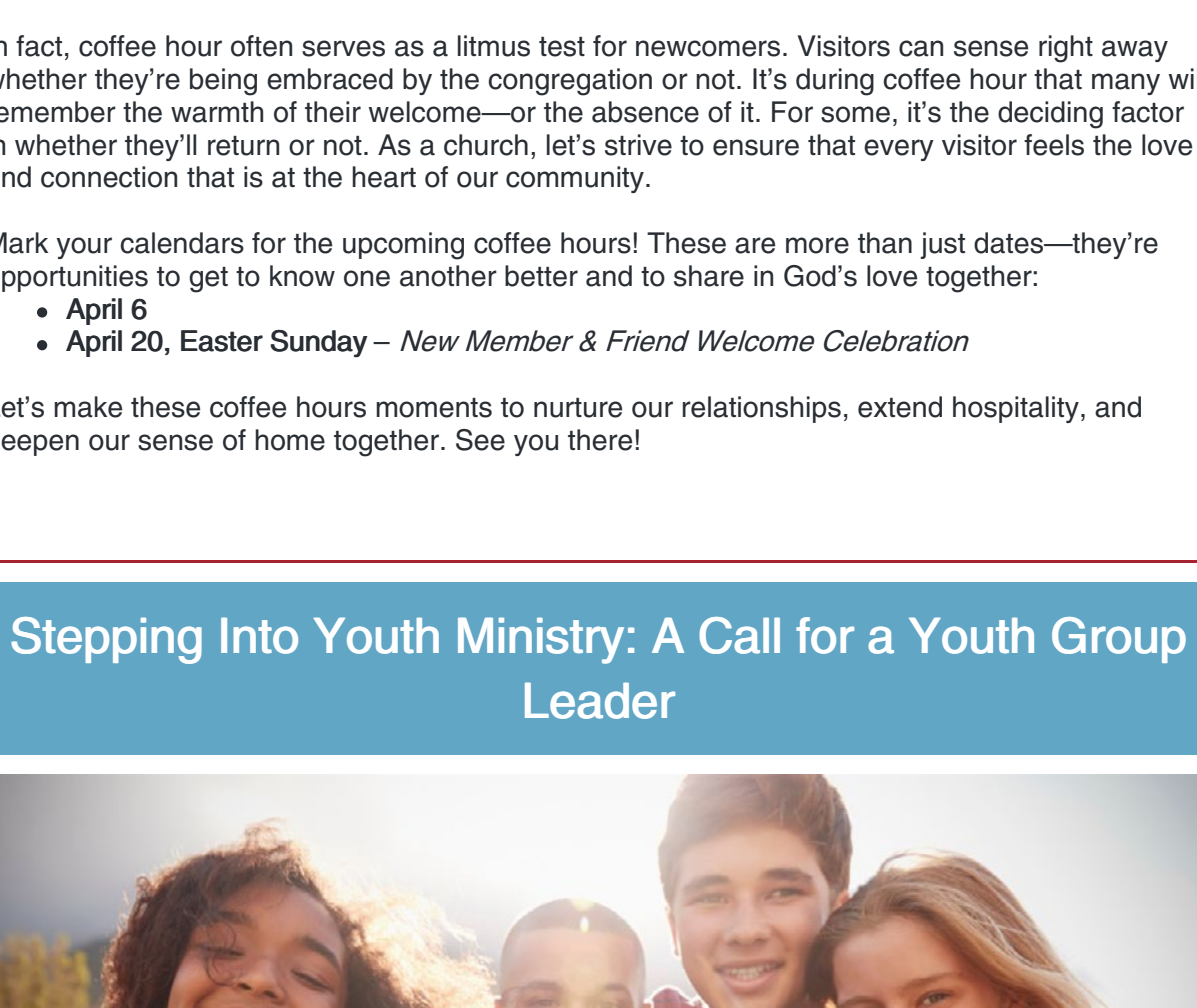


March 28, 2025

## Small Groups: Where Connections Happen and Growth Thrives!



As our community of bridge builders grows, we all need support systems to keep the connection strong. Enter small groups – the ultimate way to belong, grow, and thrive together!

