

# THE MESSENGER

## ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

JUNE 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 June 13 at 7:00 PM**

## A Page from Chaplain's Summer Log



*From Pastor Murdy's Bunk*

*Greetings, CHURCH!*

I miss you all so very much! The challenges are real. The sweat, heat, hard work, rules are real but not impossible.

My training began on May 18, 2023 as eighty-four chaplains and

chaplain candidates lined up on a sidewalk on the grounds of the U.S. Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. We were eager and excited for a hot minute. Within minutes of lining up, we were told to face forward, stand still, and shut up. That's when we all realized the seriousness of what we had just set out to accomplish.



This training is mandatory for all chaplains to be officially endorsed by the Chaplain Corps of the United States Army. This is THE place to become a chaplain. The Chaplain Basic Officer Leadership Course (CHBOLC) is broken into three parts/months. The first month is all

*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

“Each experience has  
its own challenge,  
but also comes with the  
REWARD of  
growth and  
RENEWAL.”  
~ PJ

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

about learning to be a soldier. So, the early mornings, marching in the rain, and training are all preparing us to stand by and with the women and men who serve our country.

It has only been a few weeks. The time seems to be going fast, especially with long and full days. I am enjoying new friendships and learning more every day. Each experience has its own challenge but also comes with the reward of growth and renewal.

The chaplains here come from all over the country - Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Minnesota and dozens more. The majority of students are Baptist or nondenominational, but there are many other denominations and faith traditions (Jewish and Muslim) represented. There are three other Lutherans including one ELCA, one North American Lutheran and one Missouri Synod. It has been a wonderful experience to learn and grow with others.

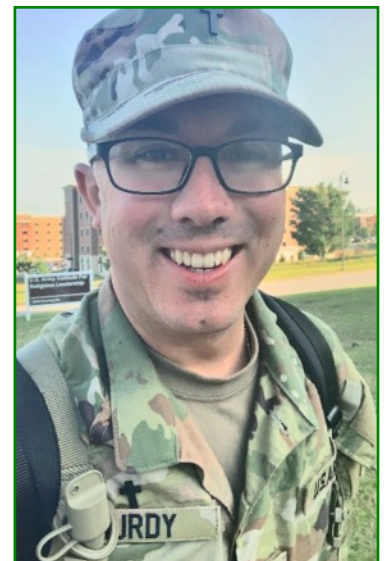
My dear friends, I pray for you each day and hope that you all are well. I have gone to a few different worship services and always think of you. I am grateful for our staff, leadership and everyone who has stepped up and stepped in to share in the ministry of the Gospel.

Thank you for your prayers, love and support. Keep the prayers coming as the heat and work intensify down here.

Love you all,  
~ PJ



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





2023 SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY

## Two Ascension members will 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, and may God bless your efforts on our behalf!

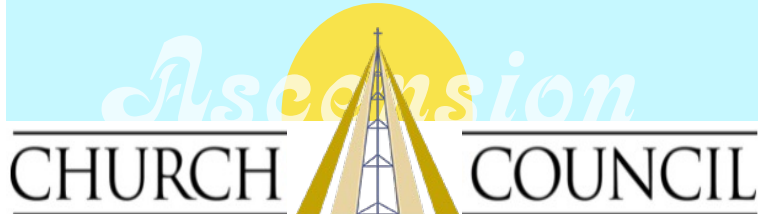
### Synod Assembly

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.



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



## ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council meeting was held Tuesday May 9, 2023

Call to order: 7:02 pm

- Motion to skip July meeting. Majority yes, one no. Motion passes.

### Old Business:

- Motion to approve use of Beverly Services to fix HVAC passes unanimously.

### Committee Reports:

- **Christian Education:** Last day of: Confirmation, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Elem. Sunday school, May 14<sup>th</sup>. Adult Sun. school, May 21<sup>st</sup>.
- **Youth:** Youth is helping with Yard Sale and Bake Sale.
- **Social Ministry:** Collecting clothes for VA all of May.
- **Worship and Music:** committee meets May 21. Will work with Jonathan to add new music to worship.
- **Personnel:** Looking to do criminal background and clearances review.
- **Important dates:** June 3<sup>rd</sup> Yard Sale
- **Next meeting:** Tuesday June 13 at 7 pm.
- **Adjournment:** 7:51 pm

## WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE - JUNE 2023

| Date                  | Assisting Minister  | Communion Assistant | Lector         | Usher | Acolyte | Sunday   | Color | Supply          | Space   |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------|---------|--|-------|-----------------|---------|
| June 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Mary Thompson       | Bob Dudek           | Emilia DeCola  | Vol.  | Vol.    | Holy Trinity                                     | W     | Pr. Jeff Schock |         |
| June 11 <sup>th</sup> | Jerry Wessel        | Amy Kruise          | Melissa DeCola | Vol.  | Vol.    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pentecost                        | G     | Pr. Ann Schmid  | Outside |
| June 18 <sup>th</sup> | Jeff Williams       | Mary Thompson       | Jeff Williams  | Vol.  | Vol.    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Pentecost<br><i>Father's Day</i> | G     | Pr. Ann Schmid  |         |
| June 25 <sup>th</sup> | Jennifer Burkholder | Bob Dudek           | Gib Palmgren   | Vol.  | Vol.    | 4 <sup>th</sup> Pentecost                        | G     | Pr. Ann Schmid  | Outside |

CONGRATULATIONS to Ascension's

## 2023 GRADUATES:

Emily Lescallette – Moon Area High School

Raleigh Rickerd – Moon Area High School

Luciana Thompson – Moon Area High School

Kelly Bryan – Heritage Valley Kennedy School of Nursing

Emily Reckner – PTC School of Healthcare - Surgical Technology

Nathan Reckner – MBA, Robert Morris University

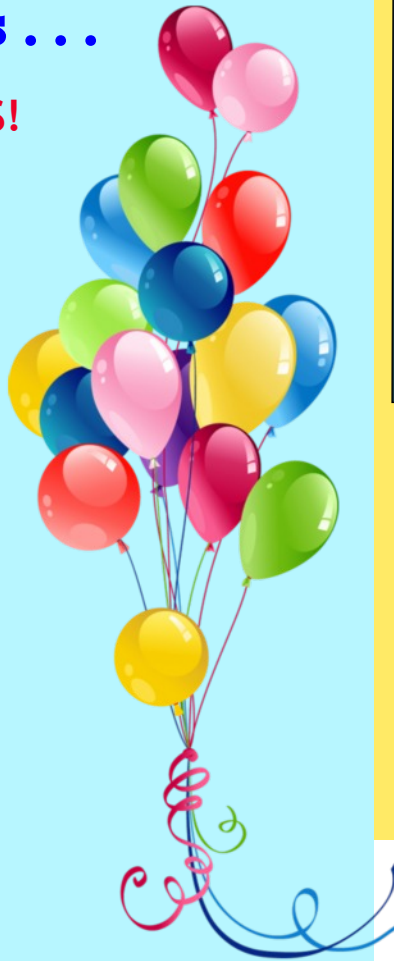


## Best Wishes . . .

### JUNE BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member/Friend

- 1 Sharon Giza  
Rick Zoltun
- 2 Brooke Thomson
- 3 Vincent Zeiler
- 12 Blake Tomchak
- 13 Clark Rose
- 14 Brian Stanford
- 17 Mike Neilson
- 19 JoAnne Erwin
- 20 Bill Whitfield
- 21 Emily Reckner
- 22 Cora Hughes
- 23 Jean Marion
- 27 Pastor Larsen
- 28 Ryan Williams



### JUNE ANNIVERSARIES!

Date | Members/Friends

- 3 Bob & Mary Thompson
- 9 Tom & Dee Lightner
- 22 Greg & Venus Thompson
- 30 Dale & Marion Cerar



... and Blessings to ALL!

## THANK YOU!

... to all who donated to the  
**VETERANS  
CLOTHING AND  
SHOE DRIVE**  
during the month  
of May.



## Lunch Bunch



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

### THE NEXT LUNCH BUNCH JOURNEY

Coming up on Thursday JUNE 15, the Bunch will travel to the Log Cabin Inn on Perry Highway in Harmony, Pa. If you plan to join the Lunch Bunch for this June 15<sup>th</sup> gathering, please let Nancy Schreiber (412-859-3969) or Jerry Wessel (412-787-1213) know by Tuesday June 13, so that sufficient space may be reserved. See you there!

~ Jerry Wessel

Ascension Church

## YARD SALE

SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023

8:00 AM to NOON



Browse through table after table of  
new finds & "vintage" treasures at  
Ascension's Annual Yard Sale,  
and stop by the Bake Sale pavilion  
for some homemade goodies and  
refreshments!

1290 Silver Lane 15136

# A challenge from our Lord . . .

A reflection by Nancy Jacobs

Covid has done much over the past few years to change our lives. We live a different life-style. If there is a positive to this, it is that in some way it has drawn us closer to God.

We pray for those affected, for families who have lost loved ones. We pray to keep us all safe.

