

THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

June 2021

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Worship - 8:30 & 10:30 AM
Sunday School - on break for summer
NA Meeting - Wednesdays at 7:30 PM
Spirituality Group - Thursdays at 7 PM
AA Meeting - Saturdays at 10:00 AM
Soccer Shots - Saturday mornings &
Tuesday evenings (*Spring-Fall*)



2021 Ascension Church COUNCIL

Council Executives

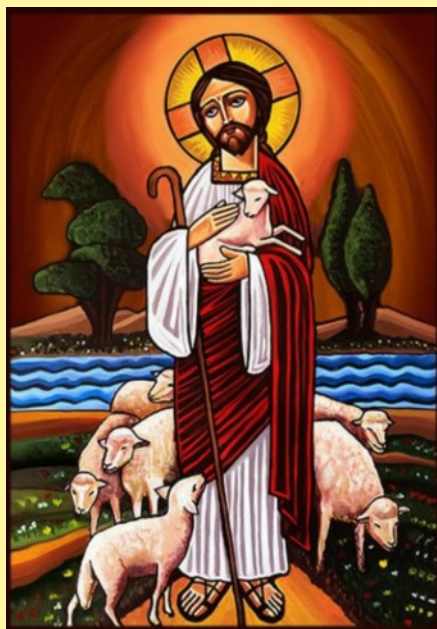
Jason Eager *president*
Jeff Williams *vice-president*
Clay Marnich *secretary*
John Bielewicz *treasurer*

Council Liaisons

Jerry Wessel *Christian Education*
John Bielewicz *Youth*
Jason Eager *Communications &
Publications*
Rudy Marnich *Social Ministry &
Evangelism*
Bob Thompson *Finance &
Stewardship*
Barbara Thompson *Worship & Music*
Mark Thompson *Property*
Jeff Williams *Mutual Ministry*
Clay Marnich *Personnel*
(Vacant) *Fellowship*

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday June 8 at 7:00 PM



From Pastor Murdy's Desk

The Good SHEPHERD

An update on the proposed merger

Dear friends in Christ,

As you may be aware, our council took action at our April meeting to take the first steps in conversation with regard to a possible merger with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, McKees Rocks. That first step was a simple motion, which states that we want to begin taking the necessary steps

in drafting a merger agreement that would later come before both congregations for approval. Just a few weeks after our council's vote, Good Shepherd also had a positive motion.

The Synod's attorney has started drafting a merger agreement that will soon come to Ascension's council for edit and review. Once that merger document has been reviewed and is agreeable between both councils, it will then be shared with the congregations for their approval at a congregational meeting.

Shortly after our April council meeting, we met with Good Shepherd's cemetery board at Mt. Calvary Cemetery. I hope I speak for the council when I say, that many questions were answered and we had a great experience getting to know their board members. The meeting allowed us to learn about how Mt. Calvary operates. Later, council requested financial history from the cemetery board's treasurer, who quickly shared what we needed. The council wanted to see how the cemetery functions financially and what assets the cemetery currently holds. From my personal perspective, I can share that the cemetery has over 7,000 plots still available, is managed well, and is financially secure. If you have family buried there or have driven past, I am sure you can attest that Mt. Calvary is a very well cared for cemetery. Working with and getting to know the people of Good Shepherd has been both a joy and a privilege. I had never been inside their church until recently with a few of our members. Together we were

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Celebrating Saint Peter & Saint Paul

June 29

PETER The New Testament clearly shows Peter as the leader of the apostles, beginning with the day he was called from his nets along the Sea of Galilee to become a fisher of men, and chosen by Jesus to have a special relationship with him.

With James and John

he was privileged to witness the Transfiguration, the raising of a dead child to life, and the agony in Gethsemane. His mother-in-law was cured by Jesus. He was sent with John to prepare for the last Passover before Jesus' death. His name is first on every list of apostles.

Peter is willing to accept Jesus' doctrine of forgiveness, but suggests a limit of seven times. He walks on the water in faith, but sinks in doubt. He refuses to let Jesus wash his feet, then wants his whole body cleansed. He swears at the Last Supper that he will never deny Jesus, and then swears to a servant maid that he has never known the man. He loyally resists the first attempt to arrest Jesus by cutting off Malchus' ear, but in the end he runs away with the others. In the depth of his sorrow, Jesus looks on him and forgives him, and he goes out and sheds bitter tears.

PAUL If the most well-known preacher today suddenly began preaching that the United States should adopt Marxism and not rely on the Constitution, the angry reaction would help us understand Paul's life when he started preaching that Christ alone can save us. He had been the most pharisaic of Pharisees, the most legalistic of Mosaic lawyers. Now he suddenly appears to other Jews as a heretical welcomer of Gentiles, a traitor and apostate.