God designed us to lean on each other, and the early church showed us just how crucial that is. In Acts 2:42-47, Paul gives us the blueprint for small groups that fuel spiritual growth and build stronger bonds.

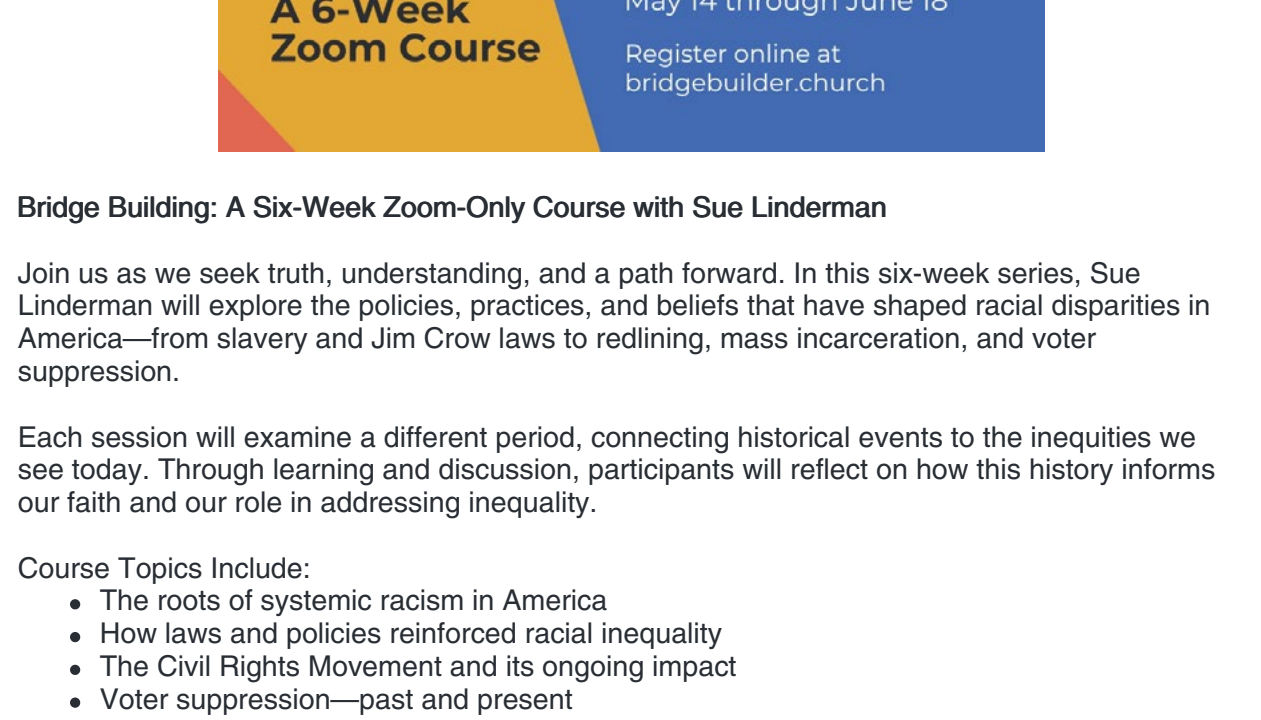
Here's why small groups are a game-changer:

- **Study & Discuss:** We're better together! Dive into the Bible or other meaningful discussions and discover insights you might miss flying solo.
- **Practice Love:** Small groups are the perfect place to practice loving each other – even those who challenge us. Grace, folks, grace!
- **Share Meals:** Breaking bread together isn't just about food; it's about deepening bonds and making lasting connections. (Jesus knew what He was doing with those dinner parties!)
- **Pray for One Another:** Power in prayer! Jesus promised, where two or more gather, amazing things happen. Let's lift each other up.
- **Serve One Another:** Helping out with practical needs – whether it's running errands or bringing a meal – strengthens both the giver and the receiver. Love in action!

We're excited to see how small groups will play a pivotal role in our growth. Want to join a small group or lead one? Contact Mary Ann Jasper at [maryannjasper@gmail.com](mailto:maryannjasper@gmail.com) or Rand Johnson at [randj22043@gmail.com](mailto:randj22043@gmail.com) to get involved!

