

# THE MESSENGER

## ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

MAY 2023

### WEEKLY EVENTS

**Sunday Worship** - 10:30 AM  
**Sunday School** - 9:30 AM (*adult & child*)  
**Drum Class** - Mondays 5-8 PM Apr-July  
**NA Meeting** - Wednesdays at 7:30 PM  
**Spirituality Group** - Thursdays at 7:00 PM  
**AA Meeting** - Saturdays at 10:00 AM  
                    - Mondays at 7:00 PM  
**Soccer Shots** - Saturday mornings &  
                    Tuesday evenings (*Spring-Fall*)



### 2023 COUNCIL EXECUTIVES

**President** – Jeff Williams  
**Vice President** – Chelsea Karaffa  
**Secretary** – Thom Kruise  
**Treasurer** – Bob Thompson

### 2023 COUNCIL LIAISONS

**Christian Education**  
Pastor Joe Murdy

**Communications & Publications**  
Jason Eager

**Fellowship**  
Sharon Giza

**Finance and Stewardship**  
John Bielewicz

**Mutual Ministry**  
Jeff Williams

**Personnel**  
Clay Marnich

**Property**  
Phil Spano

**Social Ministry and Evangelism**  
Sharon Giza

**Worship and Music**  
Thom Kruise

**Youth**  
Chelsea Karaffa, Venus Thompson

### Next Council Meeting

Tuesday May 9 at 7:00 PM

## **‘For God and Country’**

*From Pastor Murdy’s Desk*



My Dear friends in Christ,

It seems strange that in just a few short weeks I will be saying, “see you in a few months” to my church and family. If you ask me if I am ready, I would say without hesitation, “no.” I am not ready to be away from my bride and kids. I am not ready to be away from my congregation and people I serve.

I am not ready to be away from home or routine for such a long time. But as I prepare to turn the page and begin this new and short chapter of my life, I do so with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit. God is with me. God is with my family. God will be each of you as you continue in mission.

In preparing to leave for three months, I started to draft a list of all the things that needed to be done before I left. There is packing, shopping, organizing, the Yard Sale, Sunday coverage, emails, house projects - the list goes on and on. I suddenly feel as though someone took an hourglass, flipped it over and said, “ok, do what you can do.” As I stare at my to-do list, I am suddenly reminded of the apostles. They were called to a mission they were not prepared for. To follow a leader, they knew almost nothing about. To a destination that would, for a time, leave them more scattered than they were before they started. Jesus came to them and said, “Stop what you are doing and follow me. Leave your friends and family behind and come follow me.”

When Jesus calls us, that’s just how it is. We usually aren’t prepared nor ready. But we are never asked to do it on our own. God is always with us. God is always guiding our steps, encouraging us and equipping us with all we need. Even when things seem impossible,

*continued on page 2*

# Mount Calvary Cemetery

1715 Middletown Road  
McKees Rocks, PA 15136

Robert J. Dudek, Supervisor  
mtcalvarycem@alcpgh.com



## Mount Calvary Cemetery Board

Judy Henry  
Bob Hughes  
Bette Ann Kallay  
Joyce Leister  
Pastor Joe Murdy  
Jeff Williams

“GOD is always  
guiding our steps,  
encouraging us, and  
EQUIPPING us with  
all we NEED.”  
~ PJ

From Pastor Murdy's Desk (continued from pg 1)

we remember that nothing is impossible with God. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” In this simple, yet powerful verse, we discover the secret to success - “through Christ.” It is not our own strength. Not our own insight. Not our own power. The strength and will come through Christ.

I am nervous, excited, sad, hopeful and encouraged. I know that these next three months will not be easy. I am sure the Army will see to that. But I also know that we will all have what we need for the journey ahead. God will see to that.

I report to Ft. Jackson, S.C. on May 17<sup>th</sup> and I won't be back until the end of August. I leave you in good hands with great pastors and lay leaders to lead you in worship on Sunday mornings. A great pastor to help in times of crisis or need. Not to mention our more than capable Darlene, our talented John and our tremendous Council leadership.

