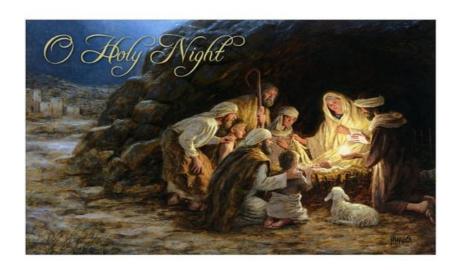
# The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day December 25, 2025



# St. Matthew's Episcopal Church 32 N. Front St. Sunbury, PA 17801 570-286-7002

The Reverend Dina Carter Ishler, Rector

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." John 1:14

## Christmas Morning, 2025~ The Nativity of our Lord

Welcome, and God's peace be to you all and especially to any guests at St. Matthew's this Christmas morning. We are so glad that you are here to worship with us on this holy day as we celebrate, with amazement and wonder, the birth of Jesus, who is the Messiah, our Redeemer. We share the gladness of the angels and shepherds who first worshipped our infant Savior as we prepare ourselves to tell these tidings of great joy to a world desperately in need of God's healing mercy and love.

Please know you are always completely welcome here for everything we do our fellowship, our mission and outreach activities, our weekday services, and our regular Sunday worship at 10am. We hope and pray you will find this to be one of your spiritual homes. Please do not hesitate to let us know what your needs are, so that we may be present to you and continue to welcome you into our community. All our contact information is listed in this bulletin.

Our Worship follows the Episcopal tradition using the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal 1982, both of which you will find in the pew racks. We create a full-text bulletin for each service with the intention of making it easier to follow along and participate; if you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to ask someone near you.

<u>All</u> are welcome at the Lord's Table. If you wish to receive communion, place your hands together to receive the bread and you may take a sip of wine directly from the chalice. We also have individual cups available that contain a small amount of wine and a wafer (the consecrated bread.) Grape juice and gluten-free wafers are available upon request. Intinction (dipping the wafer in the chalice) is not permitted. If you wish to receive a blessing, please come forward to the altar and cross your arms.

# The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 10:00AM

(Directions to stand, kneel, etc., in our services should always be considered an invitation. If you find any of these to be challenging, please worship in whatever pose may work for you, knowing you are fully in God's presence.)

### The Ringing of the Bells

We ring the sacristy bells five minutes before each service to invite us into a respectful silence that settles our souls for this time of Spirit-filled worship.

#### THE WORD OF GOD

Because today's service is a 'said' service (no music), the ministers process in silence.

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

The people and Celebrant say together

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Celebrant continues Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

### The Gloria in Excelsis (said together)

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the onlybegotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrant says the Collect.

O God, who makest us glad by the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our Judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

The Lessons The people sit.

## A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,

who brings good news,

who announces salvation,

who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,

together they sing for joy;

for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing,

you ruins of Jerusalem;

for the LORD has comforted his people,

he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations;

and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

#### Psalm 98 Said in unison.

- 1 Sing to the LORD a new song, \* for he has done marvelous things.
- 2 With his right hand and his holy arm \* has he won for himself the victory.
- 3 The LORD has made known his victory; \*
  his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of
  the nations.
- 4 He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, \*
  and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
- 5 Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; \* lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
- 6 Sing to the LORD with the harp, \* with the harp and the voice of song.
- 7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn \* shout with joy before the King, the LORD.
- 8 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, \* the lands and those who dwell therein.
- 9 Let the rivers clap their hands, \* and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, when he comes to judge the earth.
- 10 In righteousness shall he judge the world \* and the peoples with equity.

## A Reading from the Book of Hebrews: Hebrews 1:14, (5-12)

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

[For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son;

today I have begotten you"?

Or again,

"I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

Of the angels he says,

"He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says,

> "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

And,

"In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

they will perish, but you remain;

they will all wear out like clothing;

like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed.

But you are the same, and your years will never end."]

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

### The Gospel: John 1:1-14

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People Glory be to thee, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise be to thee, O Christ.

The Homily

Mother Dina

A time of silence after the homily is held for reflection.

