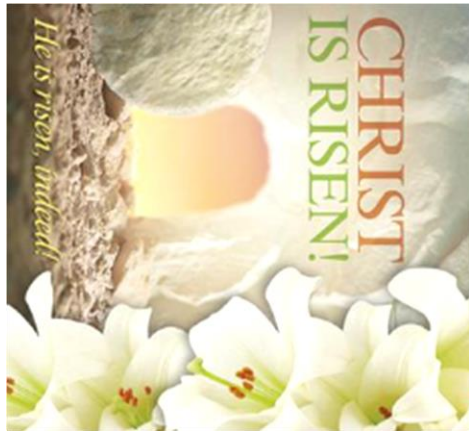


April 2025



Free Spring Church of the Brethren
670 Free Spring Church Road
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Free Spring Fountain



The water I give will become a spring of water
welling up to eternal life. – John 4:14



Free Spring Church of the Brethren

670 Free Spring Church Road
Mifflintown, PA 17059
(717) 463-3192
FreeSpringCOB@yahoo.com
Terry Smith, Pastor
Eugene Jones, Moderator
Lona Henry, Church Secretary

Office Hours:

Thursdays

10:00 am – 12:00 noon

Sunday Services:

Early Worship – 8:30 am

Sunday School – 9:30 am

Worship Service – 10:30



**Church Clean-Up and
Adopt-A-Highway Pick-Up
Saturday, April 12
8:00 am**

*Spring Church Council Meeting
Thursday, April 17
7:00 pm*



**Spring Supper & Study
Wednesdays, Beginning April 23
6:00 pm**



All items for the May newsletter and calendar must be submitted by end of day on **Monday, April 21**. *If we do not receive your submission by then, we CANNOT guarantee it will be placed in the newsletter.*



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What were you doing fifteen years ago? When I checked my old calendar book for 2010, we were tearing out the old kitchen at the church and burning all of the old boards and trim. I had just bought a new trailer so that I could haul my mower to Althea's to begin mowing her lawn as well as my mother's lawn. Geometry tests had to be graded for my JMS students, and the Easter message had to be completed a week early because the school's mission trip to Jamaica left before Palm Sunday and would return after midnight on Easter Sunday.

It was Lent, and I was spent. Still, that was a minor blip on the radar compared to the days that Jesus experienced on our behalf from Palm Sunday through Good Friday. Almost thirty years ago Pastor John Topolewski shared this *Thought for the Day*:

"The Gospel of God in Christ is often experienced as bad news, and the as good news; that is, law before gospel, judgment before grace, sin before righteousness, and doubt before confession. To be aware and confessing in the first is to be open and receptive to the second."

Many of us look for those sure signs of new signs of life after winter. I see the geese flying north, my first robin, first killdeer, and first red-wing blackbird. Do you look for the first crocus, daffodil, or grape hyacinth? I keep an eye out for the skunk cabbage pushing through by the spring behind the church. **Remember: Spring cleanup day at the church is Saturday, April 12!**

Easter reminds me to get rid of the dead growth and allow something new to sprout forth. God raised his Son Jesus from death to new life, a glorious life, and He will do the same for you and I when we have put our trust in Him.

May we joyously shout:

"He is risen! He is risen indeed!"

He is risen in you and He is risen in me!"

Easter blessings to you and your family.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Terry

**April Deacons of the Month:
Warren & Connie Wagner**

Scriptures and Messages for April

April 6

John 12:1-8

"Motivated by Gratitude"

April 13

Philippians 2:5-11

"The Mind of Christ"

April 20

John 20:1-18

"Christ Is Alive, Now and Forever"

April 27

John 20:19-31

"Enough Is Written"



2025 COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES

**Sponsored by:
The McAlisterville Ministerium**

**Theme:
Parables of the Last Week**

April 6	Loaned Money	Otterbein GMC	Graham Fowler
April 13	Final Judgment	Delaware Menn	Chad Weaver
April 18	Final Sacrifice	Pine Grove UMC	Doug Mellott

All Services begin at 7:00 pm

The Offering will go to:
Mennonite Disaster Service
To rebuild homes both locally and nationally.

Checks may be made out to: McAlisterville Ministerium.

Free Spring Library News

The following are fiction books; all part of a series.

Amish Candy Shop Mysteries Series by Amanda Flower

Marshmallow Malice – With Juliet Brody and Reverend Brook tying the knot in Ohio's Amish Country's most anticipated nuptials of the year, Bailey King is determined to do everything in her power to make the event a sweet success. Except midsummer heat waves and outdoor ceremonies don't mix, and an exasperated Bailey soon finds herself struggling to fulfill bridesmaid duties and keep her stunning marshmallow-frosted wedding cake from becoming a gooey disaster. Then much to everyone's shock, the entire ceremony crumbles when a guest drops dead, and the cause isn't sunstroke... (This is the fifth book in the series.)

