

ORWIGSBURG HAPPENINGS

From Where It All Began

... Is Happening Again

No. 126 – Issued Quarterly

BOROUGH OF ORWIGSBURG, PA

February 2026

Borough Manager's State of the Borough

Breath Easy; Spring Is About to Burst With Color & Song!

By William Reppy
Orwigsburg Borough Manager

Before I jump right into my spring message, I must recognize the work of our dedicated team of Borough services employees. This winter presented both weather and infrastructure demands. Our team rallied each time to either fix the infrastructure issue or to clear and make our streets safe. Thank you to the mighty team of four.

As the days grow longer and the world wakes up

from winter, we are excited to bring you our Spring Newsletter. This season is all about renewal, growth, and fresh opportunities. We hope you enjoy reading about recent updates, upcoming events, and community achievements. Let's spring forward together!

Take care of yourself...Health & Wellness

Spring is the perfect time to focus on your health and well-being. As nature awakens, so can we! The CDC offers the following health tips for spring:

- **Move More; Sit Less** – It is recommended that you have 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week.
- **Eat a Healthy Diet** – Incorporate fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and low-fat dairy into your diet.
- **Rethink Your Drink** – Substitute water for sugary or alcoholic drinks.
- **Get Enough Sleep** – For adults, get at least seven hours of sleep per night.
- **Quit Smoking** – Phone 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free support.
- **Be Sun Safe** – Use at least SPF 15 sunscreen when outdoors.
- **Embrace Outdoor Activities** – Not from the CDC, but from me. Plan time outside by visiting one of our parks. Did you know that Orwigsburg has seven parks/recreation areas including: Albright's Woods Park and Playground, Lions Walking Trail (1.5 miles – wheelchair/stroller friendly), Bicentennial Park (Centre Square/book exchange), Walborn Avenue Playground, Memorial Playground/Sports Complex, Fisher's Dam and Fanelli Park (baseball).

Gardening Tips... Let's get dirty!

For those with green thumbs, spring is synonymous with gardening. Here are some expert tips to

- Continued on page 2

2026 EVENTS

Listed are the planned community events that have been scheduled at this time.

Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt – Sat., March 28 starting 12 noon; Albright's Woods Recreation Park; children to 10 years old; BYOB (Bring Your Own Basket)

Lions Club 5K Run/Walk – Date TBD; Begins at the Orwigsburg Veterans Memorial Community Hall

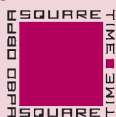
Fisher's Dam Children's Fishing Rodeo – Fisher's Dam off So. Washington St. – Children (age 13 and under); Saturday/Sunday – 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Dates TBD.

Memorial Day Parade/Service and Lions Club Chicken Barbecue – Monday, May 25; activities begin 8 a.m.

Monthly Farmers Market – M & T / Community Lot on the last Thursday – May thru September, 4 to 8 p.m.

America250~Orwigsburg Celebration – Friday & Saturday, July 3-4; commemorates the birth of the United States; Event details on Page 14 of this issue.

Square Time – Orwigsburg Business & Professional Assoc.



Summer Salsa Nite – Thurs., July 23 – 5 to 8 p.m.

Orwigsburg Heritage Day – Saturday, Sept. 12; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Orwigsburg Halloween Parade – Wed., Oct. 21, 7 p.m. (Rain Date is Thursday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m.)

Halloween Trick-or-Treat – Sat., Oct. 31; 6 to 8 p.m.

O'burg Holly Trail • Festival of Lights – Saturday, Dec. 5; starts at Noon & 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

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The recapture fee may include other recapture costs from outside vendors.

Consult a tax advisor regarding deductibility of interest and charges. Loan subject to credit approval. Not all borrowers will qualify for the lowest rate. Other rates and terms available. Rates are subject to change anytime without notice. Visit or call First Citizens Community Bank (FCCB) for full details.

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Orwigsburg Police Department

Year-End Incident Totals Stay Same; Traffic Stops Up!

As 2026 begins, the Orwigsburg Police Department reflects on the previous year marked by consistent activity, proactive enforcement, and sustained community presence.

Our officers responded to 1,902 total incidents in 2025. Oddly, that figure is only three more than the year prior in 2024 (1,899). Of those incidents, 105 were reportable crimes resulting in 34 criminal complaints and 24 non-traffic citations. Most of the crimes we investigated were petty thefts, harassment, disorderly conduct, and DUIs for both drug and alcohol.

While Orwigsburg is a safe community, we do have serious crimes that occur in town requiring investigation and arrests. Of these, this past year included drug possession, simple and aggravated assaults, sex crimes, and motor vehicle thefts along with other felonious crimes.

Our department continued to be aggressive with traffic enforcement. We rounded out 2025 with 835 unique traffic stops, resulting in a total of 536 citations and 299 warnings. Putting this in perspective, 10 years earlier in 2015, we only wrote a total of 172 traffic citations and issued 97 warnings. These stops have a direct impact on public safety as the total number of vehicle accidents in town have decreased by roughly

20% since 2015. Additionally, we issued 102 parking tickets to vehicles.

While you likely saw us patrolling throughout town in a vehicle, the department committed 369 hours of foot patrol. This is a critical component of effective community policing, as it allows officers to increase approachability and identify issues before they escalate.

Lastly, in the fall of 2025, we took delivery of a brand new 2025 Ford Explorer. This patrol vehicle will replace a well-travelled 2018 model. You may recall seeing the 2018 model throughout town with its blacked out or "ghost graphics" on the side.

Our new 2025 model also has ghost graphics. We use this graphic scheme as it offers a blend of visibility and tactical advantage. The subdued design allows the vehicle to be less visually conspicuous when monitoring traffic or responding to calls, without sacrificing legitimacy or authority. When we began using a vehicle with ghost graphics, we received many compliments from citizens on our efforts to use it for traffic enforcement and to detect crimes. We do have two other fully-marked vehicles that are easily identifiable as police, but by using this asset we have another tool at our disposal to maintain community safety.



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Shelters Need Your Help Now... Like Never Before!

"Nothing in an animal shelter is normal anymore. Adoptions are down, donations have slowed, and every shelter is full. That is why donating all year long is more important than ever. Every can (or bag) of food, every container of kitten formula, every blanket, and every dollar helps them to continue our rescue mission," reports Hillside SPCA.

Some animals have been waiting years to find their forever homes... particularly larger dogs and older animals. Also, the number of calls and emails they receive about "strays" or pet owners looking to surrender a pet has been overwhelming with an average 5-10 rehoming calls a day. Animals are rarely spayed/neutered, microchipped or vaccinated and some are in need of immediate medical care for injuries or serious health issues. Hillside currently has 30 big dogs, 20 small dogs, 10 bunnies and over 100 cats.

Char-Wills German Shepherd Rescue took in more than 460 German Shepherds in 2025. Their kennel capacity is 14 dogs and, most recently, they had 13 others in foster care or in socialization programs. With an average of eight adoptions per week, the Rescue receives as many as 15 calls or emails per day about surrendering the caller's dog(s).

Ruth Steinert Memorial SPCA reports much the same. Like Hillside and Char-Wills, they are seeing a large increase in animal "dumpings" (abandonment). These animals are most often in dire need and are found in horrible circumstances.

Our local shelters receive no government funding. They are nonprofit organizations, so monetary donations are tax deductible... the simplest and fastest way to help.

Shelters also are in need of folks to adopt, foster or volunteer. Every shelter has a "wish list" of items they need. Call and ask how you can help. Each shelter has needs that may differ from another, but every shelter will be happy to share their wish list with you.

The phone numbers and addresses of Hillside SPCA, Char-Wills German Shepherd Rescue, and the Ruth Steinert Memorial SPCA are included in our full-page ad which is printed on the facing page of this editorial. Please call and ask them what they need. If you reach a recording because they are tending to their animals, please leave a voicemail and they will return your call.

Our local animal shelters and rescues need us more than ever.

