

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Messenger March 2016 Issue



From the desk of Pastor Mardy...

March 2016

Easter is without a doubt, the highest and most experiential celebration of the church. Easter tantalizes our spiritual and physical senses through the aromatic Lillies, candles, incense, bells and hymns. As quickly as the thrill of Easter arrives it always seems to fade away. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith, but as the weeks go by, and turn into months we tend to forget about God's grace and forgiveness and focus on our brokenness. As Easter people, how do we live our daily lives fully aware of God's love and mercy? The answer is as easy as it is challenging, **keeping our eyes on Jesus**. When we look to Christ, we will see the love of God given to us immeasurably and unconditionally. Henri Nouwen once said, "God's love for us is everlasting. That means that God's love for us existed before we were born and will exist after we have died." This is how we hold on to Easter, **look to Christ**. When you fix your eyes on Jesus, you will never lose sight of God's love.

The story of Easter is one told time and again, and although many know the words it is hard to say we truly grasp its effect on our lives. The **Easter impact**, as I like to call it has changed everything. The way we conceptualize our human lives, the way we understand God, the way we understand the world around us, and how we contemplate our life and death. Above all; Easter answers the now and later questions. What happens after I die? What happens now, in the sadness, in the separation, in the midst of sin and in the hope of something more?

Friends in Christ, Easter reminds us that in our lives, in the midst of searching for answers we often find ourselves looking for Jesus in the wrong place. "Why do you search for the living among the dead?" We can sometimes allow our pain, our despair, sadness, addictions, worries, guilt, and uncertainties rule over us like a sealed tomb. It looks like there is no way out, this must be the end. Jesus broke the chains which hold us to doubt, he tore the veil of separation between us and the Father, and he triumphed over sin and death! **Alleluia! Christ is Risen!**

As we journey forward in our faith let us be reminded of those Angelic words spoken to the women who came to the tomb that early morning, "Do not be afraid." We must not be afraid, for Jesus who was crucified and died, has been raised to new life and releases us from the power sin and death. Here at Ascension we venture forward in mission, knowing with all certainty that Christ is alive and that he has shown himself to us. It is our joy to share this news with others! As Christians we have but one job, which is to share the good news. Let us go forth into our homes, to our neighbors, to the streets, and to the ends of the earth calling people to Christ by saying, "Come and see."

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Joseph G. Murdy

2016 Council Officers

President- Bob Thompson
Vice President- Kelly Braun
Secretary- Venus Thompson
Treasurer- Clay Marnich

2016 Council Members

Christian Education- Venus Thompson
Fellowship- Karen Houseman
Social Ministry- Joel Randal
Finance- Clay Marnich
Evangelism- Bill Hendricks
Stewardship- Kelly Braun
Property- Bob Thompson
Worship/Music- Jerry Wessel
Comm./Publications- Dale Kozek
Youth Ministry- Joel Randal

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, March 8th at 7:00
PM



Easter Flowers Order
DEADLINE
March 15th. Please see



If you are interested in purchasing flowers to be placed in the chancel to the glory of God, we invite you to sign up in the Narthex on the flower chart. (Please **ONLY** place your name if you are purchasing flowers) Checks can be placed in the offertory plate or church office, check are to be payable to Ascension Lutheran Church. The cost for two vases is \$50.



GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2016

7:00 P.M.

HAL H. HOPSON'S

TENEBRAE: A SERVICE OF DARKNESS

Join us for this reflective time of worship and song led by the choir. In this service, eight candles are gradually extinguished, symbolizing the flight and denial of the disciples and friends of Jesus at the time of His crucifixion.



Ascension Lutheran Church

1290 Silver Lane, Robinson Township, PA. 15136



Shirley Vete; Pat and Gene Summerhill; Mary and Harold Honath; Ken "Butch" Thompson; Ron and Pat Williams; Elizabeth Reuben; Sandy Belsky; Matt Wilkinson; Jean Nau; Aaron BraddickLorraine Zwki; Connor Paselvis; and Rich Mussman.

A Message from Rich...

Spirituality is not religion, but contains all religions. Spirituality is not science but contains all science. Spirituality is not philosophy, but contains all philosophy. Spirituality is who we are, what we do, and how we relate to our God. It is more than a set of religious principles or rules to follow, more than reciting memorized prayers or a set of do's and do not's. Although it may encompass all of these for some, Spirituality is a deep, personal, and private relationship with God as we each have come to know Him. There are certain truths about God which every Christian should believe in and embrace, and these are the building blocks for our personal relationship with God. For some religion plays an important role in their personal relationship with God. For others, it does not. This may seem strange to a Christian but there are large numbers of people in our world who sadly have no use for religion in their lives, and if you ask them they will gladly tell you. To conclude, our Spirituality is our own personal relationship with God as we have come to know Him. In future articles I will discuss the many and varied ways people relate to God on a personal basis (Spirituality). Some are very creative, some you may not agree with, but all have one thing in common; it is how each believer has come to a daily personal relationship with their very loving God. Our Thursday evening Spirituality meeting in the Learning Center has over 100 topics and discussion points relating to Spirituality developed by the members of the group. Each week we choose a handful of these as the basis for our discussion. I invite you to come and join us. You may be surprised how enjoyable it is, God Bless.