Stay tuned for sign-ups in the coming weeks. Let's grow together, one small group at a time!

## Upcoming Coffee Hours: Where the Holy Meets the Ordinary



At Community Church, we believe that the holy occupies the ordinary, and there's no better place to experience this than at our coffee hour. Held between worship services, coffee hour is more than just a time to grab a drink—it's an opportunity to connect, build relationships, and create a welcoming space for everyone.

Coffee hour is not an afterthought or a mere formality; it's a vital extension of the worship experience. It's where we put into practice the hospitality we proclaim, fostering a true sense of belonging among all of God's people. It's a time when we can be open, welcoming, and intentional in making sure everyone feels like they are part of the community.

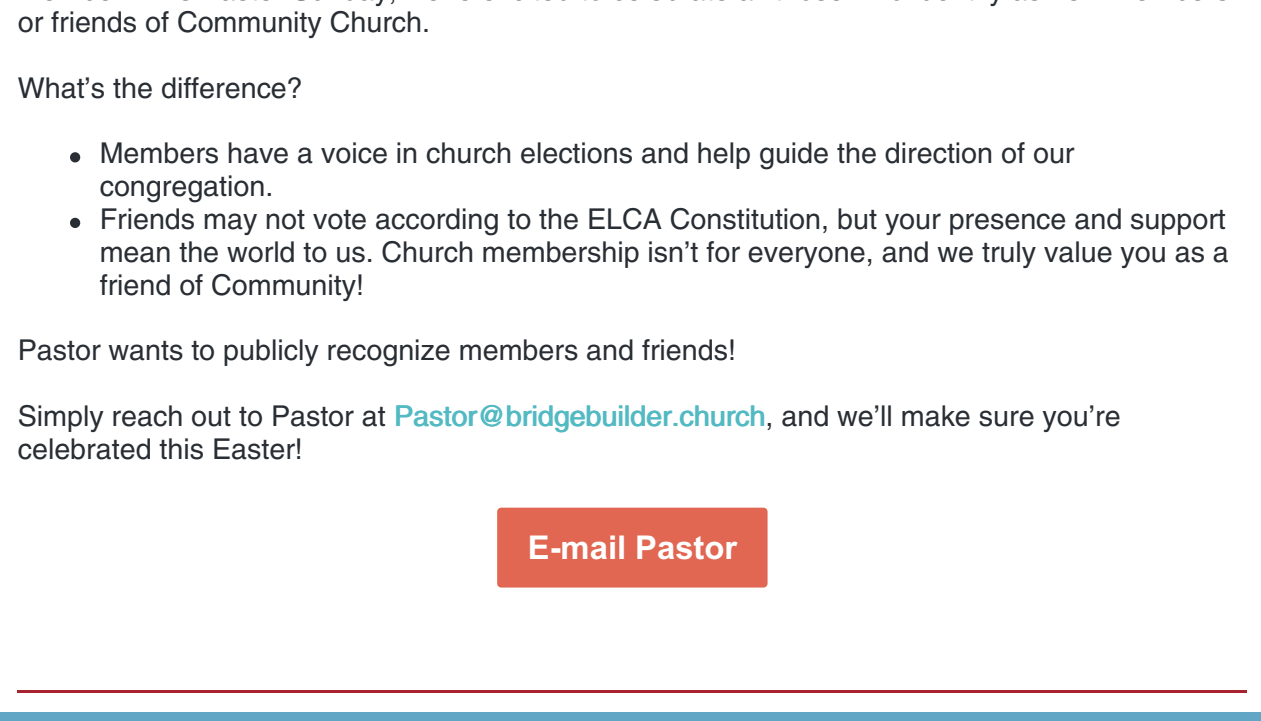
In fact, coffee hour often serves as a litmus test for newcomers. Visitors can sense right away whether they're being embraced by the congregation or not. It's during coffee hour that many will remember the warmth of their welcome—or the absence of it. For some, it's the deciding factor in whether they'll return or not. As a church, let's strive to ensure that every visitor feels the love and connection that is at the heart of our community.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming coffee hours! These are more than just dates—they're opportunities to get to know one another better and to share in God's love together:

- **April 6**
- **April 20, Easter Sunday – New Member & Friend Welcome Celebration**

Let's make these coffee hours moments to nurture our relationships, extend hospitality, and deepen our sense of home together. See you there!