Sponsored by

Ralf and Diane Bzura and their shelter dog, Beezer

Orwigsburg Sr. Citizens

Orwigsburg Senior Citizens will again begin meeting on Tuesday, March 10. Meetings continue twice per month on the second and fourth Tuesday.

From 11 to 11:45 a.m., we have coffee and desserts. Then comes an opening ceremony followed by a bring-your-own bag lunch. The meeting continues from 12:30 to 1 p.m. with entertainment, bingo, dominoes, cards or crafts into the afternoon.

Upcoming, Brian Reading will provide live music on March 21; chair exercises will be featured on April 14; Orwigsburg Police patrolman Bobby Bechtel will join us April 28; Crafting with Michele will be enjoyed on May 12 and members will learn the finer points of dominoes on May 26; "Porcupine Pat" McKinney will share his stories of nature on June 9; the "Hat Lady," Eileen Meiser will again join us on June 23.

Any area resident, age 55 and up, can be a member of the Orwigsburg Senior Citizens. Membership is only \$3 for the year. Meetings are held at the Applewood Apartments community room. Call Gerri Rae at 570-875-7829 for more info. Hope to see you soon!

Final Concert of our 36th Season



Admission
Adult – \$30
Sr. Citizens – \$25
Free for All Students

"LAVISH HARMONIES" SUNDAY, APRIL 12 – 3 p.m.

Music of Rossini, Mozart and Vaughan Williams



Performed by
Dana Allaband, Simon Maurer, Violin
Agnés Maurer, Viola
Sara Male, Cello
Domenick Fiore, Bass

Concerts at Jerusalem Church, 252 Dock St., Schuylkill Haven

Gabriel Chamber Ensemble received funding from Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts.

For more info: online – www.gabrielensemble.org;
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So many **DOGS** and so many **CATS** and not enough room...



and too much sadness and depression!



Our local shelters get **NO** government funding – **NONE!** The only help they get is from **YOU!**

Our local shelters are **"no kill"** shelters, so animals stay with them until adopted or fostered – **sometimes for years!**



PLEASE CALL YOUR LOCAL SHELTERS TODAY AND ASK FOR THEIR WISH LIST OF NEEDED ITEMS. THEY ARE WAITING FOR YOUR CALL!

Hillside SPCA

51 SPCA Rd. (just off Gordon Nagle Trail and Cressona Rd.), Pottsville, PA 17901
P.O. Box 233, Pottsville, PA 17901
570-622-7769
www.hillsidespca.com
Open 11 AM to 3 PM daily



Ruth Steinert Memorial SPCA

18 Wertz Drive, Pine Grove, PA 17963
P.O. Box 332, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972
570-345-3540
www.rmspca.org
Open M-F by appt.,
Weekends 10-3PM (no appt. needed)



Char-Wills German Shepherd Rescue

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 132, New Ringgold, PA 17960
570-573-3366
www.charwillsrescue.com
Meet and greets with our dogs by appt. only after adoption approval.

Always **REPORT** any **UNREGISTERED** and **UNLICENSED** backyard or farm-house breeders (and that's most of them) to the **PA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals: 866-601-7722.** Immediately report ANY farm or domestic animal abuse to the PA State Police. **ANIMAL ABUSE IS A CRIME.**

This request to adopt or foster a shelter pet and to provide desperately needed financial support is sponsored by: **Ralf and Diane Bzura** and their rescue dog **BEEZER**. Email: beezerandco@comcast.net

Orwigsburg Historical Society & Museum

Make History A Priority During This 250th Celebration Year!

Have you visited the Orwigsburg Historical Society & Museum, lately?

Open every Thursday, noon to 4 p.m. and always by appointment, we welcome children, school groups, scouts, family reunions, individuals and are able to design a group program or tour to suit your needs.

The Society appreciates the help of volunteers able to give of their time and talents. Students, we can help with your school's service requirement. Give us a call at 570-366-8769 or 570-617-7809.

Our museum shoppe has local history books, photos, limited edition prints (framed & unframed), and many commemorative items from Orwigsburg's past, including gift certificates in any denomination. Stop in and peruse our unique selection. Society members receive an additional 10% off all discounted & regular purchases! Be sure to check-out the "Vintage Books" section. The sale will continue through the end of March.

Bells Across Orwigsburg on July 4

Independence Day 2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of our country's birth, America's semiquincentennial. The Society's special initiative will be

2026 ANNIVERSARY MEMBERSHIP

Celebrating 32 years of preserving the history and culture of Orwigsburg and Southern Schuylkill County in 2026!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Street Address/P.O. Box: _____

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Type of Membership (Please Check One):

Individual \$20.00 Family \$25.00 Corporate \$50.00

I would like to make a contribution to the "2026 32nd Anniversary Campaign" to help with much needed revitalization to the historic headquarters in the amount of \$ _____

This contribution is "in honor of" / "in memory of" (please circle one) the following person/family:

MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO: Orwigsburg Historical Society & Museum
109 East Mifflin St., Orwigsburg, PA 17961

Phone 570-366-8769 for more information

"Bells Across Orwigsburg." Every church, organization, family, and individual with access to a bell (the America250 Committee is also selling bells) is encouraged to ring their bells, or clang pots and pans, a total of 13 times, at exactly 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 4.

This symbolizes the original thirteen colonies and commemorates the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The old Schuylkill County Courthouse bell, safely protected at the Society, will also be rung for this special occasion. If you need a bell, the Semiquincentennial Committee is selling them for \$10.

Tracing Schuylkill County's History

Mark your calendars for the "third Thursday" of every month, 7 p.m., April through October, to attend this free Orwigsburg Historical Society program series made possible by and supported, in part, by the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation and The Fred V. Knecht Memorial Fund.

Upcoming on April 16, Kerry Land, amateur archaeological investigator and authority on our county's early glass bottles, will present "Bottles, Baubles, & Other Buried Treasures: Digging Up Schuylkill County's History."

The program on May 21 will feature the program, "Revolutionary Brothers & Sisters," presented by Jim Segrave-Daly, Revolutionary War historian.

Time to join/renew your OHS membership

Thank you to every member, donor, and volunteer who has helped to make the Society what it has become. If you don't need the form shown on this page, please share this form with a friend or relative who is not yet a member.

Every person/family/business that makes a donation of \$100 or more will receive a FREE (unframed) limited edition, numbered print of the first Schuylkill County Courthouse. This print is from an original artwork created by well-known Southern Schuylkill County artist Patricia Freeman.

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Easter Weekend at Grace Free Church

Good Friday

Join us Good Friday for a quiet, meaningful experience as we remember the sacrifice at the center of Easter. Through live music, a short message, and communion, we'll create space to pause, reflect, and consider why this story still matters. Whether you come with questions, faith, or simply curiosity, you're welcome.



Friday, April 3rd
5:30pm & 7:00pm
gfcgoodfriday.com

Easter Sunday

Celebrate Easter with us in a relaxed, family-friendly environment with uplifting music, kids' activities, and a powerful message of hope and new life. Whether church is part of your routine or something you haven't done in a while, you're welcome here. Come as you are—you'll leave encouraged and reminded that hope is alive.



Sunday, April 5th
8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am
gfceaster.com

Grace Free Church - 10 Hollenbush Lane - Orwigsburg



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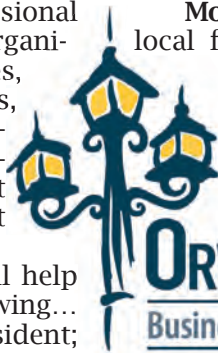
The Orwigsburg Area Business & Professional Association (OABPA) is a community-focused organization dedicated to supporting local businesses, strengthening connections among professionals, and creating events that bring people to downtown Orwigsburg. We invite community participation, new members, sponsors, and event vendors to be active participants. Learn more at www.oabpa.com.

2026 officers and board members, who will help lead the organization’s mission, are the following... Lila Smith, president; Kris Sadler, vice president; Lynn Lickman, treasurer; and Ryan Boyer, secretary. Additional board members are Al Fidler, D.J. Teter, Aimee Eckley, Savannah Bowmer, and Joanne Parulis.