Rich Mussman

Holy Family Academy, an affordable and innovative Catholic high school serving students of all faiths invites families of current 8th, 9th and 10th graders to attend an open house on Wednesday, February 3 from 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, March 5 from noon to 3 p.m. RSVP or learn more by visiting hfa-pgh.org or contacting Admissions@hfa-pgh.org or [412-307-0230](tel:412-307-0230).



Lent collection

Heads, SHOULDERS, ~~knees~~ and TOES!

Throughout the season of Lent Ascension will be collecting personal hygiene and paper products that are necessary for daily life. In the fall we discovered that Good Shepherd, in addition to food really need personal items. We invite you to help us help others. We will be collecting the following items: toilet paper, paper towels, floss, shampoo, deodorant, soap, kids soap, tooth paste, tooth brushes, foot powder, and other things we use in our daily lives.

Worship and Music

Worship: If you have an interest in decorating the church during special times of the year please see Lynn Kinney or Pastor Joe. We are looking for your talents and ideas on how we can decorate the church to be more festive and display symbols related to the season. For example, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc. We would love to work together!

Music: Have you ever wondered how hymns are selected and why we sing certain songs when we do? If you are interested in helping in the music selection process please see Pastor Joe or Brandy. As part of our three year mission plan we would like to invite more participation in the planning process. Let us know!

NEW- We invite you to share your favorite hymns with us that can be incorporated in our worship. Hymnals are available in the narthex, along with a sheet for you to list your favorites. Feel free to borrow a hymnal to spend more time with your selections.

Memorial Fund

When a loved one dies, how do we remember them? This question is especially important when a saint of the church dies and people whose lives were touched want to honor God in whom they rest and who provided such a gift- for however short a time. In the like of the church when a loved one dies we have the opportunity to contribute to the memorial fund.

New in the sanctuary

A big thank you to Jerry Wessel, who designed, created and placed the Alpha and Omega letters above the altar. These two letters which are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet remind us of the Revelation of John, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." This addition to our worship space serves as a reminder that God is the source of all things and remains with us always, through all time.





STEWARDSHIP STATION

Recently, four members of our new Congregational Council and Pastor gave up their Saturday to spend it with Bishop Kusserow and his assistants to attend the Synod's first ever training for new Council Members. On Saturday February 27, Bob Thompson, Joel Randal, Kelly Braun, Jerry Wessel and Pastor travelled to St. John's of Highland Lutheran Church in the North Hills to attend group training with several other congregations. The Bishop and his assistants, Pastor Sarah and Pastor Ed, focused on explaining the 2013 Model Constitution for ELCA Congregations (see related article in this newsletter about Ascension adopting this constitution); describing Synod resources available for the Council; and reminding us that the Synod is there to help us when needed. They also held break-out sessions for Council presidents, secretaries, treasurers and certain committees (such as stewardship). Much thanks go out to Bob, Joel, Kelly, Jerry and Pastor for taking the time to attend and network, and bringing back this information to the rest of the Council and Congregation.

Yours in Christ,
Stewardship Committee

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE

Ascension's current constitution is approximately 20 years old, and our Synod and the ELCA are encouraging us to update it. If reading and pondering are your strengths, we would love to have you join our new Constitution Committee at Ascension to assist with this process. The ELCA adopted a Model Constitution in 2013, and we will be using that as our starting point. We expect this process to take several months, but not require many meetings.

If you are interested (or want to learn more), please contact Kelly Braun at braunk@pepperlaw.com or 412-787-7773.

Holy Week

Come and see! Come and hear! Holy week is celebrated by the universal church in every corner of the world. From Palm Sunday to Easter and from Easter to the Ascension we hear the story of our Lord's passion, his victory over death, and his promise to come again. How many of us commit ourselves to being a part of such a journey? I invite you to join with us in solemn worship and holy praise through the great three days!

Palm Sunday: 10:30AM This Sunday we celebrate the triumphant entry of our Lord into the great city of Jerusalem, "the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!" Here we process into the sanctuary with palms and hear the story of our saviors passion. Palm Sunday this year will also be a celebration of first Holy Communion.

