

Tabernacle Evangelical Lutheran Church

In the city since 1906

5843 Spruce St., Philadelphia, PA 19139, 215.748.5533, TabernaclePhilly@gmail.com, Website: TLCPhila.org

The Rev. Carlton Rodgers, Pastor, rodgers1103@comcast.net

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A Pastoral Word for 2026

As we enter this new year together, my heart is full of gratitude for the ways God continues to move in and through our community. January always brings a sense of beginning again, but this year feels especially rich with possibility. We are stepping into a season marked by new faces, new ideas, and new opportunities for ministry.

We give thanks for the gifts God has already placed among us — including the joy of welcoming our new musician, whose talents will help shape our worship life in meaningful ways. We celebrate the launch of our new website, a fresh doorway for connection and hospitality. We're engaging in hopeful conversations about grant opportunities, discerning how we might strengthen our ministries and care for our building so it can continue to serve as a place of welcome and witness.

In all of this, I'm reminded that the Spirit equips each of us with gifts meant to be shared. Some of those gifts are musical or technical. Some are visionary or practical. Some are rooted in compassion, prayer, or quiet acts of service. Every one of them matters. Every one of them helps build up the body of Christ.

My prayer for us in the months ahead is that we would recognize the gifts God has entrusted to us, give thanks for them, and offer them boldly for the good of our neighbors. Gratitude and generosity go hand in hand — and when we live from that place, we become part of God's ongoing work of renewal.

May this new year be a season of joyful beginnings, faithful service, and Spirit-led growth for our whole community.



Feb-Mar 2026



Sunday Worship
@10:30 a.m. both in
the sanctuary and on
[Facebook: Tabernacle
Lutheran Church](https://www.facebook.com/TabernacleLutheranChurch)

New website!
TLCPhila.org

**Confirmation/Cate-
chetical Class** 1st Sun-
days after worship

**Food Bank Feb18 &
25; Mar18 & 25** 9:30-
11:30am

**Wednesday Bible
Study @ 7 p.m.** ID:
827 6385 3651 Pass:
661701

**TLC Kids' Club 1st &
3rd Sat @11:15am** ID:
867 9733 9075 request
passcode by email

Church Council 2nd
Sundays

About Tabernacle

Tabernacle is a member of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Since 1906, we have served in the heart of West Philadelphia, and with God's help, we will remain in the city for good! As Lutheran Christians, we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Our mission is to love our neighbors through our words and actions. We work to be an inclusive congregation, welcoming people of all racial and gender identities. We are a community-oriented congregation providing a safe space for worship, community planning and local celebrations. Sunday morning worship at 10:30am (in-person and on Facebook), Wednesday evening Bible Study at 7pm (Zoom), Saturday morning children's ministry at 11am, and Tabernacle's Food Bank are the central parts of our life together.



Praying together for:

- Dennis Abraham
- Annie Armstrong
- Mr. Arjona
- Helen Beypu
- Ann Brown
- Anita Burrell
- Grisel Cartagena
- Jan Chase
- Johnny Cochran
- David Coleman
- Olivia Cureton
- Corrie Ellis Sr.
- Paula Everett
- Joan Gamble
- Trinh Hagedorn
- Rev. Phyllis Haynes
- Tom & Gloria Huey
- Rev. Rosa Key
- Ted Kramer
- Barbara McLaurin
- Diane Medley
- Rev. Janet Peterman
- Beatrice Scott
- Jose & Vanlee Tapia
- Jonathan Thorne

*Ask, and it will be given to you;
 search, and you will find;
 knock, and the door will be opened for
 you.
 Matthew 7:7*

Send requests for prayer and visitation to Pastor:
Rodgers1103@comcast.net

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

FEB 01 | 4th Sunday after the Epiphany

Mic 6:1-8; Ps 15; 1 Cor 1:18-31; Matt 5:1-12

FEB 08 | 5th Sunday after the Epiphany

Isa 58:1-9a (9b-12); Ps 112:1-9 (10); 1 Cor 2:1-12 (13-16);
Matt 5:13-20

FEB 15 | Transfiguration Sunday

Exod 24:12-18; Ps 2 or Ps 99; 2 Pet 1:16-21; Matt 17:1-9

FEB 18 | Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Ps 51:1-17; 2 Cor 5:20b-6:10; Matt 6:1-6, 16-21