Community events planned for 2026

Coordinating many of Orwigsburg’s public events, OABPA has announced its 2026 schedule designed to bring residents and visitors to downtown Orwigsburg, support local businesses, and celebrate the vibrant spirit of the community.

Events are held on the M&T Bank Community Lot and Centre Square. The association welcomes the public and encourages local businesses, makers, farms, and organizations to participate as vendors and sponsors.



Monthly Farmers Market – OABPA proudly brings local farms, producers, and small businesses with fresh agricultural products conveniently to Orwigsburg’s Centre Square each month, May through October.

Encouraging residents and visitors to shop locally, the Orwigsburg Farmers Market will,

weather permitting, be held on the last Thursday each month from 4 to

8 p.m. Dates are May 28, June 25, July 30, August 27, and September 24. The final market date of 2026 will be held Thursday, Oct. 15 with shortened hours, 4 to 7 p.m.

Summer Salsa Night – The smash hit event initiated last year returns! Summer Salsa Night brings the heat to the Square with a salsa-making competition, live Mariachi band, and a variety of food and drink vendors—plus more surprises to be announced.

Save the date and invite friends/family from far and wide to enjoy this night – Thurs., July 23 from 5 to 8 p.m. – again, right downtown on the Square.

Orwigsburg Heritage Day – Heritage Day celebrates our town and region with history, artisan vendors, food trucks, and music. It’s a family-friendly day highlighting community pride and small business.

Always the Saturday after Labor Day – this year, September 12 – the celebration rolls on from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., filling the entire Centre Square with overflow onto adjacent streets.

Festival of Lights – A festive kickoff to the winter holiday season, Festival of Lights invites families to gather for an evening of seasonal cheer in the heart of Orwigsburg. Always the first Saturday in December, this year we light Centre Square on December 5 from 4:30 to 8 p.m.

Call for vendors, sponsors & new members

Don’t wait until the last minute; jump on board! Be part of the vibrancy that is Orwigsburg. OABPA welcomes new members, event sponsors, and vendors to continue to bring first class activities and member services this, and every, year!

MEMBERSHIP – OABPA membership is open to local businesses and professionals that want to network, grow, and contribute to a thriving Orwigsburg.

VENDOR OPPORTUNITIES – Local farms, producers, artisans, makers, food trucks, and small businesses are encouraged to apply. Be part of these exciting events.

EVENT SPONSORSHIPS – Grab this opportunity to give your business visibility while directly supporting downtown community events and local economic development.

For more information on how you can be part of the Orwigsburg area experience, visit www.oabpa.com or email: info@oabpa.com.

Newsletter Particulars

“Orwigsburg Happenings” is a quarterly newsletter of the Borough of Orwigsburg distributed to 2,000 households within the borough.

The newsletter is designed and printed by South Schuylkill Printing & Publishing
960 E. Main St. · Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972
Ph: 570-385-3120

E-mail: printing@southschuylkill.net
www.SouthSchuylkillPrinting.net

Publication dates for the next three issues are May 21, August 27, and November 19, 2026

News Submittals

Nonprofit and community organizations within the Borough are invited to submit news items for consideration. Written submittals must be received by Sarah Celani in the borough offices, scelani@orwigsburg.gov or call 570-366-3103 for info, three weeks prior to the publication date.

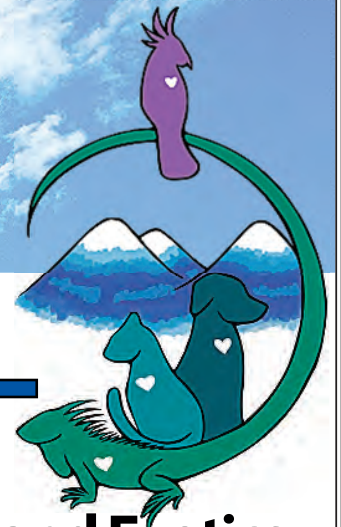
Advertising

Businesses wishing to reach every household in the Borough of Orwigsburg are invited to advertise in future issues. Contact South Schuylkill Printing & Publishing for more information. Call Barb @ 570-385-3120. All advertisements must be received at least three weeks prior to the publication dates. Ad content is subject to approval and acceptance by the Borough of Orwigsburg.

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Blue Mountain Animal Hospital

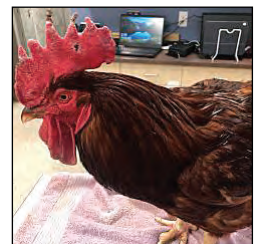
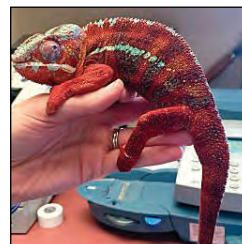
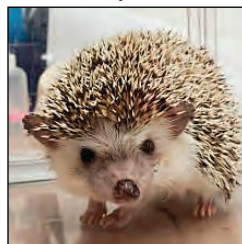
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Orwigsburg Area Free Public Library

Moving Forward, Your Library Is a Growing Entity

It's a new year and the Orwigsburg Area Library continues to refresh itself to meet the needs of the community. As 2026 unfolds, there is plenty happening here at the Orwigsburg Library.

As a direct result of the community support and several grants, your Library has been able to replace their patron-access computers and update all software to Windows 11 in accordance to state mandates and keeping itself in Standards of Excellence with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Libraries. Thank you to Schuylkill Area Community Foundation, Benevolent Association of Pottsville, and several Schuylkill Chamber members that heard the Library's plea and stepped up to help.

Need help with those new computers? The



216 W. INDEPENDENCE ST.

Orwigsburg Area Library offers **Adult One-On-One Computer Assistance** weekly on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday; but, you must sign up in advance.

The Library has a new e-book platform service, called the **Cloud Library** with more than 200,000 selections that are available at any time. Wow! Information is on the Library's website - www.orwigsburglibrary.org - or stop in and learn more.

What else is new?

Your Library has a **Recipe Club** that meets the first Saturday of the month at 12:30 p.m. There is a **Kids' Story and Craft Time** on the second Thursday of the month at 4 p.m. **Family Friendly Trivia** takes place on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5:30... join in or be a host! The next session of **Chair Yoga** is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 28 at 10 a.m.

A six-week **American Sign Language** course, for ages 14 and up, is being offered weekly on Tuesdays - March 3 through April 7 from 4 to 5 p.m. Space is limited; so, advanced sign-up is necessary.

The Library will host a **Spring Fling Book Bingo** - a FREE family event - at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Sat., March 7 from 1 to 3 p.m. Everyone wins, so bring a bag or two to carry home your prizes. St. Paul's invites everyone to this community event in their newly remodeled community area. Fun! Fun! Fun!

Something for everyone and every age

Our popular group activities return in 2026... **Storytime**, for preschool children, is held every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.; **Lapsit** (birth to age 2) is on Thursday at 10:30 a.m.; **Play K** (age 3 to 5) is held every Friday at 11 a.m.; **Home School Happenings** is scheduled the second Wednesday at 11 a.m.; **Kids' Story Craft** is monthly on the second Thursday at 4 p.m.; and **Adult Crafting** (must sign-up in advance) is the third Saturday at 1 p.m.

Do you have a special interest? Join others who enjoy the same. Inquire at the customer desk at the Library for more information. Clubs that meet regularly include **Hooks and Needles**, for those who enjoy or want to learn to knit or crochet, meet on Mondays at 1:30 p.m.; **Book Club** readers meet the last Monday of the month at 6 p.m.; **Mahjongg** enthusiasts play every Friday from 1 to 3 p.m. and also on the first, third, and fifth Wednesday at 6 p.m.; **Senior Sippers** get together the first Thursday each month at 1 p.m.

Chess players hone their skill monthly on the first Thursday at 4 p.m.; **Trivia** fans gather on the fourth Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.; and **Lego** fanatics build and share their creations on the first Saturday at 11 a.m.

The Orwigsburg Area Free Public Library is much more than books. Don't forget the other services available... copy, scan and fax at a minimal cost. There are Hot Spots to rent and free WiFi within the Library.