Holy Monday: no liturgy

Holy Tuesday/ Chrism Mass: Today at 10:00AM I invite you to join us in worship with us at a combined observance of the Episcopal Diocese and the Southwestern PA Synod for a Renewal of Vows and Blessing of Oils.

Holy Wednesday: no liturgy

Maundy Thursday: 7PM This holy night we remember our Lord's Passover celebration with his apostles. Here he washed his disciples feet, broke bread, poured wine and instituted his Holy Supper. Tonight gather in remembrance and observe this sacred eve of our Lord's passion with the washing of feet and the Eucharist. We strip the altar and make bare the church as a sign of our mourning with Christ. Tonight we also celebrate first Holy Communion.

Good Friday: 7PM This night is the most solemn of all. Today we remember Jesus crying with a loud voice saying, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. Having said this, he breathed his last." Join us for an evening Tenebrae 'darkness' service. Candles are extinguished while the story of Christ's passion is read. Tonight's Tenebrae service will feature several anthems by the choir.

Resurrection of our Lord: Easter Vigil 7PM Easter Vigil is a night like no other. Celebrated throughout the universal church as a time of Christ's passing from death to life. Throughout the world people have prepared for baptism, knowing that today best characterizes their baptismal life into Christ's death and resurrection. We begin our service outside by the new fire and process into a darkened church by candle light. The story of scripture is read and highlighted, beginning with Genesis and concluding with the Gospel where the resurrection of Christ is announced. The Easter bell is rung, flowers are added to the sanctuary, hymns are sung and the feast of victory is celebrated.

Resurrection of our Lord: Easter Day 10:30AM This holy morning the church gathers to hear the story of the empty tomb, the appearance of Christ and his victory over death! Today we celebrate the resurrection of Christ and the promise of everlasting life. Today we shout with joy, our long held ALLELUIAS!

MARCH 2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						27 AA Meeting 9:00 AM
28	29	1	2	3	4	5
			CI Woods Birthday Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	Spirituality Group 7 PM	Lynn Kinney & Karen Houseman Birthday's	Ellen Randal & Michael Rodriguez Birthday's AA Meeting 9:00 AM
6 4 th Lent Sunday	7	8	9 Mckenna Schilling Birthday	10	11	12
Harold Honoth Birthday		Council Meeting 7 PM	Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	Jeff Williams Birthday Spirituality Group 7 PM		AA Meeting 9:00 AM
13 5 th Lent Sunday	14	15	16	17	18	19
		Nancy Schreiber Birthday	Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM		Dirk and Karen Houseman Anniversary	AA Meeting 9:00 AM
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Debbie Williams Birthday		Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	Mournday Thursday Service 7:00 PM	Good Friday Service 7:00 PM Michael Boyer & Dirk Houseman Birthdays	Easter Vigil Service 7:00 PM
27	28	29	30	31		AA Meeting 9:00 AM
		Mason Bryan, Auglie Cook, and AJ Tambellini Birthdays		Aaron Braddick Birthday		

Church Office Hours: Monday- Thursday 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM
 Office Email: Office@alcoeh.com Pastor Email: Pastor@alcoeh.com Website: www.alcoeh.com Phone: 412-859-3711
 Music Director Email: Music@alcoeh.com

APRIL 2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	Spirituality Group 7 PM	1	2 AA Meeting 9:00 AM
3 2 nd Easter Sunday Mutual Ministry Meeting	4	5 Council Meeting 8 PM Dee Grotzmler & Sandy Tombellini Birthday	6 Mary Jane Kretzer Birthday Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	7 Judy Bryan Birthday Spirituality Group 7 PM	8 Brett Williams Birthday	9 AA Meeting 9:00 AM
10 3 rd Easter Sunday Baptism of Logan Murdy	11	12 Council Meeting @ 7:00 PM	13 Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	14 Spirituality Group 7 PM	15 Samantha Siemens Birthday	16 AA Meeting 9:00 AM Williams Whyte Birthday
17 4 th Easter Sunday Finance Meeting @12:00 PM	18 Matthew and Leah Yen Anniversary	19 Kristen Bryan & Elizabeth Green Birthday	20 Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	21 Cassandra Johnson Birthday	22	23 Mike Lescalette Birthday AA Meeting 9:00 AM
24 5 th Easter of Sunday Connor Shenot Birthday	25	26	27 Julia Wessel Birthday April and Gary Fisher Anniversary Choir Practice 7:00 PM NA Meeting 7:30 PM	28 Debbie Hendricks Birthday Spirituality Group 7 PM	29 Karen Mentzer Birthday Nicole and Peter Shenot Anniversary	30 Mary Ann Endes Birthday AA Meeting 9:00 AM

