



Church's Office Phone (717)933-4723 Church's Office Fax (717) 933-9223 [www.LittleSwatara.org](http://www.LittleSwatara.org)

**Pastor's  
Note.....**  
Page 1

**Birthdays &  
Condolences...**  
Page 2

**Information  
Updates...**  
Page 3-8

**Camp Swatara  
News...**  
Page 9

**Calendar.....**  
Page 10



### **"Faith It "**

No doubt we've all faced varying degrees of difficulty throughout life. Whether it's been health struggles, family issues, uncertain futures, financial hardships, we have a choice. We can face it alone, trying to control the outcomes. Or we can turn to Christ and have faith as we pray through our situations. It's always fascinating how much peace God gives us, how much strength he gives us, how much joy we can carry even in those moments of despair. By trusting God, we are trusting the only one who can make the impossible possible. We can't explain it. God just shows up. It's a matter of surrender. It's a matter of honoring God with our lives. We can honor with our lips but it's more the heart that honors God. Today is a great day to see where your heart is. Those things we treasure most are what define the hearts. Can we say our hearts long for Jesus! Do we know him personally or just know about him? Are we committed to prayer and worship? Does Gods word speak to us? The Holy Spirit is alive and well within those who earnestly seek the Lord. I pray his power over you and trust you to his provisions. God is so good. He is faithful and true. Be blessed my friends. Instead of just facing it, let's faith it together.

-Pastor Matt



|                    |   |                     |    |                     |    |
|--------------------|---|---------------------|----|---------------------|----|
| Christopher Merkey | 1 | John Kelly          | 8  | Arlene Sweitzer     | 22 |
| Denise Bohn        | 2 | Jennifer Manbeck    | 8  | Brenda S. Hershey   | 24 |
| Andrew S. Brubaker | 2 | Laura Stevens       | 9  | Jenna Baez          | 24 |
| Dane Haupt         | 2 | Martin Bashore      | 10 | Linda Wanner        | 24 |
| Deneen Ebling      | 4 | Dakota Himmelberger | 11 | JoAnn Arnold        | 25 |
| Maxine Wengert     | 4 | Sharon D. Hoke      | 11 | Ava Blatt           | 26 |
| Donna Reber        | 6 | Wenda Dinatale      | 12 | Louanne M. Boltz    | 26 |
| Jeffrey Frantz     | 6 | James Manbeck       | 13 | Enos Loump          | 26 |
| Wanda Townsend     | 8 | Scot A. Snyder      | 13 | Eugene Yenser       | 27 |
|                    |   | Randy Corbin        | 14 | Donna Schwalm       | 28 |
|                    |   | Pamela Gerberich    | 16 | Jean A. Wise-Eberly | 28 |
|                    |   | Randy Zimmerman     | 16 | Dale Bechtold       | 31 |
|                    |   | Tessa Hershberger   | 21 | Abigail Christ      | 31 |
|                    |   | Ronald Lebo         | 22 | Gregory R. Mill     | 31 |
|                    |   | Lydia Stupp         | 22 | Randall E. Yenser   | 31 |

### **Our Sincere Sympathy**

As a church family, we extend our sincere sympathy and Christian love to Terry Edris and the Edris family on the passing of Debra Edris, on July 7th. Services were held at Grose Funeral Home on Monday July 13th.

### **PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS**

**Tuesday–Wednesday–Thursday**  
**10:00 am - 12:00 pm**

### **2026 Organization Officers**

Moderator - John Wise  
Asst. Moderator - Todd Rebman  
Church Clerk - Dianne High  
Treasurer - Jamie Wise  
Financial Secretary - Jean Myers

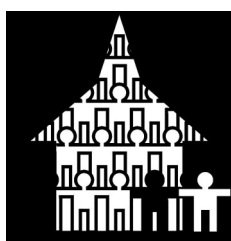
### **2026 Committee Chairs**

Stewardship & Property - Richard Yenser  
Christian Education - Ashley Koch  
Missions & Evangelism - Denise Bohn  
Spiritual Nurture Ministry - Gary Bashore  
Music and Worship - Allen Rebman