## Stepping Into Youth Ministry: A Call for a Youth Group Leader



Community Lutheran is excited to explore options for a dedicated youth ministry and bring a passionate youth ministry leader to assist in this endeavor. A volunteer is best in this season but all options are on the table in the future as our community of faith grows. We are blessed to see more young faces in our midst, but to truly support and nurture their spiritual growth, we need a committed youth group leader.

Do you know someone who has a heart for God and a desire to invest in the lives of young people? We're looking for someone who can lead our youth ministry with enthusiasm, faith, and dedication. Do you know of anyone in your neighborhood that might be interested? Do you know a former youth group leader that has moved to our area?

What's Involved in Being a Youth Group Leader?

**Role 1: Follower of Jesus**

The most important part of being a youth group leader is to lead by example. By living out faith authentically, the youth do the same. Prioritizing our own relationship with Jesus allows us to become the warmth of their welcome—or the absence of it. For some, it's the deciding factor in whether they'll return or not. As a church, let's strive to ensure that every visitor feels the love and connection that is at the heart of our community.

**Role 2: Mentor-Friend**

Building trust is key. As a youth leader, we'll need someone who can develop genuine connections with youth, balancing friendship with leadership. Creating a respectful and supportive environment helps the youth feel comfortable growing in their faith.

**Role 3: Spiritual Leader**

Leading a youth group is more than just teaching—it's about showing the love of God through passion and action. Youth today are searching for answers, and as a spiritual guide, the youth group leader will help kids navigate life's big questions with truth, love, and faith.

**Role 4: Cultural Architect**

Creating a welcoming, engaging environment is essential. From planning activities to setting the theme of each meeting, a youth group leader will shape an atmosphere where youth feel excited to gather and grow together in Christ.