Lemon Drop Dead – Although baby showers aren't an Amish tradition, Bailey King wants to celebrate Emily Keim's forthcoming bundle of joy. It's the least she can do for her hardworking assistant at Swissmen Sweets, especially with Emily being estranged from her siblings. Everyone in Harvest, Ohio has gathered at the town gazebo – decked out in lemon-themed décor to add some of Emily's favorite flavor to the festivities – including Juliet Brook, Jethro the Pig, and in a last-minute invite, Emily's sister Esther Esh. (This is the sixth book in the series.)

Peanut Butter Panic – Thanksgiving is Bailey King's busiest holiday weekend. This year promises to be even more hectic since Bailey's candy shop, Swissmen Sweets, is providing desserts for Harvest, Ohio's first village-wide Thanksgiving celebration. Yet, even with a guest list close to seven hundred people – Amish and English alike – the event's organizer, Margot Rawlings, is unfazed...until she discovers her mother, former judge Zara Bevan, will be in attendance. (This is the seventh book in the series.)

Blueberry Blunder – Bailey King, star of TV's *Bailey's Amish Sweets*, is building her dream candy factory in Harvest, Ohio. But soon she finds the dead body of a contractor who has a long list of enemies – including people in the Amish community. To add to the drama, Bailey is being filmed by a crew for her upcoming show... (This is the eighth and final book in the series; the first four books in the series are Assaulted Caramel, Lethal Licorice, Premeditated Peppermint, and Toxic Toffee.)

Echoes of the Past Series by Liz Tolsma

What I Left for You – Helena Kostyszak is an oddity – an educated female ethnic minority lecturing at a university in Krakow at the outbreak of WWII. When the Germans close the university and force Jews into the ghetto,



she spirits out a friend's infant daughter and flees to her small village in the southern hills. Helena does everything in her power to protect her family, but it may not be enough. It will take all of her strength and God's intervention for both of them to survive the war and the ethnic cleansing to come. (This is the third book in the series; the other books are What I Would Tell You and What I Promise You.)

Gone to the Dogs Mysteries Series

Every Dog Has His Day by Janice by Thompson – Lone Star groomer, Triniti Nelson, adopts a feisty rescued dachshund and the two are inseparable...until Texans quarterback, Corey Wallis, announces a large reward for his missing female dachshund. Suddenly all of Houston are on the lookout for the MIA pooch that bares a strong resemblance to Triniti's new pup. Triniti contacts Corey, but soon Ginger goes missing and Triniti is convinced Corey and his agent took her for a publicity stunt. Then there is a reporter who could be trying to manufacture a great story or a cameraman seeking the big reward. Can there be a happy ending for Ginger? (This is the fifth book in the series.)

New Leash on Life by Kathleen Y'Barbo – Air Force veteran Dr. Lane Bishop and Nora Hernandez's romance has cooled. He is busy working as a researcher at the vet school, and she's busy with her restaurant and opening an antique shop. What Lane hasn't told her is his PTSD, which manifests mostly with nightmares, makes him believe he's damaged goods. But that is about to change when he meets a stray pup that acts a lot like a military working dog. When a tornado hits Brenham, there is damage in the downtown area and a fire is ignited in Nora's new store. A Belgian Malinois dog is seen at the fire and later Lane sees him at a wedding venue where an explosion occurs. Not long after, a second explosion rocks Brenham and sends Nora and Lane on a hunt for the person responsible. Will the pair find the guilty party before more damage is done to the city's landmarks? And will Lane find the words to tell Nora how much he loves her before it's too late? (This is the sixth and final book in the series; the first four books are: Off the Chain by Janice Thompson, Dog Days of Summer by Kathleen Y'Barbo, Barking Up the Wrong Tree by Janice Thompson, and The Bark of Zorro by Kathleen Y'Barbo.)

~ Kathy Bowman, Librarian





Christian Education Commission

Come on out for Free Spring Movie Night on Saturday, April 5 at 6:00 pm and bring a snack to share and friends to fellowship to watch ***Finding Normal***. See the article in this newsletter for more movie details.