Paul's central conviction was simple and absolute: Only God can save humanity. No human effort—even the most scrupulous observance of law—can create a human good which we can bring to God as reparation for sin and payment for grace. To be saved from itself, from sin, from the devil,

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

able to continue talking, discerning, and dreaming about the ministry we might share one day. It was great to learn about their history and personal stories. Their sanctuary and building are beautiful and contain items that could enhance our worship and service.

I would also like to share with you that as of the end of May, Good Shepherd has met with another local church who is interested in purchasing their building. Those conversations are going well. The interested party is reviewing how they might purchase the building with cash rather than take out a mortgage. We of course will keep you posted. I know that the sale of their building would put a lot of minds at ease from both our congregations.

Please know that if you have any questions, I am happy to hear them and find the answers for you. The synod, as well as Good Shepherd, and our own leadership, have all been so helpful.

Please continue to be in prayer as we discern this opportunity together.

With you in Christ+

Pastor Joe

“WORKING with and
getting to know the people of
Good Shepherd has been both
a joy and a privilege.”
~ PJ

Continued on page 5

LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

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

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 rather than engage in wars. When he became a Roman Catholic, he held morning and evening prayer with his tribe, which continued after his death. 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 - Emanuel Nine, martyrs, d. 2015

On June 17, 2015, nine people gathered for Bible study and prayer at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 8, 2019.

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

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, renewer of the church, d. 1560

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."

June 25 - Presentation of the Augsburg Confession, 1530

On this day in 1530 the German and Latin editions of the Augsburg Confession were presented to the Emperor Charles of the Holy Roman Empire. The Augsburg Confession was written by Philipp Melanchthon and endorsed by Martin Luther, and 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

See feature on page 2

BEST WISHES . . .

JUNE BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member

- 1 Rick Zoltun
- 2 Brook Thomson
- 3 Vincent Zeiler
- 12 Blake Tomchak
- 13 Clark Rose
- 14 Brian Stanford
- 17 Mike Neilson
- 18 Damon Rose
- 19 JoAnne Erwin
- 20 William Whitfield
- 21 Emily Reckner
- 27 Pastor Larsen
- 28 Ryan Williams
- 29 Mike Siemons



JUNE ANNIVERSARIES!

Date | Members

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



. . . and blessings to all

got NEWS?

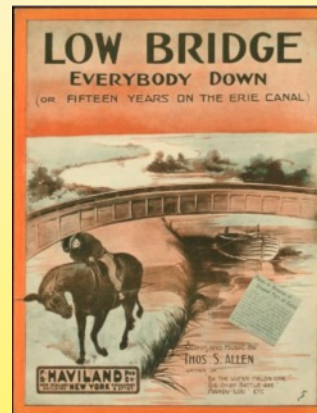
Let us hear from YOU !

If you have pictures, articles, or ideas to submit for the **JULY** Newsletter, please contact the office or Pastor, or email office@alcpgh.com.



'Low Bridge! Everybody Down!'

. . . The Lunch Bunch rides again



*I've got an old mule
and her name is Sal,
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal
She's a good old worker
and a good old pal,
Fifteen years on the Erie Canal**

On a warm, sunny, tropical kind of day in May, Ascension's Lunch Bunch cruised to the Island (Neville Island, that is) to visit

Carmody's Grille. Though no one picked up a lei or conch shell as a souvenir, the twelve "tourists" in attendance certainly ate like they were at a luau, and all had a very good time.

AND SO, another opportunity to join our Bunch is coming up on Thursday June 17, when the intrepid travelers again will try something different and travel northwest to **Sal's Ristorante** in Chippewa, Beaver County. We're not sure if it's the same Sal, but if anyone wants to join in and sing "*I've got an old mule and her name is Sal, fifteen years on the Erie Canal*" while we are there, the rest of the words to the classic folk song "Low Bridge! Everybody Down!" (or Fifteen Years on the Erie Canal) can easily be found at <https://daveruch.com/erie-canal-song/> on the Internet!

We plan to meet at Sal's, located at 2764 Darlington Road 15010 (it's actually a Beaver Falls postal address, across from the Beaver County Airport) at 11:30 am on June 17. It's about a 40-minute drive (considerably less, if Jerry is driving!), taking route 376 west to the route 51 Chippewa exit; Sal's is only about 2 miles from the exit. Unfortunately, canal boats or mules do not service that area, so we'll have to drive there!

Those who wish to join in the fun via carpool should meet at church and be ready to depart at 10:45. Please phone Nancy Schreiber at 412-859-3969 or Jerry Wessel at 412-787-1213 by noon on Wednesday June 16 – whether you plan to drive yourself and meet at the restaurant, or travel via carpool – so that reservations can be made to accommodate everyone. See you then!

~ Jerry Wessel



Father's Day Sunday, June 20 *Thanks, Dad!*

Celebrating Saint Peter & Saint Paul (continued from pg 2)

and from death, humanity must open itself completely to the saving power of Jesus.