It is my plan to share an update each month through the newsletter to let you know how things are going throughout my training. I ask for your prayers not only for me but also for Amanda, Zoey, McKenna, Harper and Jameson. I am truly grateful for your love, prayers, and support. Thank you for your willingness to give me this time away. My prayer is always that you feel connected and partnered to chaplaincy ministry. I look forward to returning renewed and refreshed.

I'll miss ya, Church!

~ PJ



Pastor Joseph Murdy, OLF  
Chaplain (CPT)  
328th, USAR



# Palms raised in thanks and praise

*A reflection by Nancy Jacobs*

As I looked at the palms which I brought home from church on Palm Sunday, I thought about the other “palms”... the palms of our hands. Reading the bulletin, I saw “hands” throughout ... hands to coordinate clean-up, hands to donate to the food pantry, hands to serve on committees, hands to hold a pen to write a check to donate to our church upkeep and well-being, and loving hands that held the beautiful little Cameron for baptism. We use our hands to greet family and friends, and to applaud for good deeds.

Our hands are connected to our heart in many ways. They both work for us, young or old, rich or poor. We put heart and hands together to pray to God to thank Him for all we have, to pray for strength to meet the day, and for His care of our friends and family. We pray for our church, our community, our country and for world peace. We pray these things with all our heart.

I may not be holding your hands today, but when I put my palms together with my heart, I am thanking God for you and for our church and its leaders and for all the good works our hands and heart do.

*“Therefore my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord, your labor is not in vain”*

I Corinthians 15:58



## ALC Council Meeting Highlights

*Council meeting was held Tuesday April 11, 2023*

- Motion to approve minutes. Approved unanimously.
- Motion to “increase the budgeted amount for sabbatical coverage by \$500 to cover unforeseen need and/or emergency coverage of local clergy.” Motion removed. Council decided that motion for the expense was not necessary.
- Future project consideration/discussion. Possible parking lot repairs/replacement.
- Adjournment: Motion to adjourn. Passed unanimously at 8:00 PM
- **Next meeting: Tuesday May 9 at 7 pm.**



2023 SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY

## Two Ascension members to attend 2023 SWPA Synod Assembly

Each year the ELCA churches of Southwest Pa. gather for fellowship, business, elections, and mission. Every congregation is invited to be represented by sending two lay voting delegates along with their pastor. This year, Pastor Joe is not able to attend, however we will be duly represented at the 2023 Synod Assembly by Ascension members Deb Walenchok and Jason Eager. Thank you, Jason and Deb for your service!

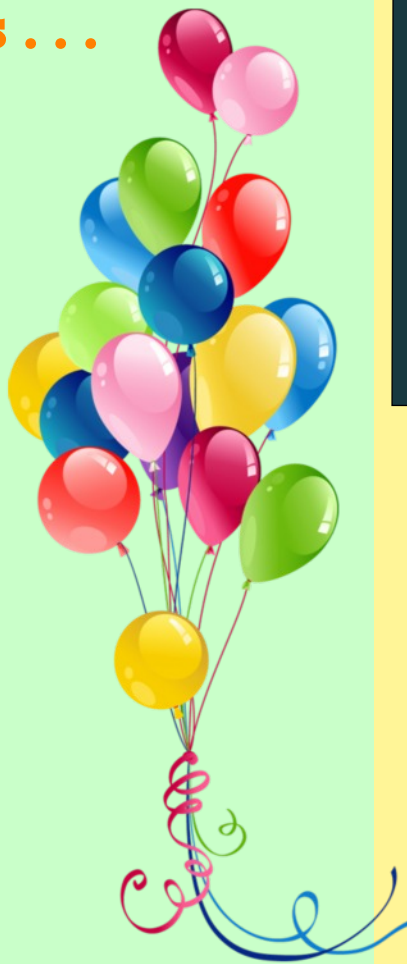
**Conference 6 Caucus Meeting**  
Wednesday, May 3rd at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

**Synod Assembly**  
Fri. June 16<sup>th</sup>, 6-9 p.m. via Zoom  
Sat. June 17<sup>th</sup>, 9 am-5 pm at California Univ. of Pa.

