

THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 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 & Stewardship

John Bielewicz

Mutual Ministry

Jeff Williams

Personnel

Clay Marnich

Property

Phil Spano

Social Ministry & Evangelism

Sharon Giza

Worship & Music

Thom Kruise

Youth

Chelsea Karaffa, Venus Thompson

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday October 10 at 7:00 PM

CHANGE? Why do we need that?

from Pastor Murdy's Desk

If you have been going to church long enough, it is almost guaranteed that you have heard the following joke in a sermon:

How Many Christians Does It Take to Change a Light Bulb?

Charismatics: Only 1 – Hands are already in the air.



Presbyterians: None – Lights will go on and off at predestined times.

Baptists: At least 15 – One to change the light bulb, and three committees to approve the change and decide who brings the potato salad and fried chicken.

Episcopalians: 3 – One to call the electrician, one to mix the drinks, and one to talk about how much better the old one was.

Unitarians: We choose not to make a statement either in favor of or against the need for a light bulb. However, if in your own journey you have found that light bulbs work for you, you are invited to write a poem or compose a modern dance about your light bulb for the next Sunday service, in which we will explore a number of light bulb traditions, including incandescent, fluorescent, long-life and tinted, all of which are equally valid paths to luminescence.

Methodists: Undetermined – Whether your light is bright, dull, or completely out, you are loved. You can be a light bulb, turnip bulb, or tulip bulb. Bring a bulb of your choice to the Sunday lighting service and a covered dish to pass.

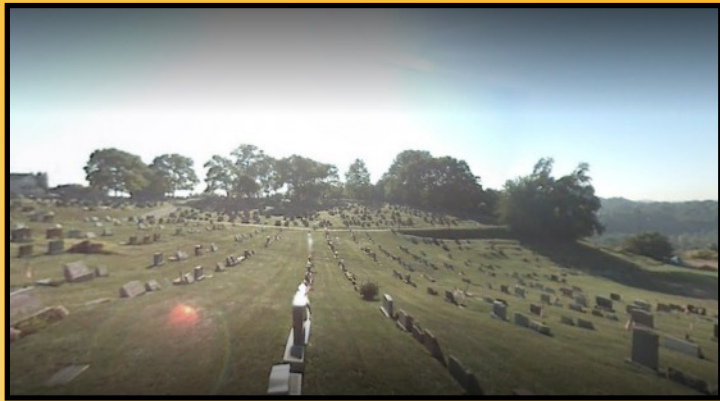
Nazarenes: 6 – One woman to replace the bulb while five men review church lighting policy.

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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

**Mount Calvary
Cemetery
BOARD
MEETING
October 22, 2023
Following Sunday
Morning Worship**

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

Byzantine Catholics: 3 – One to find Baba's directions, one to translate the directions from Church Slavonic, and one to chant "Lord Have Mercy" 40 times in 4 different languages while unscrewing the base from right to left.

Lutherans: None – Lutherans don't believe in change.

Now, after you're done laughing, we might ask ourselves, why is this so funny? It's funny because it's true. For some reason, Christians are historically resistant to change and just like any family tree, we all respond to change differently. Lutherans tend to make fun of themselves when it comes to this reality. Although we know this about ourselves, we (collectively) tend to still get a little gruff when it comes to change.

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“CHANGE
shows us that
GOD never
meant for US
to be the
SAME.” ~ PJ

Now, I will say, Ascension is no exception to the long-standing tradition of "who's going to change the light bulb," and "why, the other one was cheaper." I hope we can laugh about ourselves from time to time. However, I have always been incredibly impressed with how open and receptive Ascension has been to change. Over the past 10 years, we have changed a lot! I'm not just talking about the physical things. Sure, we've moved the baptismal font a few times a year. We've added new banners, changed settings, and even took down the shutters (now that was something). We have changed as a congregation.

As new families join the church and as traditions come and go, we have accepted that change is good. Change helps us to grow and become better versions of ourselves. Change shows us that God never meant for us to stay the same.