A sign-up sheet and books will be placed in the narthex in the coming weeks for our Spring Supper & Study with Max Lucado's ***What Happens Next: A Traveler's Guide Through the End of This Age***. Be prepared, not scared! In this optimistic, accessible, and non-sensational guide to end-times events, Lucado provides a well-researched overview that empowers you to face the future with faith. Take a journey through key milestones – including the rapture, tribulation, and heaven – and explore four big ideas that provide a solid foundation for understanding God's eternal plan. We will start April 23 with Supper at 6:00 pm, followed by the Study at 6:30 pm. Bring a covered dish to share with the group for supper. The study is about 6 weeks and additional tentative dates will be April 30, May 7, 14, 21, and June 4. We will be skipping Memorial Day week which is also high school graduation week. Dates will be discussed further once we get started.

Other upcoming events include Graduate Recognition Sunday on June 8 and VBS, to be held June 9-11, with time and the theme as yet to be determined. Keep our up-and-coming graduates, Kaitlyn Fornwalt and Kaylynn Wray, in your prayers as they get ready to conclude one chapter of their lives and begin a new one. Also remember the VBS Committee as they work to put together an exciting VBS program this year.

~ Shari Book (Chair), Alan Naylor, and Mary Zeigler

LOST KEYS

If anyone found a deer horn key chain with two keys on it, please return them to Sharon Ritzman.

Thank you!



Operation Christmas Shoebox Collection for April: Socks

Please place your donation in the bin just outside the double doors in the narthex.

Nurture Commission News

Music & Worship Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 8 at 7:00 pm.

Our Birthday of the Month is Brian Marshall, whose birthday is on Wednesday, April 9. His address is 5146 Mountain Road, Port Royal, PA 17082. Brian is the grandson of Susie Ritzman Mitchell. We will be highlighting persons in the coming months, like Brian, who have not attended Free Spring for a while, but we would like to let them know we miss them and still consider them one of us.

Lenten Teas will conclude on April 12. Thank you to Dee Bell for facilitating our discussion.

Our Spring Congregational Meeting will be held Thursday, April 17 at 7:00 pm. All are encouraged to attend.

Easter Sunrise Service will be held at 6:30 am with Brent Stoner speaking and Jenn Fornwalt bringing special music. This service will be followed by breakfast in the fellowship hall. Please bring a dish to share. Pastor Terry will also bring the message at the 8:30 and 10:30 am worship services.

You may take your flowers home after the Easter Service on Sunday, April 20. Thank you to those who contributed towards making our church look like Spring.

Thank you to Karen Logan for her beautiful Lenten Worship Center.

REMEMBER: Wednesday, April 23 is Secretary's Day. Thank you, Lona for all you do for Free Spring.

A Spring Fling Fellowship and Egg Hunt is being planned for Sunday, April 27, at 12:30 pm, down at the Schoolhouse. Please bring a covered dish to share. Hot dogs and drinks will be provided. Plastic eggs will be available in the narthex if anyone would like to help fill them. A basket will also be placed on the table to collect "small" prizes. Contact Karen with any questions.

OUR LADIES' SPRING BANQUET will be held Saturday, May 10, at 12:30 pm in the fellowship hall. We invited KRISTI EHRENZELLER to give her testimony on her "GOAT CRUSH" business and how it got started. The lunch will be catered again and we hope to see you there!!!! Cost is \$15.00. A sign-up sheet will be on the table in the narthex by Sunday, April 13, along with an envelope to place your check made out to Free Spring COB.

~ Erin Bell, Karen Logan (Co-Chair), Carla Renson, and Nancy Shadel (Co-Chair)



April Birthday of the Month

Brian Marshall, whose birthday is on Wednesday, April 9. His address is 5146 Mountain Road, Port Royal, PA 17082. Brian is the grandson of Susie Ritzman Mitchell. Please remember him/her with your prayers and cards.



Witness Commission

April Food Pantry Delivery by: Connie Wagner

The Food Pantry item for April is paper towels, and are to be delivered by Connie Wagner. We are collecting Hygiene Kits until the end of April. Bags are available in the CWS chest in the narthex and a list of items needed are included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Highway Trash Pick-Up will be held Saturday, April 5, at 8:00 am, headed up by Jenn Fornwalt. Come help keep our neighborhood clean!

We will be packing Easter cookie bags on Saturday, April 12, starting at 9:00 am, for the Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry. This is another opportunity to reach out to a diverse group of people! A simple cookie could touch a person's heart and gives the pastor an open door for ministry.

Thanks to Ron Gordon, Sharon Ritzman, and Ruth & Allen Zendt for providing the worship service on Sunday, March 16 at Northridge.

May is Free Spring's month to volunteer at the Food Pantry. Please consider giving a few hours to help our neighbors. There will be a sign-up sheet placed on the table in the narthex. Contact Warren Wagner with any questions.

Compassion Sunday is May 4. You can show God's love thru your support for this. Fina Williams will have information packets available.