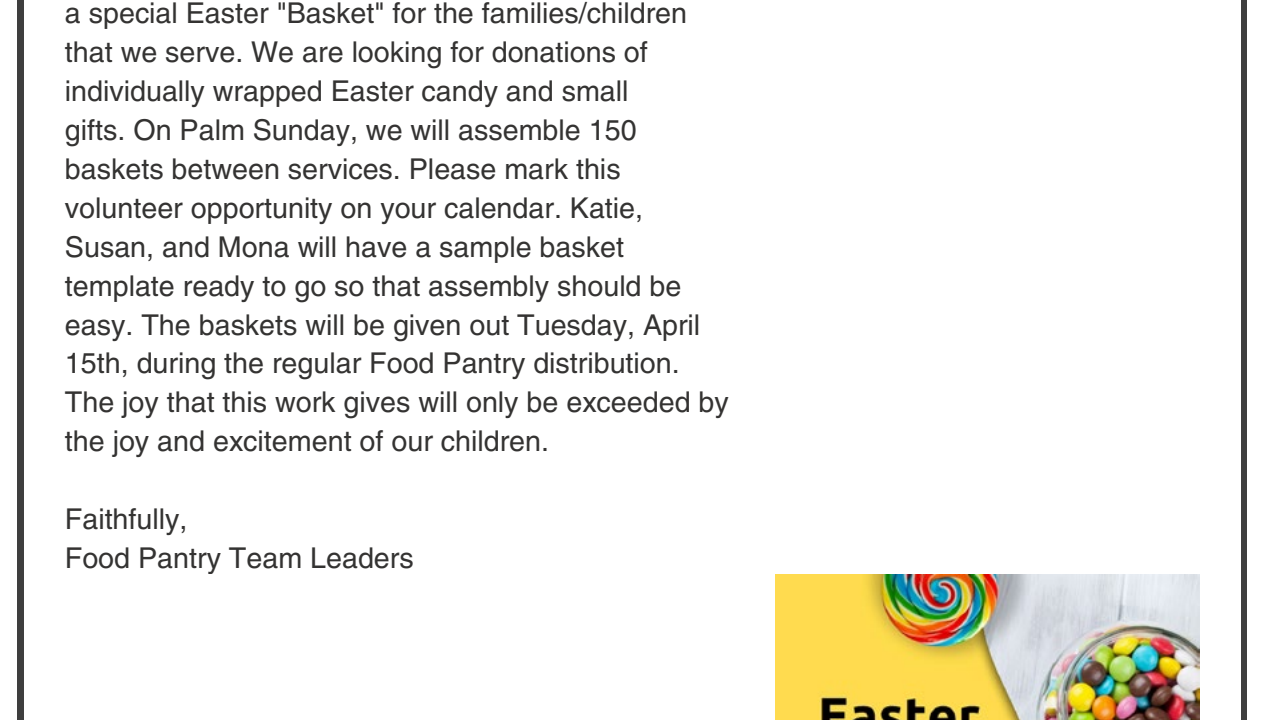
**Role 5: Boundary Keeper**

A good leader also sets healthy boundaries. By maintaining a safe and respectful space, a youth group leader will create an environment where youth can focus on what truly matters—their relationship with Jesus that is alive in serving the greater community youth.

Becoming a youth ministry leader is an opportunity to make a lasting impact on the lives of young people. It's more than just teaching; it's about shaping hearts, building relationships, and guiding the next generation toward a deeper faith.

If you know someone that may feel called to this incredible role, please contact Pastor Karis at [pastor@bridgebuilder.church](mailto:pastor@bridgebuilder.church).

## Racism in America – The History We Didn't Learn in School



**Bridge Building: A Six-Week Zoom-Only Course with Sue Linderman**

Join us as we seek truth, understanding, and a path forward. In this six-week series, Sue Linderman will explore the policies, practices, and beliefs that have shaped racial disparities in America—from slavery and Jim Crow laws to redlining, mass incarceration, and voter suppression.

Each session will examine a different period, connecting historical events to the inequities we see today. Through learning and discussion, participants will reflect on how this history informs our faith and our role in addressing inequality.

Course Topics Include:

- The roots of systemic racism in America
- How laws and policies reinforced racial inequality
- The Civil Rights Movement and its ongoing impact
- Voter suppression—past and present
- The role of faith communities in racial justice

The class will take place on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. beginning on May 14.

[Register Now](#)

## New Small Groups Forming: Join Us for Fellowship and Study!



Thank you to everyone who participated in the small group survey! After analyzing the data collected, we have created 3 small groups based on the interests and availability of those who completed the survey:

- **Sunday Sermon Discussion Group** - This group, lead by Sandy Cosentino, will meet after the second service to discuss the sermon and how it impacts our lives. This group will begin on Sunday, May 4th.
- **Wednesday Bible Book Study** - This group, co-lead by Thadine Coyne and Mary Ann Trueheart, will meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:00. The format of the group will be similar to Rev Deb's Advent and Lenten studies. This group will begin on Wednesday, April 30th.
- **Evening Kolonia Group** - This group will meet monthly on a Friday evening at 6:00 for a potluck fellowship followed by discussion, sharing and prayer. The group will meet at the home of Mary Ann Jasper and Paul Bender. This group will begin on Friday, May 8th.

You are welcome to sign up and try as many groups as you like!

Sign up online (link below) or at church on the bulletin board in Luther Hall.

[Sign Up](#)

## New Member & Friend Recognition on Easter Sunday!



Sunday, April 20, at 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Did you know? If you consider yourself a member of Community Church, then you are a member! This Easter Sunday, we're excited to celebrate all those who identify as new members or friends of Community Church.

What's the difference?

- Members have a voice in church elections and help guide the direction of our congregation.
- Friends may not vote according to the ELCA Constitution, but your presence and support mean the world to us. Church membership isn't for everyone, and we truly value you as a friend of Community!

Pastor wants to publicly recognize members and friends!

Simply reach out to Pastor at [Pastor@bridgebuilder.church](mailto:Pastor@bridgebuilder.church), and we'll make sure you're celebrated this Easter!

[E-mail Pastor](#)

## Food Pantry Ministry Activities & Accomplishments: A Year of Progress & Future Goals



The Food Pantry Ministry Team is excited to share an update on our recent accomplishments and the short-term goals we have set to further enhance our service to the community. We are grateful for the continued support from volunteers and donors, which allows us to make a significant impact in the lives of those we serve. Here's a closer look at what we've been working on and our plans moving forward.