I was browsing thru my "Jesus Calling" devotional ... looking for something ... a stress-reliever, a frustration-reliever, something inspirational to me, and out jumped, in big, bold letters, a challenge to me from our Lord!

## "REFUSE TO WORRY!"

In this world there will always be something enticing you to worry. That is the nature of a fallen, fractured planet. Things are not as they should be. So the temptation to be anxious is constantly with you, trying to worm its way into your mind. The best defense is "continual communication with Me, richly seasoned with thanksgiving. Awareness of My presence fills your mind with Light and Peace, leaving no room for fear. This awareness lifts you up above your circumstances, enabling you to see problems from My perspective. Live close to Me! Together we can keep the wolves of worry at bay."

Reprinted from *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence* by Sarah Young (pub. Thomas Nelson Incorporated, 2011) 382 pgs ISBN 1404174443, 9781404174443

## 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 October 4, 2022. At 9 days old, Taytum developed 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)

Stop by for fun/food/entertainment! Bring your family and friends to stroll down memory lane and admire these beautiful vintage vehicles.

No Entry Fee for Vehicles. Donations accepted.

*All proceeds applied to medical costs for Taytum Grace.*



**CELEBRATE!** On April 30th  
**Lola Mae Puder** (above)

and on May 7th  
**Blake Patrick Derbish** (below)  
were baptized by Pastor Joe  
at Ascension Church.



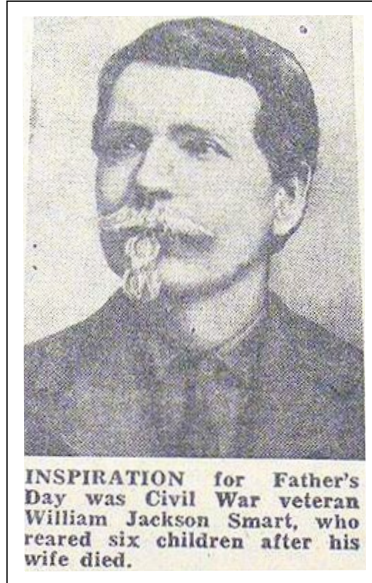
# *Honor thy* **FATHER**

The origin of Father's Day represents a grassroots phenomenon that characterizes American reverence for the family. Both Americans and Canadians set aside the third Sunday in June as the day when children show their appreciation and gratitude for their fathers.

Father's Day was first celebrated in local towns and cities scattered across America. The earliest Father's Day celebration on record appears to have been held on July 5, 1908, in a church in Fairmont, West Virginia. However, the citizens of Vancouver, Washington claim to have been the first town to officially hold a Father's Day ceremony, beginning in 1912. In 1915, the president of the Uptown Lions Club in Chicago was hailed as the "Originator of Father's Day" when he suggested that the Lions hold a Father's Day celebration on the third Sunday in June of that year. The day was chosen as being closest to then President Woodrow Wilson's birthday.

Perhaps the most famous promoter of this holiday was Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington. Her inspiration for a Father's Day celebration came while she was listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Dodd wished to show appreciation to her own father William Jackson Smart, a Civil War veteran who was left to raise his six children on his own after the death of his wife in 1898 during childbirth. Her father's birthday was June 5, so she petitioned the Spokane Ministerial Association to set aside that day in June of 1910 as a special day to honor fathers. The Association honored her request, but subsequently changed the date of the celebration to June 19. On that day, the city of Spokane became the first city to honor fathers in this way, beating Vancouver's official claim by two years.

The governor of Washington took note of the celebration and declared that the entire state should observe the day as Father's Day. Newspapers around the country carried stories about Spokane's celebration of Father's Day, and the celebration soon received national recognition. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson joined in a celebration of Father's Day by pressing a button in Washington D.C. which caused a flag to unroll in Spokane. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge recommended that the third Sunday in June be set aside as "Father's Day" in all states.



## A brief history of Father's Day

In the following years, there were several attempts to pass a resolution in Congress declaring Father's Day an official holiday. In 1957, Senator Margaret Chase Smith attempted to pass such a resolution, arguing that it was the "most grievous insult imaginable" that Father's Day had not been recognized as an official holiday, despite the fact that Mother's Day had been celebrated as a national holiday since 1914. In 1966 President Lyndon B. Johnson issued a proclamation which recognized the day, and finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed legislation making Father's Day – the third Sunday of June – an official national holiday.

Sources: [www.Encyclopedia.com](http://www.Encyclopedia.com),  
[www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)



*A faithful man will have many blessings*  
~ Proverbs

**June 18, 2023**

# LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

## **June 1 - Justin, d.ca. 165 martyr at Rome**

Born of pagan parents, Justin was influenced by an elderly Christian in Ephesus. He became a teacher of philosophy and the Christian faith. Jailed for practicing an unauthorized religion, he refused to renounce his faith and was beheaded.