Paul never lost his love for his Jewish family, though he carried on a lifelong debate with them about the uselessness of the Law without Christ.

These two are an “odd couple” of biblical witnesses to be brought together in one commemoration. It appears that Peter would have gladly served as the editor of Paul’s letters: in a letter attributed to him, Peter says that some things in Paul’s letters are hard to understand. Paul’s criticism of Peter is more blunt. In Galatians, he points out ways that Peter was wrong. One of the things that unites Peter and Paul is the tradition that says they were martyred together on this date in 67 or 68. What unites them more closely is their common confession of Jesus Christ. In the gospel reading appointed for this day, Peter declares that Jesus is the Christ through whom the foundation of the church is established. In the second reading, we hear of Paul’s faithfulness to the end, by God’s help. Together Peter and Paul lay a foundation and built the framework for our lives of faith through their proclamation of Jesus Christ.

Sources: www.sundaysandseasons.com | www.franciscanmedia.org



Stained glass of Saints Peter & Paul Lutheran Church, Sharon, Pa.

A Blessing for Fathers

God of all creation,
pour out your blessing on all fathers
and those who provide fatherly care.
You have made them in your image
and given them children to love
and care for in your name.

Bless them with a heart like your heart:
discerning and thoughtful, bold and decisive,
compassionate and loving.

As they model for their children
the life that is lived by faith and not by sight,
grant them courage under pressure
and confidence in your power.

When troubles threaten to overwhelm them,
grant them your coping calm.

When doubts give rise to anxiety,
shore up their trust in your promises.

When joy fills their days,
grant them a keen gratitude for your
abundant supply of grace.

Season them with a lively sense of humor, Lord,
for it will make life richer for us all.

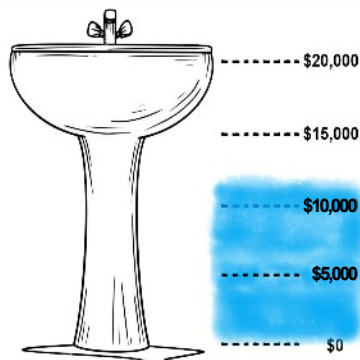
In all circumstances preserve them as your own.
We ask this in Jesus’ name.

Amen.

*Ev’ry heart beats true
Under Red, White and Blue . . .*



The "OTHER" time has come!



THANK YOU!
The **Bathroom Renovation** offering has collected over **\$12,000!**

And now the work begins, and extra help is needed . . .

BUILDING & MAINTENANCE PROJECTS HELP NEEDED!

1. Bathroom Renovations

The plumber will dismantle the men's room first. We need to install and finish drywall over the next two weeks. Tile should be here for installation the week of June 6. Plumber will then install sink, toilet, and urinal. When the men's room is operational, we then will start the women's room.

Please contact Bob Thompson ASAP if you can help with any phase of this project. Phone 412-389-1869
Email Bob.thompson72@outlook.com

2. Lawn Mowers

Looking for 1-2 lawn mowers to help this summer.

3. Mulch Spreaders

The township has delivered a load of mulch this week, and we need help raking and spreading it out.

4. Painters

The pavilion and playground will be painted this summer.

Please let Bob Thompson know ASAP if you can help with any of these beautification and maintenance projects.

Phone 412-389-1869

Email Bob.thompson72@outlook.com

ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council meeting was held Tuesday May 11, 2021

May Council Highlights:

- Congregation approved the bathroom renovation expense. Property liaison has met with the plumber and the bathroom work should be underway by the end of May.
- Annual review (first for Darlene) to begin soon.
- Discussed our experience of Mt. Calvary cemetery. [See Pastor's feature article on page 1 for detailed information]
- **Next Council Meeting:** Tuesday, June 8 - 7pm

Summer Events Update

Unfortunately, there is still no update on whether or not we will hold the yard sale or VBS this year. Both events are on our agenda to discuss in June. As soon as we come to a decision, we will let the congregation and community know.

Lutheran Day at Kennywood! Wednesday, July 21



NEWS from the SWPA Synod office . . .

Pavilion 17 (behind the Aero 360) will be designated for Lutheran Day use - all are welcome to use during the day. A digital scavenger hunt for all to participate in also will be available. Season pass holders do not need to purchase an additional ticket to join in the Lutheran Day fun. To order tickets, please mail a check ASAP (\$25 per person / \$15 per person over 60 / \$11 per person over 70) made out to the SWPA Synod, indicating the number and type of tickets you're ordering (general, over 60, over 70), and mail to:

Zion Lutheran Church
Attn: Deacon Amy
11609 Frankstown Road
Pittsburgh PA 15235

Ascension's 61st Anniversary

CELEBRATING 61 YEARS

Ascension Church May 16, 2021



*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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Ascension Lutheran Church

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