The Nicene Creed all stand and say together BCP 327 I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very

God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## The Prayers of the People

**BCP 328** 

The Reader says Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Almighty and ever living God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the

authority of government in this and every land, especially our President Donald Trump, our Governor Josh Shapiro, Senator Lynda Schlegel-Culver, our State Representative Mike Stender, and our Mayor Josh Broscious; that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor all those who in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Today in our Susquehanna Convocation Cycle of Prayer we pray for St. Matthew's, Sunbury. In our Diocesan/Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for All Saints Episcopal Church, Selinsgrove, and The Episcopal Church.

And for the special needs and concerns of this congregation, including those names we now lift up before you: Mother Dina and family, Father Fred and family, Frances, Angela, Tanya, Weston, Mike, the Sterner family, Dawson, Erika, Nancy, Becky, Easton, Ariella, Ereda, Junior, and Brendaly, AmberLynn, Daya, Arabella, Derick, Noelle, Dean, Fred, Tatum, Mary, Keith, Will, Helen, Lisa, Tina, Bob, Karen, George, Rose, Jane, and for those whose needs are known to God alone. Please pray for all healthcare workers, especially Dan, Kara, Melissa, Janice and their co-workers, all those who in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Also, please pray for all serving in our military, especially Ann, and Jayden, law enforcement, and first responders. Silence, during which the People may add their own petitions.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, especially Richard, April, and Carol, beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of St.

Matthew and of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.** 

Celebrant Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God. Silence is kept.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved thee with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in thy will, and walk in thy ways, to the glory of thy Name. Amen.

Celebrant Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Peace The Celebrant says to the people The peace of the Lord be always with you. People And with thy spirit.

We greet one another in the name of the Lord.

BCP 332

### The Presentation of the Offerings

#### THE HOLY COMMUNION

## **Eucharistic Prayer II**

**BCP 340** 

Celebrant The Lord be with you. People And with thy spirit.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them up unto the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks unto our Lord God. People It is meet and right so to do.

Celebrant It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, was made very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become thy children.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

The Sanctus (said together).

Holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

#### The Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.** 

The Lord's Prayer And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

### The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept. Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

### People Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The people and Celebrant say together We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Celebrant says These are the Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion All pray together
Dearest Jesus, we believe that you are truly present in the Holy
Sacrament, and, since we all cannot receive communion in the
consecrated bread and wine, we pray you to come into our hearts.
We unite ourselves with you and embrace you with our hearts,
souls, and minds. Let nothing separate us from you; let us serve
you in this life until, by your grace, we come to your glorious
kingdom and unending peace. Amen.

## Post Communion Prayer

**BCP 339** 

The Celebrant says Let us pray.

Celebrant and People Almighty and ever living God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our

Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Christmas Blessing The Celebrant says

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our no

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.** 

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.** 

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.** 

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.** 

The Dismissal The Celebrant dismisses the People Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. People Thanks be to God!

## Serving today's liturgy

The Reverend Dina Carter Ishler, Celebrant and Preacher
David Hollabaugh and Mary Ann Loftus,
Eucharistic Ministers/Worship Assistants
Barry Treon, Greeter and Usher

## PARISH NOTES for December 25, 2025

COLE ALLEN DIAPER PANTRY: The next Diaper Pantry will be Saturday, Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. We're in need of volunteers to distribute diapers. Please contact Connie Kistler at kistinpa@ptd.net. Monetary donations are very much welcomed, please give in an envelope labeled "Diaper Pantry." Donations of diaper wipes, pull-ups, and sizes 5 and 6 are so appreciated and urgently needed-We covered 109 baby bottoms in December!

HIS DISCIPLES FOOD PANTRY: Is the last Saturday of each month. Please contact John Blanchard, 570-286-5415, leave message

to volunteer. Donations of canned soups, cereals, and canned fruit are welcome. **We fed 49 families in November!** The next Food Pantry will be held Saturday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. **Any donations are greatly appreciated!** 

**CHURCH SERVICE TIME is 10:00 AM.** Masks are now optional. Please follow any current COVID restrictions.

CARLA'S OFFICE HOURS: Office hours for this week are Monday, 10AM to 2PM, and Tuesday, Dec. 29, 10AM-12PM. MOTHER DINA'S OFFICE/PASTORAL CALLING HOURS: No scheduled office hours between 12/26 and 1/2- I ask that you PLEASE text or call me (717) 481-0708 if you have a matter of pastoral urgency.