**Short-Term Goals: Focusing on Efficiency and Growth**

Our team is working hard to streamline operations to better serve our clients and volunteers. Below are the short-term goals we're prioritizing:

1. **Streamline Ordering, Inventory, and Receiving** We're working to make our ordering process more efficient to ensure we always have the right food on hand for our clients.
2. **Reduce "Touches" for Each Item** Our aim is to reduce unnecessary handling of each food item to improve efficiency and reduce the risk of errors during distribution.
3. **Evaluate and Update Storage Needs** A significant part of our work has been reviewing and upgrading our storage space to accommodate the increasing volume of donations and food.
4. **Blueprint for Set-Up and Take-Down on Distribution Days** We're developing clear guidelines for the setup and takedown processes on distribution days to ensure smooth operations and minimal confusion.
5. **Volunteer Recognition and Gratitude Luncheon** We'll be hosting a volunteer recognition and gratitude luncheon to show our appreciation for the incredible work our volunteers do.

**Action Items: Progress and Ongoing Projects**

Here's an overview of our current action items, showing the progress we've made and what's still in the works:

1. **Clear the Pantry's Office for Additional Storage:** We've successfully relocated the finance team to the library, clearing space in the Pastor's office for much-needed storage. Our sincere gratitude to the finance team and all those who helped with this significant task.
2. **Remove the Cabinets from Church Office:** The cabinets from the Church Office have been removed and recycled to a new home. Now that they have been cleared, we are in the process of ordering new shelving to increase capacity and improve efficiency of our Pantry.
3. **Relocate the Pallet Jack and Unused Items:** We've moved the pallet jack and unused folding chairs to a more appropriate location. This change will help improve the workflow for receiving deliveries from the Food Bank of Delaware, as well as during distribution.
4. **Purchasing Additional Shelves and Freezer Space:** We are currently evaluating the need for additional storage shelves and freezer space, which will be a big help in meeting the growing needs of our pantry.
5. **Recruiting a Purchasing Coordinator:** We are working to recruit a Purchasing Coordinator. This role will provide an opportunity for volunteers to contribute to the pantry's operations.
6. **Recruiting a Volunteer Coordinator:** We are working to recruit a Volunteer Coordinator. This role will help to organize and manage all aspects of our volunteer program, including recruiting, training, scheduling, and assigning volunteers to appropriate roles.

**Looking Ahead: Evolving to Meet Our Clients' and Volunteers' Needs**

As we continue to evolve, our focus is on ensuring that our internal infrastructure is adaptable to the needs of both our clients and our valued volunteers. We are dedicated to making our operations as efficient as possible, all while providing the best service to those who rely on our pantry.

We are incredibly thankful for everyone who has contributed their time, energy, and resources to our ministry. Together, we are making a real difference in the lives of many. Stay tuned for more updates and exciting developments as we work toward these goals!

With gratitude,  
The Food Pantry Ministry Team

## Updating the Online Directory



Some have recently noted that in the online directory, phone numbers and email addresses are not being displayed. If a phone number or email address is not displayed, it is because the person has not chosen personal contact information. Each of us must actively opt-in.

In order for people to see your personal contact information (phone number and/or email address) in the online church directory, you must specifically authorize it.

To authorize the display of this information:

1. Log on to Church Center
2. Click your profile setting at the top right corner.
3. Click "My profile & settings" at the top.
4. Click "Directory/Privacy"
5. Mark "Show selected contact info" and choose items you wish to have displayed.
6. Once your selections have been made, click "Update" at the top right of the screen.
7. That's it! Now your information will be displayed to other members.

## What's Happening at Community

**Community Lutheran ESL Program**

Thursdays 10-11 in Luther Hall

Last week the students had expressed concern about not being understood when they went to medical appointments and not understanding clearly when doctors and nurses gave them instructions regarding treatments. So for part of our class time, we set up a mock medical office with teachers are receptionist, nurse, doctor, etc. We have each student a 4-page vocabulary list of medical terms in Spanish and English. Each student had a chance to go in, register, answer identification and medical questions, give the nurse their symptoms, and talk to the doctor about what to do. It went slowly because we encouraged the students to speak as much as possible in English.