## Best Wishes . . .

### MAY BIRTHDAYS!

Date	Member/Friend
2	Charlotte DeCola
3	Rudy Marnich Jr.
4	Melissa DeCola Amy Reckner
6	Debbie Rose Betty Simpson
8	Bobby Brown
9	Bob Hughes Paula Tomchak
10	Bob Bryan
14	Johnathan Endes
15	Abbey Rose
16	Megan Mezzio
17	Nathan Reckner
20	Dale Cerar
23	Janey Zoltun
24	Bob Thompson
30	Mike Kinney Paul Tomchak Emilia DeCola
31	Jill Lescalette Jacob Lescalette



### MAY ANNIVERSARIES!

Date	Members/Friends
20	Sharon & Brian Giza
22	Debora & William Whitfield
25	Cindy & Bob Stathers



. . . and Blessings to ALL!

## GO NEWS?

If you have pictures, articles, or ideas to submit for the **JUNE 2023** Newsletter, please contact the office or Pastor, or email [office@alcpgh.com](mailto:office@alcpgh.com).

# Lunch Bunch



*A monthly gathering of members and friends of Ascension Church*

## THE NEXT LUNCH BUNCH MUNCH

For their April adventure, thirteen Ascension “Lunch Bunchers” went to see D.J.’s (Dee Jay’s) in Bridgeville, where they “spun some platters” (or at least some plates). The culinary adventurers also spun some great stories and enjoyed themselves, though no one sang along to the tunes which the deejay was playing, which probably was a good thing!

Coming up on **Thursday May 18**, the Bunch will travel to wild and wonderful La Cucina restaurant to munch in “The Kitchen,” Italian style. The popular eatery is located at 200 Three Springs Drive in Weirton, W.Va. just across the PA-WV state line off of highway 22-30 - a pleasant 30-minute drive from church.

If you plan to join the Lunch Bunch for this May 18<sup>th</sup> gathering, please let Nancy Schreiber (412-859-3969) or Jerry Wessel (412-787-1213) know by Tues. May 16, so that sufficient space may be reserved.

**LOOKING AHEAD . . .** The Lunch Bunch will be back in the woods of Pennsylvania to munch at the Log Cabin Inn on the “ides of June” (Thursday June 15<sup>th</sup>). More information will follow closer to the event date. We hope you will join us and attend one or both of these upcoming Lunch Bunch Munchings! ~ Jerry Wessel



## THANK YOU!

... to everyone who came out to volunteer for the **ROAD CLEAN-UP** on Sun. April 23<sup>rd</sup>! Many bags of debris were collected and properly disposed of to beautify our stretch of roadway along Beaver Grade Road.



# LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

## **May 1 Philip and James, Apostles**

Philip was one of the first disciples of Jesus, who after following Jesus invited Nathanael to “come and see.” According to tradition, Philip preached in Asia Minor and died as a martyr in Phrygia. James, the son of Alphaeus, is called “the Less” (meaning “short” or “younger”) to distinguish him from another apostle named James who is commemorated July 25. Philip and James are commemorated together because the remains of these two saints were placed in the Church of the Apostles in Rome on this day in 561.

## **May 2 Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria d.373**

Best remembered for defending the teaching that Christ was fully God against those who taught otherwise, Athanasius was an influential church leader around the time of the Council of Nicea. He was banished from Alexandria five times for his views.

## **May 4 Monica, mother of Augustine d.387**

Monica was married to a pagan husband who was ill-tempered and unfaithful, but whom she helped bring into the Christian faith. She repeated the influence on her son Augustine, who went on to become one of the greatest church teachers.

## **May 8 Julian of Norwich, renewer of the church, d. ca. 1416**

When she was about thirty years old, Julian (or Juliana) reported visions that she later compiled into a book, *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*, now a classic of medieval mysticism. The visions declared that love was the meaning of religious experience, provided by Christ who is love, for the purpose of love.

## **May 9 Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the church, hymnwriter d.1760**

When he was 22, a group of Moravians asked permission to live on Zinzendorf’s land. He agreed, and eventually worldwide Moravian missions emanated from this community. Zinzendorf participated in these missions, and is also remembered for writing hymns characteristic of his Pietistic faith.