As always, **YOU** make the Witness Commission successful! Let's make a difference **together**.

~ Angela Bryner, Jen Spark (Chair), Fina Williams, and Art Zug

Juniata County Food Pantry

April Update

In February 2025, the Food Pantry served 267 families – 721 of your neighbors! A big thank you to Matamoras UMC for volunteering on Saturdays in February.

Join our family! We are always looking for a few good volunteers!

Our vestibule is open 24 hours a day to receive non-perishable donations. Donations of cash, checks or gift cards may be deposited in the vestibule's mail slot.

Contact Person: Glenda Fultz, Executive Director

Phone: (717) 436-9718 (answering machine)

E-mail: jcfp122017@gmail.com

Address: PO Box 44, Mifflintown, PA 17059

Location: 114 N Main St, Mifflintown, PA 17059

Hours: Tuesday, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon, and 1:00-5:00 pm

Saturday, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Visit our Website: www.jcfoodpantry.com



Church World Service Hygiene Kits (to be collected March – April)

Please note this is a revised Kit list!

- One washcloth
- One fingernail or toenail clipper (packaging removed)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- One bath-size bar of soap (in original packaging)
- One travel-size deodorant (3.4 oz or less, non-aerosol)
- One travel-size lotion (3.4 oz or less, fragrance-free, NEW only)
- One travel-size shampoo (3.4 oz or less, NEW only)
- One travel-size toothpaste (3.4 oz or less, expiration date of 1 year)
- One sturdy wide-tooth comb (6" minimum teeth, packaging removed)

All items need to fit inside a one-gallon plastic zipper closure bag



Port Royal Men's Prayer Breakfasts

Saturdays at 7:00 am

at Port Royal Community building, 4th Street

April 5 - Rev. Nathanael Mowery from Oakland Mills Methodist Church

April 12 - Rev. Frank Swarts from New Beginnings Church

April 19 - Rev. Ron Shupe from River Church

Lenten Tea Bible Study

Saturday Mornings thru April 12
at 8:00 am

The Study starts at 8:00 am. Please come early for refreshments! A sign-up sheet and books have been placed on the table in the narthex. Hope to see you there!



March 21, 2025

Dearest Family and friends,

The following letter comes to you in two parts.

Part 1: When was the last time you did something you didn't want to do? Did someone convince you it would be good for you? Did God prompt you?

Public speaking is easily one of those things. Last month, I watched middle school students and teenagers come together with adult speech coaches to begin the process of preparing speeches for UrbanPromise's Speech Contest held March 25. Because of my role as interim director, I had started the process of preparing for the kick-off writing night. Overall, God was glorified through the process, showing Himself faithful and trustworthy in the midst of my fear and anxiety. In December, I invited adult volunteers to come serve as one-on-one speech coaches. Immediate responses came from a small team from a local bank about a work conflict which would keep them from attending. Due to issues in UrbanPromise's schedule, a second event was planned, allowing the team to take part. On the night of the event, several teens, who had finished a full school day and worked several hours at our after-school camp program wanted to go home, but their director encouraged them to stay. One of these teens, Malaysia, chose to stay. She was paired by God with a speech coach from the bank team who experienced God's comfort through working with her. Malaysia's name is quite close to his own college-aged daughter's name. Both girls attended the same high school, specifically in the same teacher preparation program. He shared at the end of the night how encouraging it was to meet and work with Malaysia because last year he had learned of the death of his mother at the speech contest. He struggled with accepting the opportunity to come be a coach this year as it caused him to reflect on the loss. We praised God with him as he shared the testimony of God's comfort with the group and challenged us to take the opportunities before us seriously. I struggled to trust God fully to take care of the details of the night, yet this testimony reminded me how precisely careful our God is in caring for His children. Below is a photo of last year's speech contest participants and judges!



Part 2: My heart longs to be more communicative! As you can read above, I am still at UrbanPromise Wilmington. I have started and

abandoned several letters since my November update, wanting to share how much I didn't see God's next steps, and how much I didn't want to accept what those steps meant. God humbled me as I sought Him about what to do in January. He highlighted how He has created me and is growing me beyond how I see myself. As I prayed, it became clear He would have me stay in Wilmington. He is calling me to consider myself and my skills outside of the known roles of teacher. I am currently assisting the StreetLeader job training program which includes communicating with teens and their families, engaging with teens during and outside of work, and going on a college vision trip over Easter. It brought me sadness to let go of family traditions and opportunities in Juniata County, yet I trust God to use me during the week for His honor and glory beyond what I would have otherwise imagined. To start the new spring season, I jumped into second grade as a maternity substitute teacher. I spent a significant amount of time observing and learning about second grade routines in preparation to teach them from now to the end of the year. It blesses the new mother immensely to know I am in her classroom, finishing the year well. The path beyond June will involve roles outside of the school, working with the administrative team to take on responsibilities with church partnerships, office management, and event planning. Though the administrative role isn't fully defined, I trust God to help expand and alter my understanding of who He has created me to be for such a time as this, for as long as He has me to be in Wilmington.