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- 2** 11:00 am Farm Women #2 / pav
- 4** 7:00 pm Leadership Team meeting
- 6** 8:30 am Quilting  
4:00 pm 50+ Club mtg / Kauffman's
- 10** 7:30 pm Every Member Council mtg.
- 11** 11:30 am Widow's luncheon/Ctry Fare
- 13** Quilting
- 16** Food Pantry collection Sunday  
Potluck Sunday
- 17** 7:00 pm Music & Worship team mtg
- 18–19** 4:00 pm Preschool Meet the Teacher Night
- 19** Newsletter deadline
- 20** 8:30 am Quilting  
9:30 am packing food bags for Bethel Food Pantry / Salem Evan Luth. church
- 21** 8:00 am Feed Them / kitchen  
3:00 pm Bethel Food Pantry
- 22** 7:00 am Men's Prayer Breakfast/café
- 24** Preschool starts
- 25** Ministry Team Minutes due  
9:00 am Women's Fellowship met / FH
- 27** 8:30 am Quilting

## Information Updates from Little Swatara



**Become  
Part of  
Our  
Church  
Family**

### Membership Classes

Have you considered baptism and becoming a member at Little Swatara? Would you like to transfer your membership or reaffirm your faith? Let's make it happen. Just see Pastor Matt or text or call at 717-675-3946. We'd be so happy and blessed to have you be part of our Faith family through membership classes.

The next Widows luncheon  
**Tuesday, August 11th**  
**11:30 A.M.**

The Country Fare Restaurant  
Myerstown, PA

**WIDOWS**



**LUNCHEON**

### Reminder:

Exercise classes will be on summer break during the month of August



**Volunteers Needed to Help  
Pack "Tulpy Packs" !**

Help is needed to pack Tulpy Packs on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 AM at the Beth-el Elementary School. on the following date:

August 5th and August 12th

(Park in front of school along bus lane & enter doors A2)



### Summer Worship

Sundays in July & August are for sunshine, fellowship, and worship! Whether you're here every week or dropping in between vacations, we'd love to see you.

8:30 AM – "Off the Hook" service / FH  
10:30 AM – traditional service / sanctuary

### AUGUST EVERY MEMBER COUNCIL MEETING

The Every Member Council Meeting will be held on **Monday, August 10th at 7:00 PM** in the Fellowship Hall

#### The agenda for this meeting:

1. 2nd Quarter financial report
2. Pastor Matt's report
3. Gathering Place report
4. 2027 LSCOB Ministry Call Slate
5. Ministry Team updates
6. Preschool Report

**Address change:** Dorothy Lutz  
*Mailing address:* 203 W. Washington Ave.–  
Apt. 6, Myerstown, PA 17067  
*Physical address:* Myerstown Nursing and Rehab., 7 W. Park Ave., Room 213B  
Myerstown, PA 17067

**Answer:** C (Matthew 5:16, NIV)



## Lunch N' Learn @ Londonderry Village

August 14, 2026 / 12:00 pm / Fellowship Hall in the Snell Community Center on the Londonderry Village Campus / Reservations Required.

### Bits & Pieces: Collage Workshop with Olivia Harris

Olivia Harris from Londonderry Village will introduce the background of collage art and share examples of paper collages, fabric collages, and mixed media pieces. You will learn the process behind building a collage, from choosing images to creating a layout, and then make your own paper collage. Guests are welcome to bring clippings, fabric, buttons, or other small items if they would like to explore mixed media. All materials will be provided at no cost.



**Date and time:** Fri, Aug. 14– Aug. 15, 2026

**Location:** Camp Swatara, 2905 Camp Swatara Rd, Bethel, PA 19507

**Speaker:** Marie Monville

**Theme:** "Our Comeback Stories"

**Organizer:** Kelly Bernstein, (717) 367-4730, kbernstein@ane-cob.org

**Registration Deadline:** August 3rd

All women are welcome to join in this weekend of worship, Bible study, singing, hiking, crafts, canoeing, swimming



Our next Women's Fellowship Meeting will be Tuesday, August 25th, 2026 at 9:00 A.M.

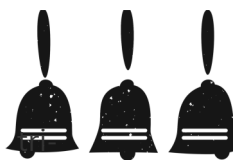
### Upcoming events:

**COBYS Bike & Hike:** September 13, 2026

**Brethren Disaster Relief Auction:** September 25 and 26, 2026.

**Annual Christmas Bazaar:** November 7th, 2026 from 8:00 – 1:00

**Women's Christmas Brunch:** November 21st, 2026 from 9:00 – 11:00 AM in the Cottage at Country Fare.



**Thank you** to all who blessed the congregation with a contribution to the Handbell Refurbishment Fund! We have reached our goal! We have been in contact with Schulmerich to arrange and schedule the refurbishment. There is no further need to contribute to this fund. Any funds that have already been received beyond the refurbishment cost, will be used for gloves, cleaning supplies and music for the handbells.