State Sen. David Argall

Funding Preserves History

Breathing new life into our historic older communities is a key priority for me. I'm pleased to share that, by working with Rep. Jamie Barton, Orwigsburg Borough has been awarded \$585,000 in state funding to restore the exterior of its historic police office and courtroom for Magisterial District Court 21-3-03 on North Warren Street.

Originally constructed in 1889 as the Orwigsburg Public School, this landmark has served generations of residents and stands as a powerful reminder of the borough's rich history. Over the years, the building has adapted to meet the changing needs of the community while remaining a central location for local government and public safety. I have spent a lot of time in this building, and I am pleased to see that this investment will ensure the exterior is properly restored and preserved, allowing the building to continue serving residents for many years to come.

Orwigsburg should be proud that it has long maintained its historic character. Preserving historic landmarks not only protects our shared heritage but also helps spark further revitalization by making our communities more attractive places to live, work, and visit. I commend Borough officials for their commitment to maintaining this historic building and for pursuing the resources necessary to see this project through.

By honoring our past and investing wisely in our future, we can ensure communities like Orwigsburg remain vibrant, welcoming, and strong for generations to come.



Senator David Argall

Orwigsburg Fire Dept. - Friendship Hose Co. #1

Our new building project will be a main focus for the Friendship Hose Co. No. 1 in 2026.

A \$2.25 million boost from the federal government through Congressman Dan Meuser was awarded last year. The proposed building expense is about \$6 million. This number is not just the building, but everything from permits to land development, to demolition, and furnishings.

We have a team dedicated to assisting us with state and local grant availability and we are optimistic that they will continue to find and apply for future funds.

How can you help?

In addition to government grants, we have had several high-dollar donors committed to the project. We are pleased to announce a major gift of \$25,000 by Jay Jones in honor and remembrance of his son, Captain Jason B. Jones, USMA 2007, KIA Jalalabad, Afghanistan on June 2, 2014. Captain Jones was raised in Orwigsburg and attended Blue Mountain High School.

A list of all donors is available on our website www.orwigsburgfire.com. There, you will also find links to donate as well as information about our upcoming fundraisers and events. It also provides historical information about the department.

Speaking of upcoming events, last year we held what we thought would be a one-time "Gala" event. Its success and the feedback we received from attendees allowed us to make the decision to do it again!

This year's "Casino Gala" will be held Sat., April 11 at the Orwigsburg Veterans Community Memorial Hall featuring a casino, cash bar, silent auction, and a gourmet catered meal. There are only two hundred tickets available for sale. Info to purchase tickets is available on the website, or you can scan the QR Code.



Scan to purchase your tickets!

Annual fund drive

We have ambitious fundraising goals for the building; but, we cannot lose sight of our daily operations. We were dispatched and responded to 255 calls last year, totaling 1410 man-hours. Add 1211 hours training and 1040 hours of administrative time, volunteers logged 3661 hours serving our community. These numbers will continue to rise with expected growth.

Annual Fund Drive letters will be mailed soon. Donations go to operational expenses for the year. Historically, we get about a 17% response from the drive. We appreciate every single contribution!

We vow to do our part by keeping our community and its visitors safe. We pride ourselves on being well trained, well-equipped, and well-staffed to meet the needs of Orwigsburg and beyond.

- Brad Miller, President & 1st Assistant Fire Chief

3 locations in Schuylkill County



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America250 ~ Orwigsburg Celebration

Spirited Independence Day & Fireworks Planned

Beginning the evening of July 3 through July 4, Orwigsburg Borough will proudly join communities across Pennsylvania and the country to celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence, America's 250th birthday, its semiquincentennial.

This special event offers a meaningful opportunity for residents, local businesses, churches, and organizations to honor the founding of our nation and Pennsylvania's central role in America's history.

This is our moment to honor the past, celebrate the present, and look forward to the future - together as a community!

Private funding is needed to support these and additional activities. Refer to the donation appeal on the facing page and contribute what you are able.

Tentative schedule of activities

The following events have been planned, but are subject to change. A more complete and final list will be included in the May issue of *Orwigsburg Happenings*. Here is what we know happening on Friday, July 3.

Luminaries on the Square - Lighted tributes will line Centre Square. These luminaries can be purchased and dedicated in honor and remembrance of a veteran, an ancestor, or loved one.

Patriotism, Faith & Community Spirit - A non-

denominational service with musical selections and readings to celebrate our faith and community spirit will be held at St. John's United Church of Christ, 232 E. Market St., at 6 p.m.

And, here is the lineup for Saturday, July 4:

"Mini" Fire Truck Parade - Downtown to Orwigsburg Memorial Community Hall beginning at 9 a.m.

1976 Time Capsule Reveal - Display at the Memorial; what was buried for the past 50 years?

Gathering at Albright's Woods - Ringgold Band entertains with spirited patriotic music at noon; Enjoy an afternoon of food, fun, and children's activities.

Bells Across Orwigsburg - At 2 p.m. wherever you are, grab a bell, pot or pan and let freedom ring - 13 times for each of the original colonies.

Spirit Celebration - Inside the Veterans Community Hall beginning at 7 p.m., Fife and Drum procession, reading of the Declaration of Independence, and a concert by the Anthracite Philharmonic and Schuylkill Choral Society.

Spectacular Fireworks Display - Close out the America250~Orwigsburg gala with fireworks set off from the athletic fields adjacent to the Veterans Hall.

Wear the nation's colors

Gather family, friends and your patriotic spirit! Plan now to sport your red, white and blue colors!



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**DONATE TO
AMERICA250-ORWIGSBURG**

HELP US MAKE HISTORY IN ORWIGSBURG!

Your donation to America250-Orwigsburg will support a once-in-a-lifetime celebration honoring our nation’s 250th anniversary. Every contribution, large or small, helps fund community events, entertainment, a community picnic, and more for the **July 3-4, 2026** festivities. Show your hometown pride and be part of a legacy that will bring our community together for generations.

Together, we can create a celebration worthy of America’s milestone birthday!

- GEORGE WASHINGTON.....\$5,000+**
- THOMAS JEFFERSON.....\$2,500**
- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.....\$1,000**
- BETSY ROSS.....\$500**
- PAUL REVERE.....\$250**
- JOHN HANCOCK.....\$100**
- PATRIOT.....LESS THAN \$100**

Each donor’s name will be placed on a yard sign in the square from May - July 2026 (unless “Anonymous”) for all donations exceeding \$100.

PLEASE MAKE MY DONATION IN THE NAME OF:

PAYMENT METHOD: CASH OR CHECK

YOUR NAME: _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
AMERICA250-ORWIGSBURG

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

MAIL OR DROP OFF:
AMERICA250-ORWIGSBURG
C/O ORWIGSBURG BOROUGH HALL
333 S. LIBERTY ST.
ORWIGSBURG, PA 17961

STATE: _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

Orwigsburg Borough News

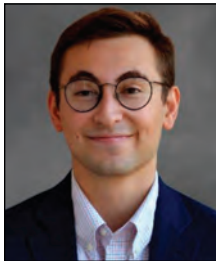
Attorneys join WF&J Law Firm

Schuylkill County's largest and oldest law firm, Williamson Friedberg & Jones, proudly announces the addition of two new associate attorneys—Jessica Halina Eckrote and Joseph B. Colletti—to support the firm's continued growth and expansion.



Both will join WFJ Law's Elder Law & Estate Planning Group, where their practices will focus on asset protection and wealth preservation planning, long-term care planning, estate planning (wills and trusts), and estate administration.

WFJ Law continues to experience significant growth across multiple practice areas. As part of the firm's long-term strategic development plan, WFJ Law anticipates hiring three additional associate attorneys in 2026 to support its expanding client base and ensure the firm maintains the highest level of service.



Memorial Day Chicken Barbecue

Don't forget the annual Orwigsburg Lions Club Memorial Day chicken barbecue held as part of the

Memorial Day festivities on Monday, May 25.