FEB 22 | First Sunday in Lent

Gen 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Ps 32; Rom 5:12-19; Matt 4:1-11

MAR 01 | 2nd Sunday in Lent

Gen 12:1-4a; Ps 121; Rom 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

MAR 08 | 3rd Sunday in Lent

Exod 17:1-7; Ps 95; Rom 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

MAR 15 | 4th Sunday in Lent

1 Sam 16:1-13; Ps 23; Eph 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

MAR 22 | 5th Sunday in Lent

Ezek 37:1-14; Ps 130; Rom 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

MAR 29 | Palm/Passion Sunday

Palm Lit: Matt 21:1-11; Ps 118:1-2, 19-29; Passion Lit: Isa 50:4-9a; Ps 31:9-16; Phil 2:5-11; Matt 26:14-27 or 27:11-54

MAR 30 | Monday of Holy Week

Isa 42:1-9; Ps 36:5-11; Heb 9:11-15; John 12:1-11

MAR 31 | Tuesday of Holy Week

Isa 49:1-7; Ps 71:1-14); 1 Cor 1:18-31; John 12:20-36

APR 01 | Wednesday of Holy Week

Isa 50:4-9a; Ps 70; Heb 12:1-3; John 13:21-32

APR 02 | Thursday of Holy Week/Maundy Thursday

Exod 12:1-4 (5-10), 11-14; Ps 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Cor 11:23-26;
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

APR 03 | Friday of Holy Week/Good Friday

Isa 52:13-53:12; Ps 22; Heb 10:16-25; John 19:1-42 or
Mark 14:1-15:47

APR 04 | Holy Saturday/Easter Eve

Job 14:1-14; Ps 31:1-4, 15-16); 1 Peter 4:1-8; Matt 27:57-66 or
John 19:38-42

APR 05 | Easter Day/Resurrection of our Lord

Jer 31:1-6; Ps 118:1-2, 14-24; Col 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43; John
20:1-18 or Matt 28:1-10

Mark your Calendars

Palm Sunday March 29

Good Friday April 3

Easter Sunday April 5

Lord, create in me a clean heart and a renewed spirit



February 18, 7pm
Spirit & Truth Worship Center
1000 Church Lane
Yeadon, PA 19050

ASH WEDNESDAY, February 18, begins the season of LENT, a 40-day journey of reflection and repentance leading to Easter. Tabernacle will join Grace, New Life, Faith-Immanuel, and Spirit & Truth for joint Ash Wednesday service. The Rev. Dedra Florence-Johnson, pastor of Grace, will be the preacher. For those who desire, ashes will be applied to your forehead in the shape of a cross, a reminder of our need for God's forgiveness. For more information contact Beverly Gaines (610.547.1288) or Carolyn Jackson (215.760.2373). In the event of inclement weather, the service will be on ZOOM. ID 796 544 5875. Connect by phone: 267.831.0333.

Community News from Philadelphia Councilmember Jamie Gauthier

 **3rd District Alley Tree Removal Program** – Got an overgrown alley tree? Email 3rdDistrict@phila.gov with your name, address, contact info, and photos to request removal. Trees must be located directly behind your home — not in backyards or vacant lots.

 **Financial Aid Webinars** — **Free**, virtual sessions that walk students and families through FAFSA, grants, scholarships, and paying for college with clear, step-by-step guidance.

 **Senior SEPTA KeyCard Days** — Seniors 65+ can stop by our District Office (606 S. 52nd Street) on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 AM-4 PM, to renew or apply for their SEPTA KeyCard.

 **Free Uber Rides for Seniors** — Older adults age 60+ living in eligible West Oak Lane, West Philly, and Southwest Philly ZIP codes can receive free one-way or round-trip Uber rides to medical appointments, banks, and grocery stores with ID verification.