Toward the end of class we issued students their workbooks for the rest of the year. It looks like we have enough volunteer teachers for group discussion on topics of the students' choice to begin each class and one-on-one lessons in their workbooks for the second part of each class.

Opportunities for topical discussion at the beginning of class make the students feel more comfortable and give them skills in areas they have identified as important. One-on-one workbook time builds their sight-referencing vocabulary and pronunciation skills.

All of us feel fortunate to have this opportunity to build trust and camaraderie within diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Team Leaders: Jen Read and Mari Satterlee



**Food Pantry Ministry**

The Community Food Pantry Ministry is dedicated to providing food and support to those in need within our community.

We serve on the first and third Tuesday of each month, with volunteer set-up beginning at 8:30 a.m. and concluding by noon. Volunteers are always welcome to help with organizing, distributing, and supporting our neighbors. Whether you're looking to give back or need assistance, we invite you to join us in making a difference and spreading kindness.

**2024 Contribution Statements**

The Finance Committee sent out 2024 Contribution Statements around the end of January. According to the system, all the statements were sent out successfully. Unfortunately, it has come to our attention that many folks never received their statement. Please check your spam folder to see if it is there. If not, please let me know, and I will make sure that you get a copy.

-David Nilsson, [treasurer@bridgebuilder.church](mailto:treasurer@bridgebuilder.church)

[Email David](#)

The team members of the Food Pantry will be doing a special Easter "Basket" for the families/children that we serve. We are looking for donations of individually wrapped Easter candy and small gifts. On Palm Sunday, we will assemble 150 baskets between services. Please mark this volunteer opportunity on your calendar. Karis, Susan, and Mona will have a sample basket template ready to go so that assembly should be easy. The baskets will be given out Tuesday, April 15th, during the regular Food Pantry distribution. The joy that this work gives will only be exceeded by the joy and excitement of our children.

Faithfully,  
Food Pantry Team Leaders



**Garden Ministry: Calling All Green Thumbs!**

Do you have a passion for plants? Join us for the Garden Ministry as we plan and plant our outdoor garden! We will gather on **Saturday, April 5 at 9:00 a.m.** to bring our plans to life on the garden.



**WOULD YOU LIKE AN EASTER LILLY TO TAKE HOME ON EASTER SUNDAY?**  
**EMAIL THE COMMUNITY CHURCH ALTAR GUILD TEAM LEADER, SUSAN BARACCATO, AT [SUSANBARRACATO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SUSANBARRACATO@GMAIL.COM)**



## Holy Week Services



**Maudy Thursday** April 17  
Worship Times: Noon and 6 p.m.

**Good Friday** April 18  
Worship Times: Noon and 6 p.m.

**Easter Sunday** April 20  
Worship Times: 8:45 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Special Musical Guests: Off 24

## What Is a Prayer Request?



Jesus said, "Where two or three have gathered together in my name, I am there in their midst." Prayer is powerful, especially when many are praying for the same person or situation. At Community Church, we are committed to praying for you and those you hold dear—whether they are struggling with illness, grieving a loss, or facing any other hardship life may bring.

To maintain confidentiality, we will only include first names when sharing prayer requests, but you may share your relationship to the person being prayed for. We also ask that you refrain from sharing personal details about someone else without their consent.

How Can We Pray for You?

If you would like to submit an e-newsletter prayer request, whether for yourself or a loved one, please contact: [tech.clc.30897@gmail.com](mailto:tech.clc.30897@gmail.com).

We are here to support you and lift you up in prayer, trusting that God hears and answers in God's perfect timing.

[Submit a Prayer Request](#)

## Prayer Requests: Together in Faith

No requests this week. Continue to lift one another in prayer this week.

Each person mentioned in this newsletter publication has granted us permission to do so.

### Team Leaders

Please submit e-newsletter articles every Tuesday at noon for publication each Friday.

Articles should be emailed to [tech.clc.30897@gmail.com](mailto:tech.clc.30897@gmail.com).