## Bible Quiz

Jesus said that his followers are the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). It wouldn't do much good to hide a light under a bushel, he said. It should be put on a lamp-stand to give light in the house. Then Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see ..."

Choose the ending of Jesus' sentence:

- A. their way and not stumble.
- B. how good and faithful you are as my servants.
- C. your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
- D. in their darkness.



Answer on Page 3



## Snowball Mountain Challenge VBS 2026

We had a great week on Snowball Mountain. Our challengers learned that with Jesus they can face all challenges throughout life's journey. Our verse for the week was Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through him who strengthens me".

The week was filled with amazing music, cool winter themed snacks, great role playing of our bible stories, fun science experiments, creative crafts, and some new games.

We had as many as 119 students, 55 children bringing Bibles, and 49 helpers. We raised \$893.24 for our mission, Red Creek Wildlife Center. They rescue injured or orphaned animals with the hope of rehabilitating them and if possible, releasing them into the wild.

We finished our week at Camp Swatara where we enjoyed fun and fellowship. Lylee from Red Creek came to camp to give a presentation called "Wildlife of Pennsylvania". It was very interesting and educational. She brought a box turtle, red-tailed hawk, barn owl, and a black vulture. She was a great presenter. Thank you Lylee! We enjoyed a nice picnic meal to close out the day at camp.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers that helped to make VBS possible. We would also like to thank the congregation for your

prayers for a successful week and for all of the items that were donated or came out to help paint our amazing decorations. We couldn't do it without all of you. We can't wait to see what is in store for next year!

~ VBS Committee

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."

~ Mahatma Gandhi



Little Swatara Preschool is accepting enrollment applications for the 2026-27 school year. If you would like more information, please visit our website at: [LittleSwatara.org](http://LittleSwatara.org) or contact Sara Bryant, Director at: [sara.bryant@littleswatara.org](mailto:sara.bryant@littleswatara.org)



**Pastor Matt's spiritual retreat brought him closer to God than he ever expected.**

## Hand Bells Go to NYC



With the current hand bell refurbishment project underway, some may wonder why Little Swatara has such a strong core of experienced hand bell players. The answer reaches back to the Church of the Brethren's National Youth Conference in 1982.

Over the years, Little Swatara has had many hand bell choirs. For a time, the congregation even supported both youth and adult choirs, helping train many people to play. Hand bells have

provided a meaningful way for those without extensive musical training to take part in music ministry and choir life.

In 1982, Little Swatara's Youth Hand Bell Choir was invited to perform a full concert at the Church of the Brethren's National Youth Conference in Estes Park, Colorado. The group played for several thousand youth in the Long House gathering room as a featured evening concert event.

Preparing for the concert took many long hours of rehearsal. The youth learned to play as many as five or six bells each and practiced advanced techniques, including passing bells back and forth down the table to other performers. To gain experience, the choir performed in as many settings as possible, even once taking tables and hand bells to an outdoor baptism.

Directed by Jeff Smith, the choir included Joel Zeigler, Mark Myers, Jamie Batz Wise, Jo Lyn Batz Light, Christine Rebman Doig, Linda Wise Cass, Tim Snyder, Missy Moyer Hipps, Suzanne Yonker Miller, Kim Soliday Schneck, Kara Seiler Henning, and Donna Daub.

John Wise traveled with the group as "tour manager," helping carry equipment. Lisa Gagliano and Pam Wenger Franklin also attended.

Traveling to Colorado was not inexpensive, so the group held many fundraisers to help cover the cost. The youth, bells, and equipment made the three-day trip by bus, staying in church basements along the way.

One memorable moment came about three hours southeast of Denver, when the aging bus broke down and left the group stranded for several hours on the prairie. Eventually, the driver was able to nurse the bus into the cooler temperatures of the mountains around Denver.

In all, the trip included six days of travel for a four-day conference. The theme that year was "Alive... to love, to care, to share."

## Cybersecurity Tips for Seniors

There has been yet another up tick in on line scam attempts on church members. Christians in general, and older adults in particular are common targets of scams.