The chicken is barbecued on the spot at the Orwigsburg Veterans Community Memorial Hall. A full dinner is available and a convenient "drive thru" pick-up is utilized. Tickets will be sold in advance and some may still be available during the event. All proceeds are used by the Lions to sponsor local events.

Borough holiday schedule

Orwigsburg Borough offices/operations will close in observance of these upcoming holidays - Friday, April 3 (Good Friday) and Monday, May 25 (Memorial Day).

Holiday refuse/recycling collection

The Borough contracts with Anthracite Waste Services, Inc. for the weekly collection of refuse and biweekly recycling collection. Curbside collection is on Tuesday for properties north of Market Street... and on Friday for properties on and south of Market Street.

Collection will delay one day due to the upcoming Memorial Day holiday - Tuesday pickup moves to Wed., May 27; Friday pickup moves to Saturday, May 30.

orwigsburg.gov



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Pottsville | Saint Clair | Schuylkill Haven
Shenandoah | Tamaqua

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(Schuylkill County, PA)



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A Town's Spirit Reflected Through Its Churches

Community services during Lent

All Orwigsburg area residents and visitors are invited to worship at Community Lenten Services each Wednesday, March 4 through March 18. Salem United Methodist Church, St. John's United Church of Christ, and Zion's Red Church are all participating in the Wednesday Community Lenten services.

Friedens Lutheran Church, 525 Church St., New Ringgold will host the Lenten service March 4. Pastor Jan Remer-Osborn of Zion's Red Church will be joined by the speaker, Pastor Ken Schira, of Friedens Lutheran. Come early, as all are invited to join in a community hymn sing to begin at 7:15 p.m., prior to the service at 7:30 p.m.

Wed., March 11, the 7 p.m. service will be held at Salem United Methodist Church, 133 S. Liberty St., Orwigsburg. Pastor Rev. ShinAe Kim will lead the service with the Rev. Jeff Johnson of St. John's UCC the speaker.

The service on Wed., March 18 will be hosted at St. John's United Church of Christ. 232 E. Market St., Orwigsburg at 7 p.m. Pastor Jeff Johnson will lead the service and the speaker will be the Rev. ShinAe Kim, of Salem UMC.

All Lenten services will be followed by a time of fellowship and light refreshments.

Zion's Red Church

In this year of 2026 - a year of change and chal-

lenges - we pray that you will find the "peace that passes understanding" in your relationship with Jesus Christ.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the historic Zion's Red Church. Sunday worship is at 10:30 a.m. with Pastor Jan R. Osborn preaching and leading the service. Church member Carol Faust shares the children's sermon.

We follow a traditional liturgy with contemporary messages based on scriptures. Holy Communion is served on the first Sunday of the month and Easter Sunday. New this year, Pastor Jan will be posting weekly Lenten Meditations on Facebook, having already started on Ash Wednesday.

Pastor Jan holds office hours weekly on Wednesday, beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the Market Square Coffee House and by appointment. Please call her at 570-449-1743. Also, on Wednesdays at Zion's Red Church there is an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Zion's Red Church is participating in the Wednesday Community Lenten service schedule detailed at the beginning of this page. All are also invited by the New Ringgold Area churches to their Wednesday Lenten services, if more convenient. Each of these begin with a 7:15 sing-a-long, followed by the 7:30 p.m. service - Zion at Lewistown Valley on

- Continued on page 18

Orwigsburg Area Churches
invite you to a
series of Wednesday Evening

Lenten
SERVICES

Services begin
at 7 PM

Frieden's Lutheran Church
525 Church Street, New Ringgold
March 4

Salem United Methodist Church
133 S. Liberty Street, Orwigsburg
March 11

**Saint John's United Church
of Christ**
232 E. Market St. Orwigsburg
March 18

Fellowship & Light Refreshments Follow Services

We are a federated congregation of the United Church of Christ
and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Our Mission Is To...
WELCOME all with God's love,
STRENGTHEN individuals for life's journey,
& **BLESS** our wider community.



**ZION'S
RED CHURCH**

Founded in 1755
1287 Centre Turnpike
Orwigsburg, PA 17961
570-366-1178
zionsredchurch.com

Sunday Worship w/ a Children's Sermon - 10:30 a.m.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
Wednesday, February 18 (7 p.m.)

PALM SUNDAY SERVICE
Sunday, March 29 (10:30 a.m.)

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE
Friday, April 3 (7 p.m.)

EASTER SUNDAY w/ HOLY COMMUNION
Sunday, April 5 (10:30 a.m.)

Wednesdays - Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings - 7:30 p.m.
Check our article, website, & Facebook page for more information.

A Town's Spirit Reflected Through Its Churches

- Continued from Page 17

February 25, Calvary Evangelical United Methodist, and Lewistown Valley on March 25. Pastor Jan will preach at a Maundy Thursday service to be held at Steigerwalt's Church of God, McKeansburg on April 2.

Additional Easter season services at Zion's Red Church include Palm Sunday on March 29, Good Friday on April 3, and Easter Sunday on April 5. All are invited; see our advertisement in this issue of **Orwigsburg Happenings** for service times.

Join Zion's Bible Study group, meeting after worship on Sundays, from 11:45 to 12:45 p.m. Open to all and led by Randy Kramer, the group is currently studying prominent Biblical characters. This time together includes discussions on how we can apply Biblical principles to our everyday lives. Home-baked goods, provided by Randy, are served.

The biannual meeting of the UCC Schuylkill Association will be hosted at Zion's Red Church on Sunday, May 3, at 3 p.m. Pastors and church members of the United Church of Christ in Schuylkill County are invited for refreshments at 2:30, followed by a church service and meeting.

On Friday, June 19, Pastor Jan will offer group and individual/group "Blessings of the Bikes" during "Bike Nights" at Schaeffer's Harley Davidson parking lot to help raise funds for the America 250~Orwigsburg celebration. Delicious food will be available. Our community is grateful to Schaeffer's for sponsoring

this event. We also continue our involvement with the Orwigsburg Food Pantry alongside other local churches and organizations.

Faith Church

Even with the snow still falling and the winter lingering longer than we would like, we are reminded that spring is not far away. Beneath the cold ground, new life is already stirring.

In the same way, God is always at work bringing renewal and fresh beginnings even when it doesn't look like it yet.

At Faith Church we are always finding new ways of helping people find new understanding of our purpose and build on our spiritual gifts. We do this through our "Navigating Your Purpose with E's" program.

This is Faith Church's five-class pathway designed to help you live out our mission of Loving God, Loving People, and Serving the Community. Through Engage, Equip, Empower, Entrust, and Elevate, you'll discover how to join the Faith family, build a strong spiritual foundation, uncover your gifts and where you can serve, and learn how to confidently share the Gospel. Classes are offered year-round, allowing you to take your next steps at a pace that works for you.

As we move toward Easter, we invite you to join us for Good Friday Service. A time to pause and reflect on the powerful sacrifice of Jesus. It prepares us for the joy and victory we celebrate on Easter morning. Reminding us that light breaks through the darkness and the new life He offers each of us.

In addition, our church continues to offer outreach ministries that allow us to serve our community. We also have small groups that create a space for deeper relationships and spiritual growth. Whatever your background or stage of life, there is something here for everyone.

If you are looking for a place to worship, grow, serve, and belong, we would love to have you join us for our Celebration Service on Sundays at 10 a.m.

- Senior Pastor Doug Cresswell

St. John's United Church of Christ

St. John's United Church of Christ, 232 E. Market St., Orwigsburg is the "church by the blinker light with the gargoyles on the steeple"... and hopefully, we are also known for friendly and welcoming members to all who worship with us. Our weekly Sunday worship is held at 10 a.m. when Pastor Jeff Johnson leads the service and offers a meaningful children's message for the children and youth before their Sunday school class each week.

Pastor Jeff also shares a weekly message on Tuesday and Thursday via Facebook. He leads a Bible Study class on Wednesdays at 2 p.m. in the church office where everyone is invited to join in and learn more about Biblical history.