My friends, whether change is easy or challenging for you, know that God is with you. Sometimes change can be overwhelmingly positive. Other times, change can feel like a loss. At times such as this we need to grieve and allow for renewal.

So, whether it's at home, work, the seasons around us, or yes - even in church - change can be a *good* thing. I am proud of the way Ascension often welcomes change. Our lives may change, but God is everlasting!

*"Blessed is the one who trusts me, GOD,
the one who sticks with GOD.*

*They're like trees replanted in Eden,
putting down roots near the rivers.*

*Never a worry through the hottest summers,
never dropping a leaf.*

*Serene and Calm through droughts,
bearing fresh fruit every season."*

– Jeremiah 17:7-8 (MSG)

Blessings+

PJ



ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council Meeting was held September 12, 2023

- **Call to order:** 7:00 pm
- **Motion to accept as amended by Jason, second by Bob.**
Passed unanimously.
- **Subcommittee on Cemetery Funds Policies** – Scope is to define the policies and procedures for use of cemetery funds to make purchases for the church. Bob and Clay volunteered to be a part of the subcommittee and are awaiting another volunteer.
- **Youth:** 9/17–mini-golf canceled; 10/22 – Pumpkins with PJ; 11/5 – Service project; 12/1 – Parent's Night Out
- **Important dates:**
 - Next meeting: Tuesday, October 10th 7 p.m.
 - Congregational Meeting: November 19
- **Adjournment:** Motion by Jason, Thom second.
Passed 7:50 pm.

SPEAKING OF CHANGE . . .



Worship at Ascension is changing a bit in the month of October. Beginning Sunday October 1st we will be introducing ELW (cranberry book)

Setting I. For close to a year, we have used ELW IV which is the traditional LBW II. It's familiar and lovely, but, it's time for something different. We will also be reintroducing the age-old tradition of singing the psalm, as they were meant to be heard. If that's not enough music, we have already begun introducing one communion hymn to be sung for a month. Because this is a lot of wonderful change, we have asked Amanda to serve as our cantor to help lead us musically while we learn.

Best Wishes . . .

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member/Friend

- 1 Harper Murdy
- 7 Suzie Bryan
- 8 Cayley Hughes
- 9 Rich Mussman
Jameson Murdy
- 10 Callie Derbish
Rachael Hall
- 13 Jerry Wessel
- 20 Dave Walenchok
- 23 Myrtle Cairns
- 26 Thad Ritter



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES!

Date | Members/Friends

- 4 Brian & Jeannette Tomchak
- 7 Mike & Jill Lescalette
- 12 Bob & Mary Hughes
- 15 Travis & Candace McEwen
- 21 Michael & Diane Bayer



. . . and Blessings to ALL!

★ UPCOMING EVENTS ★

Social Ministry, Evangelism
& Outreach ministries

October: Blessings and sending of quilts 10/01
Blessing of the Pets 10/07

November: Collection for food bank and NEW blood
pressure checks beginning Sunday,
November 5th

December: Presents for Patients, date TBD



**THURSDAY
OCT. 19
Shakespeare's
Castle**

On the third Thursday of September, eighteen Lunch Bunchers set out into the wilderness of Western PA to attempt to discover Nico Luciano's in Ellwood City. Unfortunately, two intrepid explorers got lost along the way but discovered a different place to lunch (which will never be found again). The surviving sixteen were served in a log cabin-type room with so much good (and inexpensive) food that most took culinary souvenirs (ok, leftovers) home for supper or lunch the next day!

The Lunch Bunch will head back to the Ellwood City area on Thursday October 19 for another delicious destination at Shakespeare's Castle, 1495 Mercer Road on the "other side of town." If you plan to convoy, you should meet at church by 10:30 AM; otherwise, meet at Shakespeare's at 11:30. We're not sure if Will himself plans to be there, but if YOU do, call Nancy Schreiber at 412-859-3969 or Jerry Wessel at 412-787-1213 by Tuesday October 17 so that sufficient space in the feasting hall may be reserved. Elizabethan attire is not required, but if anyone would like to perform a scene from "Macbeth" I'm sure that we would appreciate it (as would any other guests) and forsooth, we promise not to "LOL." Til then, remember "Something tasty this way comes." ~ MacJerry Wessel



Christmas Program Help Needed!