## **June 3 - John XXIII, Bishop of Rome, d. 1963**

When elected pope, the former Angelo Roncalli was expected to be a short-term caretaker. He showed great spirit, though, and convened the Second Vatican Council which helped bring great changes to Roman Catholic and other churches.

## **June 3 - The Martyrs of Uganda, d. 1886**

On June 3, 1886, thirty-two young men were burned to death for refusing to renounce Christianity. The confident manner in which these Christians went to their deaths contributed to a much stronger Christian presence in Uganda.

## **June 5 - Boniface, Bishop of Mainz, d. 754**

*missionary to Germany, martyr*

Boniface was a native of England who became a Benedictine monk and was called to missionary work among the Vandal tribes of Germany. With fellow workers, he established churches and schools, and he also worked to reform the church.

## **June 7 - Seattle, chief of the Duwamish Confederacy, d. 1866**

Noah Seattle led a coalition of tribes, and convinced them to live peacefully with encroaching white settlers. When he became a Roman Catholic, he held morning and evening prayer with his tribe. The city of Seattle is named for him.

## **June 9 - Columba, d. 597; Aidan, d. 651; Bede, d. 735**

*renewers of the church*

These three monks from the British Isles helped keep the light of learning alive during the Middle Ages. Columba founded three monasteries off the coast of Scotland. Aidan was a pastor who led people to works of charity. The Venerable Bede was a Bible translator, historian, and hymnwriter.

## **June 11 - Barnabas, Apostle**

Barnabas was not numbered among the twelve apostles, but the book of Acts gives him that title. After Paul was converted to Christianity, Barnabas welcomed him to Jerusalem, and later the two traveled together on missionary journeys.

## **June 14 - Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea, d. 379; Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, d.ca. 385; Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Constantinople, d.ca. 389; Macrina, theologian, d.ca. 379**

The Cappadocian fathers, as the three men in this group are known, explored the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Basil's monastic rule forms the basis for Eastern monastic life. Gregory of Nazianzus defended orthodox Christianity in Constantinople. Gregory of Nyssa, Basil's younger brother, wrote on the spiritual life. Macrina, older sister of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, was the leader of a community dedicated to asceticism, meditation, and prayer.

## **June 17 - The Emanuel Nine, d. 2015 martyrs**

On June 17, 2015, nine people gathered for Bible study and prayer at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina were murdered by a self-professed white supremacist. A resolution to commemorate June 17 as a day of repentance for the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine was adopted by the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA on August 8, 2019.

## **June 21 - Onesimos Nesib, d. 1931 translator, evangelist**

Onesimos was born in Ethiopia. Captured and taken as a slave to Eritrea, he was there freed by Swedish missionaries. He translated the Bible into his native Oromo and returned to preach there.

## **June 24 - John the Baptist**

John said, "[Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease." And so his birth is celebrated half a year before Jesus', just as the daylight in the northern hemisphere begins to wane. Jesus honored John as being the greatest prophet.

## **June 25**

### **Philipp Melanchthon, d. 1560 renewer of the church**

Though he died on April 19, Philipp Melanchthon is commemorated today because of his connection with the Augsburg Confession. Colleague and co-reformer with Martin Luther, Melanchthon was a brilliant scholar and popular professor, known as "the teacher of Germany."

### **Presentation of the Augsburg Confession, 1530**

On June 25, 1530 the German and Latin editions of the Augsburg Confession were presented to the Roman Emperor Charles. The Augsburg Confession, written by Philipp Melanchthon and endorsed by Martin Luther, consists of a brief summary of points in which the reformers saw their teaching as either agreeing with or differing from that of the Roman Catholic Church of the time.

## **June 27 - Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, d. 444**

Cyril defended the orthodox teachings about the person of Christ. After a conflict involving all of the major Christian leaders of the time, it was decided that Cyril's interpretation, that Christ's person included both divine and human natures, was correct.

## **June 28 - Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, d.ca. 202**

This important early church leader tried very hard to hold to the faith handed down by the apostles. An opponent of the movement known as gnosticism, Irenaeus was one of the first to speak of the church as catholic, or linked together.

## **June 29 - Peter and Paul, Apostles**

These two apostles are the pillars of the church in the first generation after Christ. One of the Twelve, Peter both offered a glorious confession of faith and later denied knowing Jesus. Paul once led the persecution of Christians, then was converted and helped bring the faith to non-Jewish people.



*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