Overall, the two parts of the letter point to the continued need for your prayers and support. Prayers for teens as they seek what God has for them and prayers for second graders to continue to learn all God has for them. Prayers for me as I serve God with teens and second graders. Thank you to those who have been supporting me financially and in prayer during this transitional season. Words cannot explain how much God has done in me during 2024 and how He has opened my eyes to the ongoing work He wants to accomplish in and around me for His honor and glory! God provided for all my financial support goals as I served as interim director, meeting the \$15,000 goal. I am now seeking to raise an additional \$15,000 as I serve as an assistant and as a second-grade teacher.

Love in, and because of, Christ,

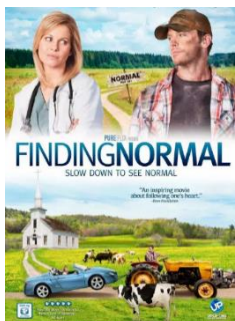
Faith



Free Spring Church's Website

Check out our website for bulletins, newsletters, photos from various activities, the history of our church, forms for updating your Directory information, and so much more at <https://cob-net.org/church/freespring/>

(Click on the "Updates To Our Site" link under MENU to see what has been updated and when!)



Free Spring Movie Night Saturday, April 5

6:00 pm

in the fellowship hall

Movie: Finding Normal

Bring a snack to share if you would like!

The only thing standing between Dr. Lisa Leland (Candace Cameron Bure) and the wedding of her dreams in the Hamptons is a 2600-mile drive from Los Angeles to Long Island. However, a run-in with the law in the country town of Normal, North Carolina leaves Dr. Leland with a choice – jail or community service. Sentenced to three days as the town's doctor, Lisa has her world turned upside down by a man she would never expect. Quickly, Lisa finds that there's a lot more to Normal than she could have imagined.



Highway Trash Pick-Up

Saturday, April 5

8:00 am

Church Spring Clean-Up Day

Saturday, April 12

8:00 am

We need your help!



Truck Stop Ministry

Cookie-Packing

Attention bakers!

We will be packing Easter cookie bags for the Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry on **Saturday, April 12 at 9:00 am** (immediately following the Ladies' Lenten Tea). This is another opportunity to reach out to a diverse population, literally...people from all over the world! Your cookies are appreciated!



Easter Sunrise Service Sunday, April 20 at 6:30 am in the sanctuary

Start your Easter off right! Come to our Easter Sunrise service at 6:30 am on Easter morning, April 20. **Brent Stoner** will be the speaker, and **Jenn Fornwalt** will be special music.

The service will be followed by breakfast in the fellowship hall. Please bring a dish to share for the breakfast.

Please remember our shut-ins with your prayers and cards. *Please note new address information.

Dot Benson
389 Raccoon Valley Road
Millerstown, PA 17062
(223) 362-2002

Lottie Holsinger
4845 Arch Rock Road
Mifflintown, PA 17059
(717) 436-8495

Melda Ritchie
3761 Mountain Road
McAlisterville, PA 17049

*Barbara Shepler
118 The Bridges
92 Village Drive
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Clair Varner
145 School Street, Apt 202
McAlisterville, PA 17049
(717) 635-0513 (cell)



CHURCH DIRECTORY

UPDATES AND CHANGES

Updates/changes have been placed as an insert in your April newsletter for placing in your 2025 Free Spring Church Directory. Thank you!

Easter Blessings

*May Christ's glory and
the promise of this joyous
time of year, bring peace
and happiness to you and
those you hold most dear.*



UPDATES AND CHANGES

Please place this insert in your 2025 Free Spring Church Directory. This includes all the changes we received for items that need to be updated/changed.

Auditor (page 1)
Sharon Ritzman

Nominating Committee (page 1)
Add: Cindy Lucas, 2026

Schoolhouse Committee (page 3)
Dan Elsasser, 2027
Sharon Ritzman, 2027

Free Spring Church of the Brethren Family Directory (page 19):

Witzell, David & *Rosemary – change:
Remove: (717) 463-3800 home phone
Add: (717) 994-1600 (Rosemary's cell)

Zendt, J. Allen & Ruth – change:
(717) 247-1841 (Ruth's cell)