On Sunday December 17th Ascension will host a birthday party for Jesus! Join us for an after-church luncheon to celebrate the birth of our savior. During worship we are hopeful to once again support a children's Christmas program. If you are interested in helping coordinate this effort, or help with the luncheon, please reach out to Pastor Joe pastor@alcpgh.com.

On Sunday, October 1st

we will bless 50 quilts which our Creative Hands ministry team have been working on diligently to complete. Each quilt will be boxed up and delivered to a Lutheran church in Zelienople and from there will be sent out into the world through Lutheran World Relief. Following worship, we will need help folding and boxing up the quilts for delivery. so please stay to help if you can. We thank our ladies for all of the hard work they have done throughout the year!

Photos of this year's quilts will appear in November's newsletter!

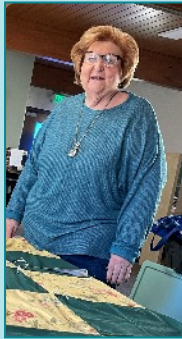
Thank You . . .

. . . to my church family for all of the beautiful cards, phone calls, offers of meals and rides and most of all, the prayers.

Especially a special thanks to Rose Marie for keeping me informed on what was going on, Bette Kallay for taking over the Treasurer job at the Cemetery and to Darlene Witt for keeping the quilts moving along for next year. We could use some help catching up with this project. You can do some cutting of squares at home, no sewing experience needed, but helpful.

I will be back full time when I can drive by myself.
God Bless all of you.

Judy Henry



REMEMBER: YOUTH BEGINS WITH **YOU!**

**Please keep an eye on these
FUN upcoming Fall 2023
YOUTH and FAMILY events:**

**Sunday October 22nd
Pumpkins, Pizza & Pop
With PJ!**

**Sunday November 5th
Service with Creative Hands
& College Care Packages**

**Friday December 1st
Parents Night Out!**

**Please reach out to MELISSA with
any questions or concerns at
melissadecola@hotmail.com**

Happy Halloween! Tuesday Oct. 31, 2023



"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

~ 2Corinthians



We sincerely thank YOU - our members and friends - for your continued support and generosity! In addition to Sunday giving envelopes, we offer other ways for you to add your financial contributions. One popular, easy and secure way is through [TITHE.LY](https://www.alcpgh.com) (scan the QR code, left) or visit our website www.alcpgh.com to access a link.

To celebrate the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, Pastor Joe Murdy invites all animal lovers and pet owners to a special event ...



Blessing of Pets

Saturday Oct. 7, 2023
9:30 AM
Ascension Church
1290 Silver Lane

"OTHER"-wise ...

Ascension's iconic road sign is going **DIGITAL!**

You can greatly help to fund this new Special Project by directing a portion of your Sunday offering to "OTHER" on your giving envelope. Questions? Ask any Council Member for details about this new outreach venture.



Thanks for your generous support!

"Save the Date" Congregational Meeting Sunday, November 19th following worship

Meeting will include: ratifying constitutional amendments, approving 2024 budget and election of new council members.



Pumpkins,
Pizza
and Pop
with PJ!

All youth are welcome to join us in the outdoor pavilion after worship on **SUNDAY OCTOBER 22nd** for some Fall fun! We will have pumpkins ready for you to decorate ... we can't wait to see what creations you make! No RSVP required - just come and have a great time! Please contact Melissa DeCola at melissadecola@hotmail.com with any questions.

LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

October 4

Francis of Assisi, *renewer of the church*, d. 1226

Born into the family of a wealthy merchant, Francis gave up his inheritance to serve poor people. He formed the Order of Friars Minor (called Franciscans), who took on poverty and the task of preaching “using words if necessary.” Francis had a spirit of gratitude for all of God’s creation.