**ALTAR SERVERS:** St. Matthew's is looking for altar servers **of all ages** for the ministries of: **Eucharistic Minister, Crucifer, Torch Bearers, Lector, Thurifer, etc.** Please contact Mother Dina if interested in participating in these or ANY of our other ministries!

CHOIR REHEARSAL: Rehearsals will continue to be Thursday evenings at 5:30pm. All are welcome to join us - NO MUSICAL EXPERIENCE NECESSARY! No rehearsal 1/1.

YOGA CLASSES: NO YOGA on 12/25 and 1/1/26. Yoga classes will be held in the Social Hall every Thursday at 7:00PM. \$5.00 per class.

**COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEERS:** Volunteers are needed each month to sign up for a weekly coffee hour session. Sign-up sheets are posted in the Choir Room. Any questions, please contact Carol Hixson. This month's sign-ups are:

Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>- Matt & David Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>- Need Volunteer Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>- Need Volunteer Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>- Annual Meeting

**MONTHLY MORNING BREAKFAST:** The monthly morning breakfast will be held on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> from 9:00AM-10:AM

**VESTRY MEETING:** The monthly Vestry Meeting will be held on January 14th at 6:00PM in the Parish Hall.

**UP-COMING MONTHLY EVENTS:** Details to follow closer to the time of the events. Please visit our website for more information Sun., **Jan. 4**<sup>th</sup>: Monthly Breakfast Hour, 9:00AM Sat., **Jan. 10**<sup>th</sup>: Game Night, details to follow

Wed., Jan. 14th: Vestry Meeting, 6PM, Social Hall

Sun., Jan. 18th: Adult Bible Study, 9AM

Sun., Jan. 18th: Annual Meeting after worship

<u>VESTRY MEMBERS</u>: Fran Zartman, *Senior Warden*; Martha Bohner *Junior Warden*; Mary Ann Loftus, *Clerk of the Vestry;*; Ric Haines, Carter Ishler, Dana Kelly; Carol Lamparter; Tina McGee, Lynda Schlegel-Culver. **SEXTON:** Sharon Baney

#### DONATIONS:

All tithes and offerings are most greatly appreciated, as we rely on your prayerful generosity to care lovingly for our physical space and to keep ourselves vital and active in our community through our worship, our witness, our outreach, and our presence.

You may now donate to Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church "online" at the link listed: <a href="https://diocesecpa.org/stewardship">https://diocesecpa.org/stewardship</a>

Or you may continue to mail your contributions to:

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church 32 N. Front St.

Sunbury, PA 17801

stmatthewsunbury@gmail.com (office email)

reverenddina@gmail.com (Mother Dina's email)

Please visit us at <u>stmatthew-episcopal.org</u> and follow us on Facebook: <u>St. Matthew's Episcopal Church</u>

To connect with our livestreamed services, please go to our YouTube channel: @St.MatthewsEpiscopalChurchSunB

\*All printed and performed music and lyrics are used with permission under our license agreements: Riteseries, copyright 2024 Church Publishing; One License #A-741634. All Rights Reserved.

St. Matthew's is part of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania; The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan, Bishop



Rose and Kurt Miller: In loving memory of Family and Friends Roy and Cathy Casey: In loving memory of our Parents John and Carol Blanchard:

In loving memory of Inns and Blanchard families In loving memory of Aaron Blanchard

Carol Hixson: In loving memory of Packer and Hixson Families
Tina McGee: In loving memory of Allethea Bruce and
Glenda Sears

Connie and Pete Kistler:

In loving memory of departed Family and Friends Lynda and Tom Culver:

In loving memory of Charles E. Schlegel II In loving memory of Perry and Nina Culver

William Rowe: In loving memory of my beloved wife

Carole Rowe

In loving memory of departed Rowe family In loving memory of departed Russo family

Jayme Knouse: In loving memory of Marty Lehman

In loving memory of Paul Lehman In loving memory of River Knouse

David Phillips: In loving memory of Jeanne Newcomer Phillips
In loving memory of Jesse C. Woodring
In loving memory of Pamela Barfield Clark

Mary Ann Loftus:

In loving memory of departed Family and Friends