 **Free Smoke Alarm Installation Program** — The American Red Cross is offering free smoke alarm and bed shaker alarm installations for Philadelphia residents to help prevent fire-related injuries and deaths, with appointments available by request online or by phone.

 **PASH Program at Penn Dermatology** — The Penn Academy for Skin Health (PASH), run by Penn Medicine Department of Dermatology, offers high-school students (10th-12th grade) from Philadelphia schools a four-weekend hands-on research experience starting February 28, 2026. Participants explore dermatology labs, engage with scientists, and may qualify for a paid summer internship.

 **2026 Youth Diplomats** — A free, exclusive opportunity for Greater Philadelphia high school students to train in cultural diplomacy, Philly history, and volunteer leadership while representing the city at major 2026 global events.

 **LDC Apprenticeship Programs** — Apprenticeship and training opportunities offered through the Laborers' District Council, combining paid work with hands-on skill development in the building trades.

 **America250PA Semiquincentennial Scholarships** — America250PA is offering Semiquincentennial Scholarships to support Pennsylvania students pursuing postsecondary education, recognizing academic achievement, civic engagement, and leadership as part of the Commonwealth's 250th anniversary.

ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry issues statement on Minneapolis ICE shooting

Learn to do good; seek justice; rescue the oppressed; defend the orphan; plead for the widow.
(Isaiah 1:17)

Alongside our siblings in Christ in Minneapolis and throughout Minnesota and all who have been impacted by aggressive immigration enforcement and violence by federal law enforcement agents, I mourn the shocking shooting death of Renee Nicole Good by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent on Jan. 7, 2026. I join calls for a thorough investigation into this case, accountability for the shooting and a de-escalation of ICE enforcement across the United States. Alongside the Lutherans who have held vigils in Minneapolis and around the country, our church prays for God’s peace in this community and justice in this case.

The ELCA is committed to upholding and guaranteeing basic human rights for the safety of migrants and their families. Our church works toward just and humane policies affecting migrants in and outside the United States. We decry language that dehumanizes immigrants who are beloved children of God and escalates tensions between federal agents and communities. Surges of immigration enforcement and violent encounters like we are seeing in Minneapolis — as well as in Chicago; Atlanta; Los Angeles; Portland, Ore.; and Washington, D.C. — have indiscriminately targeted our neighbors, creating fear and uncertainty. This has created conditions where immigrants, those accompanying them and federal agents are all at risk.

ELCA social teaching provides guidance in complex situations: “Public safety depends upon trust in law enforcement to respect and protect the rights of all” (“Gun-related Violence and Trauma”). As a church, we are concerned by the trend of law enforcement and federal agents involved in immigration enforcement relying on the use of force in our communities without sufficient accountability or oversight.

God calls us to be witnesses to God’s presence, healing and hope. I invite ongoing prayers, vigils and advocacy for peace and justice, and I affirm the ELCA’s “pledge to continue our church’s historic leadership in caring for refugees and immigrants” (For Peace in God’s World).

In Christ,
The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Black History Month

by Al Hunter, Jr.

If you ever questioned why Black History Month is important, look at what has occurred in just the past months: In Philadelphia, 34 plaques in an exhibit memorializing the enslaved Blacks who worked at the President's House near the Liberty Bell were removed by the Department of Interior; meanwhile, one of the first actions taken by President Donald Trump in 2025 was to do away with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives designed to promote and encourage fair participation in the workforce. He also pressured colleges to scale back their use of DEI in hiring and in curriculum offerings.

And just recently, this same president posted on his Truth Social website an ugly, racist meme of former president Barack Obama and his wife Michelle, pictured as apes. (The meme has since been taken down.) It's no wonder why Black History Month has a little more edge to it this year.

Black History Month is an extension of Negro History Week, founded in 1926 by Carter T. Woodson, a Black historian, and members of his Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. The purpose: to celebrate the achievements of Blacks in America. It started the 2nd week of February, a week that includes the birthdates of Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12) and abolitionist Frederick Douglass (Feb. 14).