Theodor Fliedner, *renewer of society*, d. 1864

Fliedner helped to bring about a revival of the ministry of deaconesses among Lutherans. He was influenced in this by Moravian deaconesses he had met. The motherhouse he founded in Kaiserswerth, Germany, inspired many around the world to take up this ministry.

October 6

William Tyndale, *translator, martyr*, d. 1536

Tyndale was ordained a priest in England, and his life’s desire was to translate the Bible into English. He was opposed in this by King Henry VIII, causing him to flee to Germany. He completed the New Testament in 1525, but before he could finish the Old Testament, he was tried for heresy and burned at the stake.

October 7

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, *pastor in North America*, d. 1787

Divided Lutherans in America asked leaders in Europe to send someone who could take charge and unite their work. Muhlenberg was sent, and was effective in organizing the American Lutherans. Among other accomplishments, his liturgical principles became the basis for the Common Service of 1888.

October 15

Teresa of Ávila (Teresa de Jesús), *teacher, renewer of the church*, d. 1582

Teresa of Ávila (AH-vee-la) is also known as Teresa de Jesús. She chose the life of a Carmelite nun after reading the letters of Jerome. She worked to reform her monastic community in Ávila. Her reforms asked nuns to maintain life in the monastic enclosure without leaving it and to identify with the poor by not wearing shoes. Teresa’s writings on devotional life have enjoyed a wide readership.

October 17

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, *martyr*, d. ca. 115

Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch in Syria, the city where the name “Christians” originated. Ignatius is known to us from his letters, which encouraged Christians to live in love, yet stand firm in true doctrine. When his own martyrdom approached, he wrote in one of his letters, “I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. . . . Do not stand in the way of my birth to real life.”

October 18

Luke, *Evangelist*

St. Luke is identified by tradition as the author of both Luke and Acts. Luke is careful to place the events of Jesus’ life in both their social and religious contexts. Some of the most loved parables, including the good Samaritan and the prodigal son, are found only in this gospel. Luke’s gospel has also given the church some of its most beautiful songs: the *Benedictus* sung at morning prayer, the *Magnificat* sung at evening prayer, and the *Nunc dimittis* sung at the close of the day. These songs are powerful witnesses to the message of Jesus Christ.

October 23

James of Jerusalem, *martyr*, d. ca. 62

One of three early-church leaders named James, this man is identified in the New Testament and by a historian of the time as a brother of Jesus. Scholars are uncertain whether this means a blood brother. He was a leader of the church in Jerusalem.

October 26

Philipp Nicolai, d. 1608; **Johann Heermann**, d. 1647; **Paul Gerhardt**, d. 1676; *hymnwriters*

These great hymnwriters all worked in seventeenth-century Germany in times of war and plague. Nicolai, a pastor, lost 1,300 parishioners to plague, 170 in one week. He wrote “O Morning Star, how fair and bright” and “Wake, awake, for night is flying.” Heermann’s hymns, including “Ah, holy Jesus,” often express the emotions of faith. Gerhardt, perhaps the greatest Lutheran hymnwriter, was a pastor in Berlin.

October 28

Simon and Jude, *Apostles*

Little is known about Simon and Jude. In New Testament lists of the apostles, Simon the “zealot” or Cananaean is mentioned, but he is never mentioned apart from these lists. Jude, sometimes called Thaddeus, is also mentioned in lists of the Twelve. At the last supper Jude asked Jesus why he had chosen to reveal himself to the disciples but not to the world. A traditional story about Simon and Jude says that they traveled together on a missionary journey to Persia and were both martyred there.

October 31

Reformation Day

By the end of the seventeenth century, many Lutheran churches celebrated a festival commemorating Martin Luther’s posting of the *Ninety-five Theses*, a summary of the abuses in the church of his time. At the heart of the reform movement was the gospel, the good news that it is by grace through faith that we are justified and set free.



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

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