## **May 14 Matthias, Apostle**

Matthias was the apostle added to the Twelve after Jesus’ resurrection, as a replacement for the dead Judas Iscariot. He had traveled among the followers of Jesus throughout the Lord’s ministry. Formerly commemorated on February 24, Matthias’s celebration is moved to May 14 in agreement with most Western calendars.

## **May 18 Erik, King of Sweden, martyr d.1160**

Erik is considered the patron saint of Sweden. As king of that nation, he tried to bring peace in the region, and to spread Christianity in Scandinavia. He was also known for his attempts to make fair laws and to protect those who were poor or sick.

## **May 21 Helena, mother of Constantine d.ca.330**

Wife of the co-regent of the West, Helena (or Helen) was mother of Constantine, who later became Roman emperor. After he was converted to Christianity, he influenced her also to become Christian. She is also remembered for traveling through Palestine and building churches on the sites she believed to be where Jesus was born, where he was buried, and from which he ascended.

## **May 24 Nicolaus Copernicus, d.1543; Leonhard Euler, d.1783; scientists**

These two men were both scientists who helped to explain the wonders of God’s universe. Copernicus is best known for promoting the idea that the sun, not the earth, is at the center of our solar system. Euler was one of the founders of pure mathematics, and contributed to many other fields.

## **May 27 John Calvin, renewer of the church d.1564**

Gifted both as a systematic theologian and as an interpreter of scriptures, Calvin embraced the Reformation, and as a preacher in Geneva, Switzerland, brought a theocratic government to it. He is regarded as the father of the Reformed churches.

## **May 29 Jiri Tranovský, hymnwriter d.1637**

Considered the “Luther of the Slavs” and the father of Slovak hymnody, Tranovský trained at the University of Wittenberg in the early seventeenth century, was ordained in 1616 and spent his life preaching and teaching in Prague, Silesia, and finally Slovakia. He produced a translation of the Augsburg Confession and published his hymn collection *Cithara Sanctorum* (Lyre of the Saints).

## **May 31 Visit of Mary to Elizabeth**

Sometime after the Annunciation, Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth. This occasion is sometimes referred to as “The Visitation.” Elizabeth greeted Mary with the words “Blessed are you among women,” and Mary responded with her famous song, the Magnificat. Luke’s gospel tells that even John the Baptist rejoiced and leapt in his mother’s womb when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting. On this festival two women are seen: one, the elder, bears the last prophet of the old covenant, and one, the younger, bears the incarnate Word and the new covenant.

# ♥ TAYTUM GRACE ♥ HEART WARRIOR

## \*\*\* CAR CRUISE \*\*\*

**WHEN:** FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2023  
4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

**WHERE:** ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1290 SILVER LANE  
MCKEES ROCKS, PA 15136

Taytum was born Oct. 4, 2022. At 9 days old, Taytum contracted a respiratory virus that damaged her heart. She is currently on the transplant list awaiting a new heart. All proceeds will be applied to her medical care.

- \* DASH PLAQUES
- \* DJ
- \* 50/50 RAFFLE
- \* CHINESE AUCTION
- \* FOOD & BEVERAGES  
(no alcohol please)

**All Classic and  
Antique Cars Welcome**



\*\*\*No Entry Fee for Vehicles. Donations accepted.  
*All proceeds applied to medical costs for Taytum Grace.*

Donations are currently being sought for the Chinese Auction as well as for refreshments (water, soda, hot dogs/buns, chips/pretzels, etc.). Assistance and suggestions for this event are most welcome and appreciated.

To donate, or for more information,  
please contact  
Deb Walenchok at 412-708-6141



**Ascension Church**  
**YARD SALE**  
**SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023**  
**8:00 AM to NOON**

**Bake Sale and refreshments also available!**

- ♦ \$10 per area (approx 10'x10')
- ♦ You keep all of the \$\$\$ from what you sell!
- ♦ We provide the space, you provide your own table/set-up and treasures to sell.
- ♦ Register by calling the church office (412) 859-3711 or by e-mailing [Ascensionyardsale@gmail.com](mailto:Ascensionyardsale@gmail.com)

Ascension Lutheran Church | 1290 Silver Lane  
Robinson Township PA 15136 | 412-859-3711