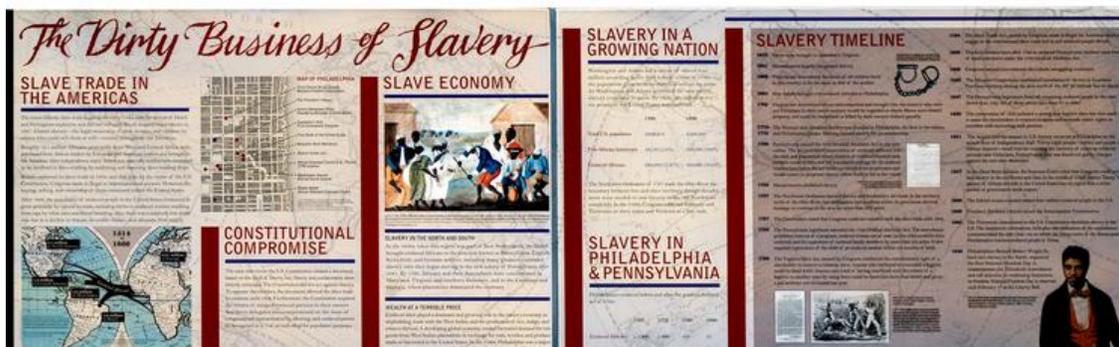
For many, it is difficult to imagine the Lutheran church playing a role in Black history, but it has. According to a Pew Research study, the ELCA in 2014 roughly two percent of its members were Black. The ELCA's presiding bishop, Rev. Yehiel Curry, is Black and the former bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, the Rev. Patricia A. Davenport, is Black. (For more information about Blacks and the Lutheran church, check out the documentary "[Unsung: The Untold Story of Black Lutherans in America](#)" on YouTube.)

Over its 100 years of existence, Black History Month has flourished, raising the names of unknown black inventors and civil rights leaders, and sharing little known Black history, as well as chronicling the impact of racism and enslavement on millions of Black men and women.

But over the years, Black History Month has come under fire. Questions such as, "Why does it matter? Why is it celebrated during the shortest month of the year, in effect diminishing its importance? Why is it needed because doesn't American history cover all history?"

In his 1963 essay and speech "A Talk to Teachers," the writer James Baldwin said America suffered from "... (A) failure to confront the country's history of racism and cruelty." And that continues to hold true in 2026 as deliberate, stepped-up efforts to erase the important contributions, innovations and painful legacies of Black men and women from America's memory continues un-daunted. Black History Month's importance and necessity are clearer now than it has ever been.

An interactive look at the signs taken down from *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (January 26, 2026). <https://share.inquirer.com/AJONdn>



Tabernacle's Food Bank ministry continues to serve the needs of our neighbors.

Open
February 18 & 27
March 18 & 27
9:30am - 11:30am

There are 3 ways you can help:

1. Bring non-perishable food items to Tabernacle
2. Send a check to Tabernacle, designating it for the Food Bank
3. Donate online. See below.

Thank you!



Tabernacle asks members and friends to continue your offerings by mailing checks to P.O. Box 5323, Yeadon, PA 19050. Another way is to sign up for an account on www.tithely.com. You will find selections including: manage your personal account; then find a church; then select Tabernacle Lutheran Church (Philadelphia); then enter the dollar amount. Upon completion, you will receive a thank you message. We thank you!

Tabernacle has a new website. Go to <https://tlcphila.org/> or scan this:



Tabernacle is on Facebook where you can stream Sunday services live. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TabernaclePhilly> or scan this:



Tabernacle is celebrating 120 years of ministry in West Philadelphia! More to come!



Happy Birthday to all born in February and March!

Tabernacle Church Council

President: Al Hunter Jr.

Vice President: Barbara Eddings

Recording Secretary: Mary Stewart

Members: Pastor Rodgers (ex-officio), Annie Armstrong, Valary Callender, Fern Lee Hagedorn, Veronica Smokes, Craig Taylor

Financial Secretary: Patricia Hunter-Moore

Treasurer: Beverly Gaines