Here's another quick review of common ways to stay safe on line -

Tip 1 - Don't click on links in emails from unfamiliar senders - in fact be suspicious of any email links. This holds text messages, and social media as well. SPAM or fake emails are the most common method of stealing your information or delivering viruses. Here's an example - you receive an email appearing to be from a legitimate source. Recently Jean Myers reports she got one that really really looked like it was from Ace Hardware for discounted Yeti mugs. It was a scam, and she had to have her credit card replaced. When you click the link, it either downloads viruses on your computer or phone - OR - takes you to an entirely legitimate looking web site asking for financial information such as account numbers. Scammers often apply urgency, they want you to act right away before you have time to stop and think. Always take a step back and carefully assess the situation. TIP - if your bank is contacting you *THEY ALREADY KNOW YOUR INFORMATION* and don't need you to give it to them. Always go directly to the web site, type it in yourself, and check. Finally - ABSOLUTELY NO legitimate company or person will ask you to pay a bill - any bill, bail, speeding tickets, etc - in gift cards.

Tip #2 - Don't open any attachments unless you know the sender and you are expecting the attachment. It may look like your friend sent you a cute photo, or that company you don't know sent an invoice. Frequently they are virus infected, especially if the file name ends in .exe or .zip. Always reach out to the sender and make sure it's legitimate.

Tip #3- This is primarily social media - and it's the one that has hit our church the hardest. Scammers create duplicate - FAKE - accounts using the names and photos of people you know. Then they send a friend request, or the request money. Always reach out to your friend BEFORE responding, and reach out directly to a contact method you absolutely know is correct. DO NOT respond to the scammers. And again, a dead giveaway of a scam is a request for gift cards. We have an established method of helping those in need - **and it absolutely does not** involve Pastor Matt asking for gift cards.

Tip #4 - Ignore unsolicited phone calls and "robocalls" Treat any unexpected phone call with skepticism, even if it appears to be from your favorite grandchild. Scammers can now fake telephone numbers to make it look like someone you know. They'll try very hard to appear legitimate.

Common scams are pretending your car registration is expiring, or a young family member is in trouble. They urgently ask for money. Another common scam is calling you from "Tech Support" and telling you your computer is infected. NO COMPANY OR GOVERNMENT AGENCY will call you out of the blue and offer tech support or ask for sensitive information.

Tip #5 - Don't click on pop up boxes on your computer. Just don't. Your device is likely not compromised and likely does not need repair. It's always a good idea to have antivirus software like Windows Defender, MacAfee or Norton just in case.

>>> continued on page 10

Internet safety is important, but awareness is a powerful first step in protecting yourself. If you think you've been a victim of an online scam, be vocal. You are not alone and there is no reason to feel embarrassed. Immediately contact your financial institutions and the police.

*"The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps." - Proverbs 14:15*

Being skeptical in some circumstances is actually biblical. We're called to use discernment and wisdom in decision making. Assess information carefully, weigh potential outcomes and plan your actions wisely. Seek wisdom and understanding from God rather than relying on superficial appearances. Proverbs 14:15 is a reminder to pause before acting and to ask for discernment to apply knowledge thoughtfully.

~contributed by Mark Myers



### **August 4 - National Night Out**

Mt. Aetna Fire Company grounds  
5:00-8:00 PM

### **August 22 - Country Fair**

Mt. Aetna Fire Company grounds  
5:00-8:00 PM

### **Bethel-Tulpehocken Public Library** **Movie Night**

Wednesday, August 12 at 6:00 pm  
"Remarkably Bright Creatures"  
Rated PG-13

*All movies will have free, freshly made popcorn and lemonade. Please register by calling or texting 717-933-4060*

**Thank you** to everyone who contributed to this month's Newsletter. The deadline for the next edition is the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Open to all. Feel free to share Little Swatara Church related events, thoughts, pictures of past events, articles summarizing past and future events, or anything else.



### **August Mission of the Month**

The August Mission of the Month will support COBYS (Church of the Brethren Youth Services).

Motivated by Christian Faith, COBYS Family Service educates, supports and empowers children and adults to reach their full potential. For more than 40 years COBYS has been carrying out this mission by providing safe and loving homes for children through foster care and adoption services; helping children and adults overcome challenges through counseling; and leading family life education programs teaching skills and principles to parents, teens and children so families can become all that God intended them to be.

### **Why Me?**

When we're faced with unexpected hardship, our first impulse is often to ask, "Why me, O God? Why me?"

Yet when a blessing comes our way, we receive it with gratitude and rarely ask the same question: "Why me, O God? Why me?"



## News from Camp Swatara

### Movie Night in the Campground

Saturday, August 8th, 2026 to September 12, 2026

8:00 PM

Join us at Camp Swatara for movie nights in the Campground under the Stars (weather permitting) 2nd Saturday from May to September.