Housed at St. John's, the Orwigsburg Area Food Pantry is supported by area churches, scout groups, Orwigsburg Lions Club, Women Who Care, businesses and private citizens. All donations are greatly appre-

FAITH CHURCH

loving God - loving people - serving the community

Senior Pastor Doug Cresswell
1168 Centre Turnpike
(next to Ark Rentals)

Orwigsburg, PA 17961
570-366-5131

Online Service Available
Weekly Celebration Service
Sunday 10 a.m.

www.atfaithchurch.com



A Town's Spirit Reflected Through Its Churches

ciated and distribution is provided monthly on the 3rd Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m. via drive-thru along Sherman Street. Volunteers are always needed the 3rd Friday to help pack the boxes of food (any age) and then Saturday to distribute the food (ages 18 and older).

St. John's is active through Diakon Community Services, as host for various programs to enlighten the community. A weekly senior exercise group is held on Wednesday from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Girl Scout Sunday will be enjoyed on March 8, recognizing all area Girl Scouts, their families, and leaders who are welcome to join us in worship. Cookies will be for sale after the worship service.

Cub Pack 624 is sponsored by St. John's and is a welcome addition with their lively meetings each week!

Ash Wednesday was held February 18 with Pastor Jeff offering "Ashes and Prayer" from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the church parking lot directly across the street from St. John's. The Ash Wednesday evening service was held inside the church at 7 p.m.

St. John's UCC is participating in the Wednesday Community Lenten service schedule detailed at the beginning of this church section on Page 17. Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter services will be held at St. John's... times are shown in our ad.

Wherever you are on life's journey, you are always welcome at St. John's. Please phone the church office

- 570-366-2255 - with questions. The church website is stjohnorwigsburg.org.

St. Paul's Lutheran

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, located at 215 North Warren Street, warmly welcomes all who seek a place of faith, community, and hope. Rooted in the Lutheran tradition, we worship God, serve our neighbors, and strive to share Christ's love in word and deed.

We worship every Saturday at 5:30 p.m. and on Sunday mornings at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Saturday of each month and at every Sunday service. Whether you have been Lutheran your whole life or are simply exploring, you will find a place of belonging here.

Our Adult Forum meets on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. for thoughtful conversation about scripture, faith, grace, and the ways the gospel calls on each of us to serve our neighbors. If you would like to participate, please contact the church office.

Sunday School is offered monthly during the school year, providing engaging activities for children and youth. Younger children (ages one to six) enjoy stories, crafts, and snacks during the 10:30 service, while older children (ages seven to 12) gather at 9:15 a.m. to grow in faith and friendship. For more information, please contact Sarah Eger at 570-394-3522.

We began the season of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service on February 18. This service

- Continued on page 20



St. John's United Church of Christ

232 E. Market St., Orwigsburg • 570-366-2255

Spirit filled worship for contemporary souls

Worship 10 a.m. Every Sunday

Join Us for **GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY**
March 8 (10 a.m.)

LENTEN & HOLY WEEK SERVICES



ASH WEDNESDAY
Held February, 18

PALM SUNDAY
March 29 (10 a.m.)

MAUNDY THURS./TENEBRAE
Thursday, April 2 (6 p.m.)

EASTER
Sunday, April 5 (10 a.m.)

Online Worship Services at
StJohnOrwigsburg.org
 Check our Facebook page, website, or church sign for information.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

215 North Warren Street • Orwigsburg
Office: 570-366-2316

www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org

Handicap
Accessible



Worship Times
Saturdays 5:30 p.m.
Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m.

Holy Communion shared the first Saturday and every Sunday service

UPCOMING EVENTS INCLUDE:

ASH WEDNESDAY – Wed., February 18 at 7 p.m.

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY – Sun., March 29 at 8 and 10:30 a.m.

"EASTER EGG-STRAVAGANZA!" – Sun., March 29; Noon to 2

MAUNDY THURSDAY – Thurs., April 2 at 7 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY – Fri., April 3 at 7 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY – Sunday, April 5 at 8 and 10:30 a.m.

EARTH DAY EVENT – Sat., April 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

COMMUNITY PATRIOTIC CONCERT – Sun. May 24 at 7 p.m.

Please check out our Facebook page and website. Visit us on YouTube to watch our online worship. Or, call our Church Office (570) 366-2316 for more information about our upcoming activities and events.



A Town's Spirit Reflected Through Its Churches

- Continued from Page 19

included the imposition of ashes as a sign of repentance and the Sacrament of Holy Communion, reminding us of God's mercy and strengthening our faith.

Our congregation will host the Orwigsburg Area Free Library's "Spring Fling Book B-I-N-G-O" on Sat., March 7 from 1 to 3 p.m. in Reidler Hall. Admission is free and everyone who attends will leave with at least one book. Refreshments will be available at this event.

St. Paul's will also host Diakon Community Services' "Healthier Living with Diabetes" series in March. This program supports adults sixty and older in learning effective ways to manage Type II Diabetes. Sessions begin Thurs., March 19, from 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., and continue for six consecutive Thursdays, concluding on April 23. To enroll, contact Diakon Community Services at 570-624-3017.

Our annual "Easter Egg-stravaganza" will be held on Sun., March 29. Children up to age 10 and their families are invited to join us between 12 noon and 2 p.m. for Easter-themed crafts, games, and refreshments.

Palm/Passion Sunday worship will take place on Sat., March 28 at 5:30 p.m. and on Sunday, March 29 at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Together we will remember Jesus' joyful entry into Jerusalem and reflect on his suffering and death on the cross.

On Maundy Thursday, April 2, we will gather at 7 p.m. to remember Jesus' command to love one another and the events of the Last Supper. This service includes Holy Communion and the solemn stripping of the altar.

On Good Friday, April 3, we will hold a Tenebrae (meaning "darkness" or "shadows") service at 7 p.m. Through readings from the Psalms, we recall the sorrow felt by Jesus' followers at his betrayal, trial, and crucifixion. The service concludes in darkness and silence, symbolizing our Lord's burial.

We will celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord on Easter Sunday, April 5 at 8 and 10:30 a.m. With joyful music and the sharing of Holy Communion, we proclaim the good news: Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.

On Sat., April 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., a celebration of God's creation through an "Earth Day" event will feature educational displays, creation themed games, and snacks. Children, youth, and families are warmly invited.

In the lead-up to Memorial Day, join us for the Orwigsburg area's annual "Community Patriotic Concert" featuring our handbell and chancel choirs on Sunday, May 24 at 7 p.m. We will give thanks for God's blessings, remember those who have sacrificed for our freedom, and enjoy fellowship and refreshments afterward. All are welcome.

Our church office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. You may reach Pastor Mike Petresky or our staff at 570-366-2316. If the office is closed, please leave a message and we will return your call.

We also invite you to support the Orwigsburg Food Pantry as it reaches out to help hungry families

and to join us in praying for healing and peace in our nation and throughout the world.

To learn more about worship, events, or weekly Gospel messages at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, visit us on Facebook, YouTube, or our website.

New Awakening Church

Spring is coming, and it won't be long before Easter is here. As we enter that hopeful and holy season, remember that Jesus died for you because He truly, deeply loves you.

If you've been having a tough time lately or feel that you need some answers, we encourage you to take a moment to pray and connect with the God who has good plans for your life. Also, you are always more than welcome to visit us and ask for prayer!

This spring, we'll be diving into some important sermon topics, such as: Christ's great love for you, God's calling on your life, the role of prophecy, and the importance of testimony. You can hear these messages every Sunday morning at 10 a.m. at the Schuylkill Racquet Club in Orwigsburg (25 S Greenview Rd). Or, you can join us online at www.facebook.com/newawakeningchurch. Check us out at www.newawakeningchurch.com for more information.

In addition to Sunday service, come and meet some great people during one of our mid-week group gatherings. Our church thrives on faith, laughter, honest conversation, and earnest prayer. We're not perfect people, but we really want you to know that you matter and that you're valued by God. We would love to meet you!