**Veterans Clothing  
and Shoe Drive**  
will take place at Ascension  
through the month of May.

**Items especially needed:**

- Jeans, Dockers style pants (waist 32 & up)
- Mens and women's underwear (all sizes)
- Sports bras (wireless, all sizes)
- Sweatpants & shirts (all sizes)
- Unisex coats (size large & up)
- T-shirts (all sizes)
- Men's shoes/sneakers (size 7.5 & up)

**Other needs are:**

- Denture adhesive
- Deodorant sticks
- Reading glasses

# However you say it, MOTHER means LOVE

**Albanian:** "Nene," "Meme" **Arabic:** "Ahm" **Belarusan:** "Matka,"  
**Matulya** **Bosnian:** "Majko" **Bulgarian:** "Maiko" **Croatian:** "Mati,"  
 "Majka" **Czech:** "Matka" **Danish:** "Mor" **Dutch:** "Moeder," "Moer"  
**Estonian:** "Ema" **Filipino:** "Nanay" **Finnish:** "Aiti" **French:** "Mere," "Maman" **German:** "Mutter"  
**Greek:** "Mana" **Hawaiian:** "Makuahine" **Hindi:** "Maji" **Hungarian:** "Anya," "Fu" **Indonesian:**  
 "Induk," "Ibu," "Biang" **Irish:** "Mathair" **Italian:** "Madre," "Mamma" **Japanese:** "Okaasan" **Latin:**  
 "Mater" **Latvian:** "Māte," "Mammite," **Lithuanian:** "Motina," "Mamyte" **Norwegian:** "Mamma,"  
 "Mor" **Persian:** "Madr" **Polish:** "Matka," "Mama" **Portuguese:** "Mãe" **Punjabi:** "Mai," "Mataji"  
**Romanian:** "Mamă," "Maica" **Russian:** "Mat'" **Samoan:** "Tina" **Serbian:** "Majko" **Slovak:** "Mama,"  
 "Matka" **Slovenian:** "Mati," "Mamica" **Spanish:** "Madre," "Mama," "Mami" **Swahili:** "Mama,"  
 "Mzazi," "Mzaa" **Swedish:** "Mamma," "Mor," "Morsa" **Turkish:** "Anne," "Ana" **Ukrainian:** "Mati"  
**Uzbeki:** "Ona" **Vietnamese:** "Mẹ" **Welsh:** "Mam"

## Mothers Day WORDSEARCH

Z N M M I C E E R M W S B K M Q M C J Z  
 I V H A O G F C Z P A C A N N E G P J C  
 D M C J K E R Z T K L T A L H X E D D K  
 C O O C M U D U T K Z A H Q Z S T J H I  
 W M T K Y E A E G F Y N E A A O E U J G  
 W M O Z A Y R H R M B Y J P I Y X R A X  
 Q Y J U T A W E I R A A L V J R I M S O  
 E V O M C U S M O N F I J W P S L V T G  
 G W N Z A G N A A Z E G C P E F B M B U  
 L M V S Q M P B N T R E E A S M S J H X  
 L A A G X X Y X T O U Y P O G D L Q S K  
 I Z Z J U Y M T M I Z L A H T U F T D Y  
 A V G X K C A N E U S T Y I S R J X F A  
 S K E O A A T A V M M N I A T Y H I U K  
 P R F C Y A A M N O M M E N P I M T M Z  
 S L M M E V J C Y T O G I N A M U I U P  
 C R O A N A I T Y H N P A E E Z T X M Q  
 C L M M P C G F X E A K W X L A T D U G  
 Y Y D A G Y K Y G R P E P D I Z E N H G  
 T W J R X W V M B N V U P G Q I R W G K

MOTHER  
 MOMMY  
 MAMA  
 MOM  
 MUM  
 MUMMIE  
 NENE  
 MAJKA  
 MOEDER  
 MUTTER  
 MAKUAHINE  
 MERE  
 MZAZI  
 ANYA  
 OKAASAN  
 MATAJI  
 TINA  
 ANNE  
 AITI  
 MAICA  
 MATHAIR  
 ONA  
 MATULYA  
 MAMYTE





*To be Christ's Disciples,  
nurture our faith, serve God,  
welcome our neighbors,  
and joyfully share in His love.*

**Contact Us**  
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PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