### Camp Swatara Car Show

August 15, 2026

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Bring your classic or customized car or just come to see the cool cars!

For more information & registration: [www.campswatara.org](http://www.campswatara.org)



### Camp Swatara Labor Day Auction

Camp Swatara needs your help with the Annual Family Camp Auction! We want to make this auction the best yet! We are looking for individuals, SS classes, family groups, etc., who would be willing to donate something. Theme gift baskets are always a winner! Do you have a talent for painting, pottery, sewing, woodworking, etc.? Birdhouses and bird feeders are popular! We need items for the Children's Auction, too! Do you have a service you could share? Think outside the box! Remember 100% of donations from the auction benefit Family Camp at Camp Swatara. There are no administration costs, it is organized and run by volunteers. We will be glad to pick up your donation, just give us a call to make arrangements. Item Preview—Friday, Sept. 4th, 6-8 PM. and Saturday, Sept. 5th, 8–9 AM. Children's Auction—Saturday, Sept. 5th, at 9 AM. Regular Auction following Children's Auction.

## August 2026

| Sunday                                                                                       | Monday                                             | Tuesday                                                                               | Wednesday                                                                                        | Thursday                                                                                                                               | Friday                                                                                                                                                                                     | Saturday                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 26<br>Bread & Cup<br>Communion                                                               | 27<br>church closed<br>for cleaning                | 28<br>church closed<br>for cleaning<br>Ministry Team<br>Minutes Due                   | 29<br>carpet cleaning<br>upstairs &<br>downstairs                                                | 30<br>carpet cleaning<br>upstairs &<br>downstairs<br>8:30am Quilting -<br>Cx                                                           | 31<br>church closed<br>for cleaning                                                                                                                                                        | 1                                                                   |
| 2<br>11:00am Farm Women<br>#2 / Pav Heather<br>Forry                                         | 3                                                  | 4<br>7:00pm<br>LEADERSHIP<br>TEAM Mtg                                                 | 5                                                                                                | 6<br>8:30am Quilting<br>4:00pm 50+ club<br>mtg/Kauffmans<br>BBQ Pavilion                                                               | 7                                                                                                                                                                                          | 8<br>J & D High /<br>pav                                            |
| 9<br>Tiden/Edris Reunion (D.<br>Gensemer) / pav<br>12:00pm Spiritual<br>Nurture meeting      | 10<br>7:00pm Every<br>Member<br>Council<br>Meeting | 11<br>11:30am<br>Widows<br>Luncheon/Ctry<br>Fare                                      | 12                                                                                               | 13<br>8:30am Quilting                                                                                                                  | 14                                                                                                                                                                                         | 15                                                                  |
| 16<br>Food Pantry Collection<br>Potluck Sunday<br>11:00am James & Holly<br>Manback / reunion | 17<br>7:00pm Music<br>& Worship<br>Team<br>meeting | 18<br>4:00am<br>Preschool<br>meet the<br>Teacher Night<br>/ narthex &<br>classrooms   | 19<br>Newsletter<br>Deadline<br>4:00pm<br>Preschool<br>meet the<br>Teacher Night /<br>downstairs | 20<br>8:30am Quilting<br>9:30am Packing<br>food bags for<br>Bethel Food<br>Pantry / Salem<br>Evangelical<br>Lutheran<br>Church, Bethel | 21<br> Food<br>Pantry<br>Needs<br>8:00am Feed<br>Them /<br>Kitchen<br>3:00pm<br>Bethel Food<br>Pantry | 22<br>Country Fair<br>7:00am Men's<br>Prayer<br>Breakfast /<br>Cafe |
| 23<br>Ray Keeney / pav                                                                       | 24<br>preschool<br>starts                          | 25<br>Ministry Team<br>Minutes Due<br>9:00am<br>women's<br>fellowship<br>meeting / FH | 26                                                                                               | 27<br>8:30am Quilting                                                                                                                  | 28                                                                                                                                                                                         | 29                                                                  |
| 30<br>10:00am S. Hartranft<br>/pav                                                           | 31                                                 | 1<br>7:00pm<br>LEADERSHIP<br>TEAM Mtg                                                 | 2                                                                                                | 3<br>50+ club mtg/FH<br>8:30am Quilting<br>6:00pm<br>Preschool<br>Board meeting                                                        | 4                                                                                                                                                                                          | 5                                                                   |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|