Need some place to go for Easter? Celebrate Holy Week with us at the Schuylkill Racquet Club - Palm Sunday service on March 29 at 10 a.m. (an Easter Egg Hunt will be enjoyed after the service); Good Friday service on April 3 beginning at 5 p.m.; and Easter Sunday service on April 5 at 10 a.m.

Grace Free Church

You're not alone in this! Life can be a lot.

Not in a dramatic, everything-is-on-fire kind of way - but in the steady, everyday weight that builds over time. The kind that comes from responsibilities piling up, expectations pressing in, and the quiet sense that you're carrying more than anyone realizes.



NEW AWAKENING CHURCH

A place of love, truth, and new beginnings

**SUNDAYS AT 10 AM
AT THE SCHUYLKILL RACQUET CLUB
25 S GREENVIEW ROAD · ORWIGSBURG**

www.newawakeningchurch.com

A Town's Spirit Reflected Through Its Churches

Most people you pass in the grocery store, sit next to at a game, or work alongside during the week are holding something... stress, grief, uncertainty, fatigue, questions they don't have words for yet. And, because life doesn't usually slow down to make space for those things, we learn to just keep moving.

But here's something worth hearing today - You don't have to carry it alone.

God has never asked us to pretend life is easy or to muscle our way through it by sheer strength. Over and over in scripture, we're reminded that His posture toward us is not distant or disappointed - but present and compassionate.

One of the simplest and most grounding promises in the Bible says this... "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18)

That verse doesn't minimize pain. It doesn't rush healing. It doesn't tell you to hurry up and get it together. It simply reminds us that God draws close when life feels heavy.

That makes a difference.

It matters when you're tired and don't know why. It matters when you're trying your best and still feel unsure. It matters when life looks fine on the outside but feels heavy on the inside.

Feeling that way doesn't mean something is wrong with you. It means you're human - and, you're not meant to do this on your own.

At Grace Free Church, we believe faith isn't about pretending everything's okay; it's about walking honestly with God and with one another through real life. No pressure. No performance. Just people who need grace, learning to trust a God who is for them.

We also believe community matters. That showing up for one another through encouragement, prayer, and simple reminders of truth can make a real difference over time.

That's why we send a short, encouraging email each week. Nothing heavy, nothing pushy. Just a few hopeful words to remind you that you're not alone, God is with you, and grace is still at work - right where you are.

If that sounds like something you could use, you're welcome to sign up at gracefreechurch.net/encourage.

And if you're looking for a church that feels a little different - honest, welcoming, and centered on grace - we'd love to have you at Grace Free Church. Whether you're full of faith, full of questions, or somewhere in between, there's room for you here. Go to visitgfc.com for more information.

You're not alone. God is for you. And, we are too.
- **Lead Pastor Josh Ott**

Kimmels Church

In a world that often feels overwhelming and uncertain, hope is something we all long for. This spring, hope is alive and growing at Kimmels Church.

Over the next couple of months, our church family is excited to open our doors wide to the community for a season filled with joy, celebration, reflection,

and new beginnings. From family-friendly events to meaningful worship gatherings, we invite you to come experience the love of Jesus, find encouragement, and be part of something life-giving.

One of the most anticipated days of the year is Palm Sunday, when we host our annual Community Easter Egg Hunt - one of the largest community events in our town. Beginning at 3 p.m., children ages 0-to-10 and their families are invited to join us for an afternoon of laughter and fun as we search for over 6,000 Easter eggs, win prizes, enjoy the playground, and connect with neighbors and friends. Hundreds of families gather each year. And, at the heart of it all is the greatest love story ever told - the story of Jesus and His resurrection. It's a joyful celebration of community, hope, and new life.

As Easter week continues, we invite the community to join us for a Good Friday Service at 6:30 p.m. This will be a meaningful and interactive service of worship, scripture, and communion as we reflect on Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Together, we will remember the fulfillment of God's promises and the incredible gift of forgiveness and salvation made possible through Jesus. This service is designed to help prepare our hearts—to pause, reflect, and experience the depth of God's love in a powerful and personal way.

On Easter Sunday morning, we will gather early

- *Continued on page 22*

179 Pine Creek Drive, Orwigsburg, PA 17961

Join Us!

- Community Easter Egg Hunt**
March 29 - 3 pm
- Good Friday Service**
April 3 - 6:30 pm
- Easter Services**
April 5
 - Sunrise Service - 6:30 am
 - Mid Morning Worship Service 10 am
- Mother's Day Service**
May 10 - 10 am

For more information visit our website: kimmelschurch.org

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for a Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. at our beautiful Chapel on the Hill. Just as the women discovered the empty tomb on that first Easter morning, we will come together to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus as the sun rises over the hill. It will be a special time of worship, scripture, and reflection - quiet, meaningful, and full of awe.

Later that morning, everyone is invited to our main Easter Worship Service at 10 a.m., a joyful celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. This powerful service will be filled with uplifting music, an encouraging message, and a community of people rejoicing together in the victory of Easter.

Our Easter sermon series, "The Day Everything Changed," will focus on the events of Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday—and how God is still using those moments to change lives today. It's a message of hope, love, and victory, reminding us that no matter what is happening in the world, God is still at work.

At Kimmel's Church, we believe church is more

than a place to attend... it's a family to belong to. It's a place to grow in faith, build meaningful friendships, find encouragement, and encounter the Savior who loves you deeply. As our church continues to grow, we are even expanding our sanctuary to make room for more people and more ministry, because we believe everyone deserves a place to belong.

Whether you've been part of church your whole life, haven't been in years, or have never stepped through the doors before, you are welcome here. Bring your family. Invite your friends. Come as you are. You will be greeted with open arms. Come and be part of what God is doing - we can't wait to see you!

For more details, visit kimmelschurch.org or contact the church office at 570-943-2759.

Salem United Methodist Church

"Walk Together in Love" is the theme chosen for Salem's 202nd year serving the community of Orwigsburg. A renewed emphasis on sharing Christ's love with Salem's neighbors has resulted in funding support from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference for Salem's key outreach ministries - all community related and sponsored free of charge to the community.

While all the proceeds from the recent soup and bake sale by the Women of Salem go to support the congregation's annual free August Block Party, recent community engagement and congregational development grants will contribute significantly to the Block Party as well as a number of other events planned for the coming year.

The first of the new events was Invite-a-Friend Sunday on February 15, which will be repeated again in May and September. At the February 15 event, special music was provided by Roy McCutcheon. Congregation members and friends were treated to small gifts and a reception following the 10 a.m. service. The September Invite-a-Friend Sunday will feature special music by evangelist Johnathan Bond, who will also present a free concert at Salem later in the day.

Ongoing ministries that will be supported by the grants are Salem's free Meal and Movie Nights, held on the first and third Sunday evenings each month, the Wednesday morning Eat, Pray and Color outreach ministry held weekly at Cake Pros in Schuylkill Haven, and Thursday Night Dinner Church.

MEAL MINISTRIES - Dinner church is now in its third year of offering dinner and a casual, family-oriented service with live music on Thursday evenings. The next sessions will be held in Salem's hall on March 2-9-&-16. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. followed by worship from 6 to 6:30 p.m. The service is family-friendly with short messages given by Salem's lay members as well as community guests. Dinners are also delivered to a number of housebound neighbors as part of this outreach.

Additionally, The Market Square Coffee House, provider of entrees for Dinner Church, has begun providing free pick-up dinners to any Orwigsburg area resident in need of a meal. The coffee shop prepared

State Rep. Jamie Barton

Property Tax/Rent Rebate

The application period for the state's 2025 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is now open for eligible Pennsylvanians to claim rebates on property taxes or rent paid last year. Income limits have increased to \$48,110 for both homeowners and renters. This is due to a law I supported, adjusting the income limit annually based on the Consumer Price Index. Remember to exclude 50% of Social Security when determining your income. The maximum rebate is \$1,000.



Representative
Jamie Barton

The program is open to residents 65 years and older; widows and widowers 50 years and older; and people with disabilities 18 years and older.