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Office Email: Office@alcpqh.com

Pastor Email: Pastor@alcpqh.com

Website: www.alcpqh.com

Phone: 412-859-3711

Music Director Email: Music@alcpqh.com

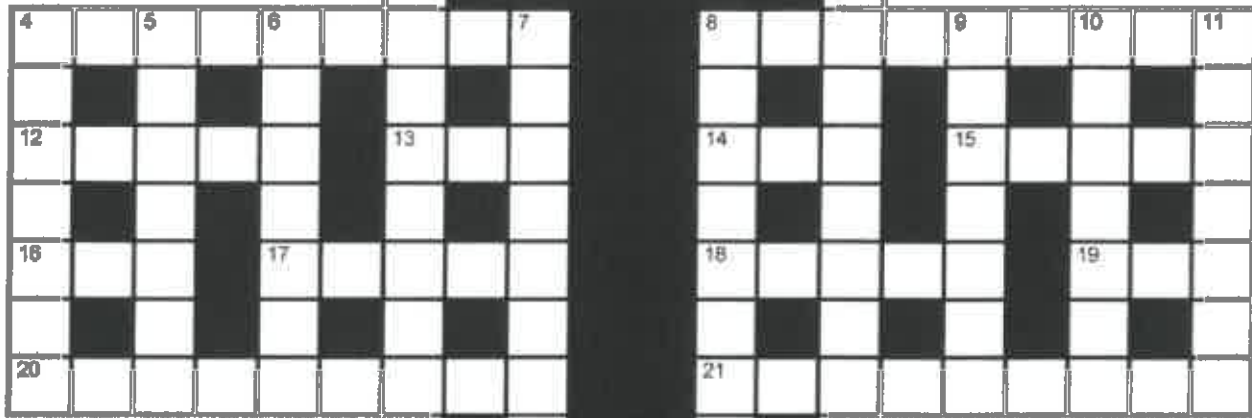
Bible Crossword X

Across

- 1 Donkey (3)
- 2 Jesus' Father (3)
- 4 One of the twelve (9)

Down

- 1 One of God's messengers (5,2,3,4)
- 3 1940s archaeological find (4,3,7)



- 8 Didn't believe in resurrection (9)
- 12 One of David's warriors (5)
- 13 First word of the Lord's Prayer (3)
- 14 New Testament name for Noah (3)
- 15 Wish harm upon (5)
- 16 Hole in the ground (3)
- 17 Adversary (5)
- 18 Savour (5)
- 19 First woman (3)
- 20 Mother of John the Baptist (9)
- 21 Family of priests (9)
- 22 Third son of Jacob (4)
- 23 Hates (8)
- 26 Assurances (8)
- 30 Endured pain (8)
- 31 Return from the dead (4)
- 32 Intercessor (8)
- 35 Decorating (8)
- 39 Old Testament book of the Bible (4)
- 40 The prince of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal (3)
- 42 A wise insect (3)
- 44 Dwelling place of kings (6)
- 45 Make bigger (8)

- 4 Tread down (7)
- 5 Father of Jonah (7)
- 6 Very salty water bordering Israel (4,3)
- 7 Defensive structures (11)
- 8 Refuges (11)
- 9 Dirty (7)
- 10 Devout (7)
- 11 Pieces of money (7)
- 24 Used to listen (3)
- 25 Used to see (3)
- 26 Positions (5)
- 27 Made available (7)
- 28 Snake (7)
- 29 Destroyed along with Gomorrah (5)
- 33 Finish (3)
- 34 Possess (3)
- 35 King of the Amalekites (4)
- 36 Last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
- 37 Almost sacrificed by Abraham (5)
- 38 Present (4)
- 41 Unfasten (4)
- 43 Fish traps (4)

Lent



Lenten Suppers (March 2nd, 9th, & 16th) 6:00 PM
 Palm Sunday, March 20th 10:30 AM
 Maundy Thursday, March 24th 7:00 PM
 Good Friday, March 25th 7:00 PM
 Easter Vigil, March 26th 7:00 PM
 Easter Sunday Resurrection, March 27th 10:30 AM



(See John 20 | 18) 03 29 2022

I WANT YOU TO FOLD UP MY BURIAL CLOTHES,
 WAIT FOR MARY, AND REMEMBER THAT THIS IS
 SERIOUS ... NO HIDING AND YELLING "BOO"



Inside this Month Issue...

- A Message from Rich**
- Prayer List**
- Upcoming Events**
- Birthdays and Anniversaries**
- Crossword Puzzle**

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McKees Rocks, PA 15136

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office@alcpgh.com
music@alcpgh.com
pastor@alcpgh.com
www.alcpgh.com