You can apply online at mypath.pa.gov or contact my offices for help - the Tamaqua office at 570-668-1240, Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; or the Hamburg office at 484-660-3721 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

You may get an automated call starting in April to notify you that your application was received. Beginning in June, automated calls go out to inform applicants that their application was approved. Starting July 1, rebates will begin to be issued. Payments will be made by direct deposit or check mailed to the applicant, depending on the payment option you choose on your application.

Applications for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program are due by June 30. Applications postmarked by that date will be accepted for processing. To date, funding has been available to allow all who qualify to benefit from the program.

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meals for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and then again in January. Watch the Market Square Facebook page for information on upcoming community meal pick-ups and Salem's web page for April through May Dinner Church dates.

The coloring page ministry at Cake Pros is in its 7th year. Anyone can drop in from 10:30 to noon on Wednesday for a devotion and prayer, coordinated to a scripture coloring page. All materials are provided for the program and the coffee is free.

Salem's small group and Bible studies will continue for 2026, and are open to everyone in the community. Pastor ShinAe Kim leads an in depth Bible study on Wednesday afternoons at 2 p.m. in the hall. On Thursday mornings at 10 a.m., Salem's Women's Group meets for prayer, fellowship and study.

Salem is participating in the Wednesday Community Lenten service schedule detailed at the beginning of Page 17. Salem held Ash Wednesday services on February 18 and will have a Maundy Thursday service on April 2. A Passover Seder will be held at the church on Good Friday, April 3. Check Salem's webpage at www.SalemUM.com for more information for all services and activities.

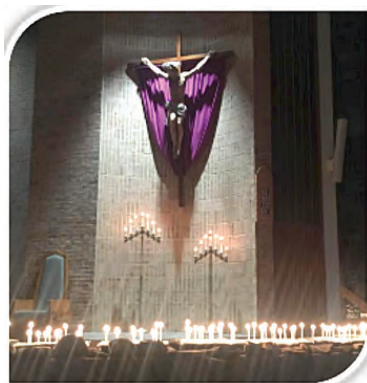
Regular Sunday morning worship is held at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary of the church. The service is led by Rev. Dr. ShinAe Kim, with a children's message and Sunday School held during the service time. Music is a traditional-contemporary mix, with accompaniment by piano and guitar. Coffee and snacks are available before and during the service in the lobby. A stair chair is available for anyone who chooses to avoid the stairs to the sanctuary.

For more information about services and ministries, Salem's administrative assistant can be reached at the church office, directly across S. Liberty Street from the church, Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 570-366-0201 and office@SalemUM.com. Pastor Kim can be reached at ahavato@yahoo.com.

Saint Ambrose Roman Catholic Church

As our country prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, St. Ambrose will be celebrating the 175th anniversary of the establishment as a parish in 1851. We look forward to sharing more information in the May issue of *Orwigsburg Happenings* - stay tuned!

This year, Lent at St. Ambrose began on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18 with a Mass and distribution of ashes at 9 a.m., 4 and 7 p.m.



We welcome and invite everyone from our surrounding communities to join us on Wednesday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m. for our Taize Prayer Service. This is an ecumenical service that is a night of prayer and silence. As we gather with one another and in the presence of Christ, we

will sing hymns of simple thoughts and few words, allowing the mystery of God to become tangible through the beauty of simplicity. As we gather with one another, we unite our hearts with our Savior into whose journey to Calvary we will soon enter.

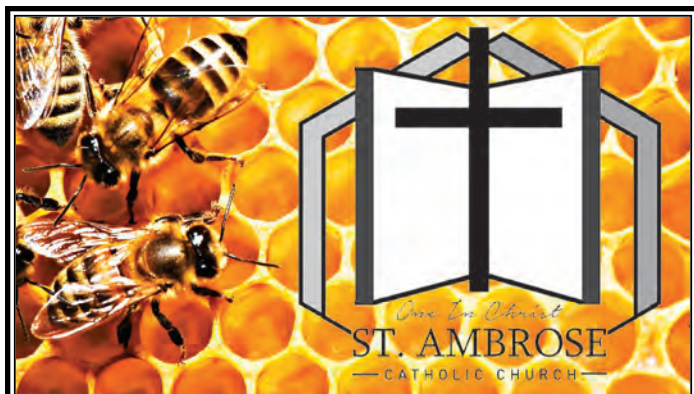
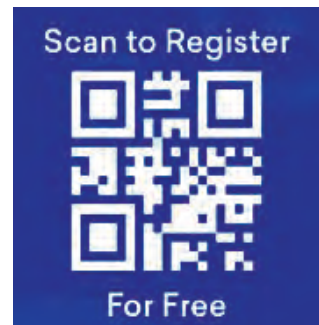
For a complete schedule of services during Lent, such as: Family Friendly Stations of the Cross, Soup & Movie Night, Holy Hour for Vocations, please visit our website at: www.stambrosehaven.com or scan the QR code in our ad.

We invite you to join St. Ambrose on **FORMED.org**, that also features thousands of videos, e-books, and programs. For example, the Search area leads people to the deepest questions of the human heart, i.e. What Do You Seek? Who Are You? Why a God? to explore the meaning and purpose of life. The Search Continues answers commonly searched questions about the Catholic faith.

Scan the QR Code shown above or visit: signup.formed.org and enter our parish zip code: 17972

Don't forget to pick up your Welcome Bag when you visit St. Ambrose.

- Rev. Msgr. Edward Zemanik



Please Join Us - Regular Mass Schedule

Saturday 5 p.m.

Sunday 8:15 and 10:30 a.m.

Weekdays - Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m.

First Fridays 12:30 p.m.

St. Ambrose Catholic Church

201 Randel Street

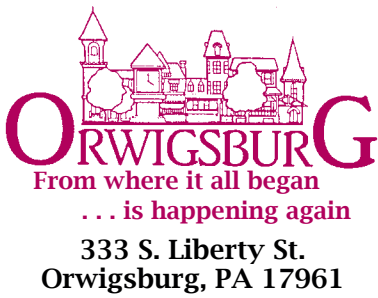
Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972

570-385-1031



www.stambrosehaven.com

Pastor: Rev. Msgr. Edward S. Zemanik, M.Div



**Official Matter
of Orwigsburg Borough**



**ECRWSS Postal Customer
Orwigsburg, PA 17961**

A Friendly & Historic Community . . . Serving Its Residents • Welcoming Its Visitors

Rave Mobile's Smart911 – Critical Info Fast!

Rave Mobile's "Smart911" is a communication service that allows Orwigsburg Borough to notify residents quickly and efficiently in the event of an emergency or need to convey critical information.

The PA Department of Environmental Protection mandated all water systems are required to notify customers quickly when a situation with the water system arises. From time to time, we have had to contact our customers when our water system was compromised and issue a Boil Water Advisory.

Orwigsburg Borough has contracted with Rave Mobile's Smart911 to contact our customers and residents. Smart911 is a Public Notification System using cutting-edge technology to swiftly contact our residents via telephone or e-mail. Now when a Boil Water Advisory is necessary, or any time the Borough needs

to be in contact with its residents such as a declared snow emergency, we can do so in a matter of minutes. This would also include other states of emergency, disaster announcements, road closures, parking restrictions, and other announcements as necessary.

We need your help!

In order to make Smart911 work, information regarding you, including your address, phone number, cell phone number, e-mail address, and your preferred method of notification is necessary. If you were registered previously with Swiftreach, your information has been transferred to the Smart911 system. If you have not sent this to date, complete the form and mail it in, deliver in person, call or e-mail your info today! Or, go to the Borough website

www.orwigsburg.gov. Under the Services drop-down menu, select **RAVE Notifications**.

Mail or deliver to Orwigsburg Borough, 333 S. Liberty St., Orwigsburg, PA 17961. You can also call 570-366-3103 with the information.

Property owners with apartments should provide information regarding their tenants. Tenants should also complete the form to ensure optimum notification.

Orwigsburg Borough • Water Customer Information System

Contact Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Please check the line for your preferred method of notification.

Primary Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Please return the information sheet to the Borough Office at
Orwigsburg Borough: 333 S. Liberty St., Orwigsburg, PA 17961