



THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

November 2022

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Worship - 10:30 AM

Sunday School - 9:30 AM (adult & child)

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)



2022 COUNCIL EXECUTIVES

President – Jason Eager

Vice President – Chelsea Karaffa

Secretary – Venus Thompson

Treasurer – John Bielewicz

2022 COUNCIL LIAISONS

Christian Education

Pastor Joe Murdy

Communications & Publications

Jason Eager

Fellowship

Members

Finance and Stewardship

John Bielewicz

Mutual Ministry

Jeff Williams

Personnel

Clay Marnich

Property

Bob Dudek

Social Ministry and Evangelism

Sharon Giza

Worship and Music

vacant

Youth

Chelsea Karaffa, Venus Thompson

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday November 8 at 7:00 PM

Reaching OUT



From Pastor's desk

If you have been to worship over the last three weeks of October, you could tell others that Outreach has been a recurring theme here at Ascension. It is one of the most important and

fundamental callings we have as a congregation - yet, let's be honest - it doesn't always receive the level of importance it deserves. Of course, there are things that we do which can and should be celebrated: Our annual collection for the Inter-Church Food Bank (*keep reading the Newsletter, see page 4*); our Beaver Grade Road clean-up (which we are due for); Presents for Patients and caroling at Allegheny Valley schools. Finally, and more recently is our Creative Hands quilting ministry which just sent 40 quilts to comfort and warm people around the world. Of course, that's not all. Could we do more? Could more of our baptized members be a part of such wonderful ministry efforts?

At the dismissal from worship every Sunday, we are sent out with a mission, "Go in peace, serve the Lord." Then we respond with thanksgiving for this joyous vocation of service by saying, "Thanks be to God." How is it that we serve our neighbor? As individuals?

As a congregation? I believe, like many of you, that by serving our neighbor we surely serve the Lord. This comes straight from the Messiah's mouth, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." To see this in another way, we could look through the eyes of the Good Samaritan. When the rich man asks the Lord, "But who is my neighbor," he learns quickly that being a good neighbor means showing mercy. In this way we come to understand that our service to others is a sign of compassion and love. A love that we have received and are called to share and demonstrate.

continued on page 3

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 Chelsea Karaffa



got NEWS?

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



Council Meeting was held October 11, 2022

- **From the Pastor** - working to reinvigorate and encourage outreach within our congregation. Will begin announcing this initiative in worship and put something in the bulletin. Council is encouraged to bring ideas to next council meeting.
- **From the Treasurer:** Re-evaluating structure of the budget. Slated to meet, next two weeks to finalize budget and prep. (Pastor, John, Jason, Darlene, and Bob Thompson). Recommendation for the council in the future, look at the treasurer position, longer term/relationship to assist for longer.
- **Christian Education:** Sunday School meets at 9:30. 6 in regular attendance for adults, 5 for elementary. Confirmation has begun - every other Wednesday via Zoom. Spirituality Group is back underway on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m.
- **Youth:** Pumpkin painting youth activity, Sunday, October 30th
- **Fellowship** Sundays in October to look at designs/discuss building project. Bob, working on this 10/16 or 10/23, fellowship for building concepts.
- **Property:** Furnace has been installed and is now running.
- **Building Task Force:** Looking to share visual of preliminary drawings, engage in discussion with congregation, collect ideas and gauge commitment. Then next would be refining design. Look at specifications to be completed for cost. In addition, possibly starting a capital campaign in 2022-23 for 3-5 years. Presentation on October 16th and 23rd following worship. After assessing congregation, a motion may be presented at our next congregational meeting.
- **December 4th - Congregational Meeting**

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 7:00 pm

Outreach is about quite literally *reaching out* to our community and serving our neighbor, walking with our neighbor, and sharing the love of God with those around us. However, lest we limit our reach to the zip code(s) around 1290 Silver Lane, we should also be clear that reaching out extends throughout our synod, our state, our nation and into the world we so cherish.

There are cautions we must consider as we discern our call to outreach. One caution we must resist is the temptation to reach *IN* rather than reach *OUT*. Another temptation is helping our neighbor based on conditions. In other words, whether or not we believe they deserve it. Or, limiting help/contributions based on their ability to *return* the favor. Let's just agree to stay away from these unfaithful mindsets.

With all of this in our hearts and minds, let me ask the question, how can we come together as a community of faith and develop ways of doing what we are called to do - reach out to others as the hand of Christ. As Saint Teresa of Avila teaches us, "Christ has no hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good."

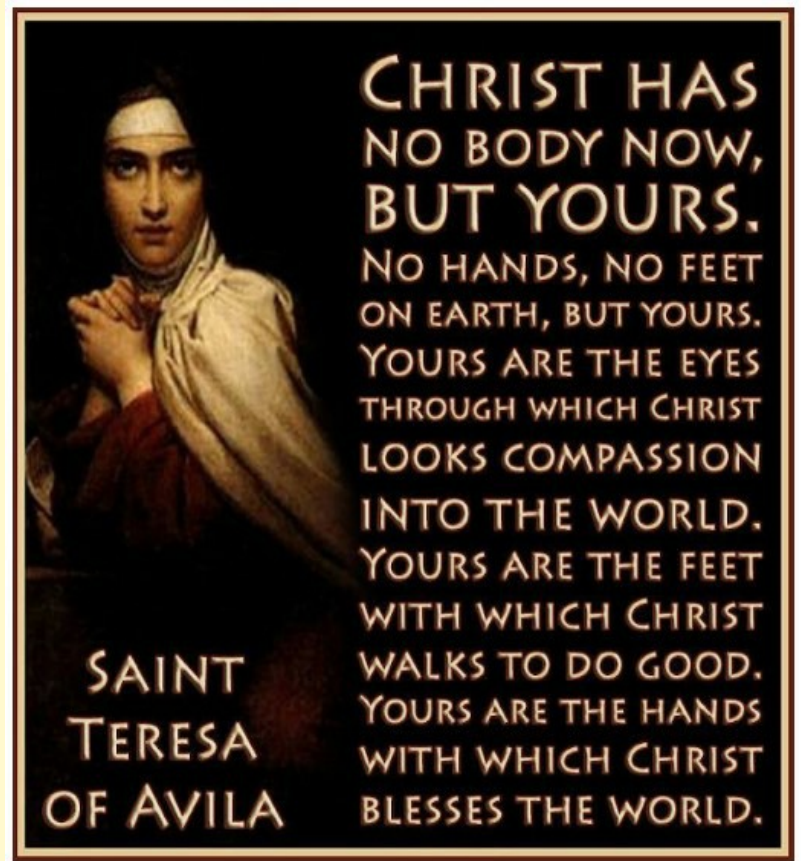
My dear friends in Christ, **WE CAN DO IT!** God has provided us with all that we need to do that which God has called us to do. Each of us (that means everyone) has gifts to share. Will you hold them to yourself? Will you hide them? Or will you share, give and respond to the great mission to which God has called us? Will you encourage one another in this holy work? Will you be the hands and feet of Christ in Robinson, McKees Rocks, Moon, Crafton, Carnegie, Coraopolis, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the United States, and the world?

We are all called as disciples to share the good news – it's about time that becomes our number one goal. Can we do it?

YES, WE CAN!

With love and appreciation,

~PJ



“... by serving our
neighbor,
we **SURELY**
serve
The LORD.”

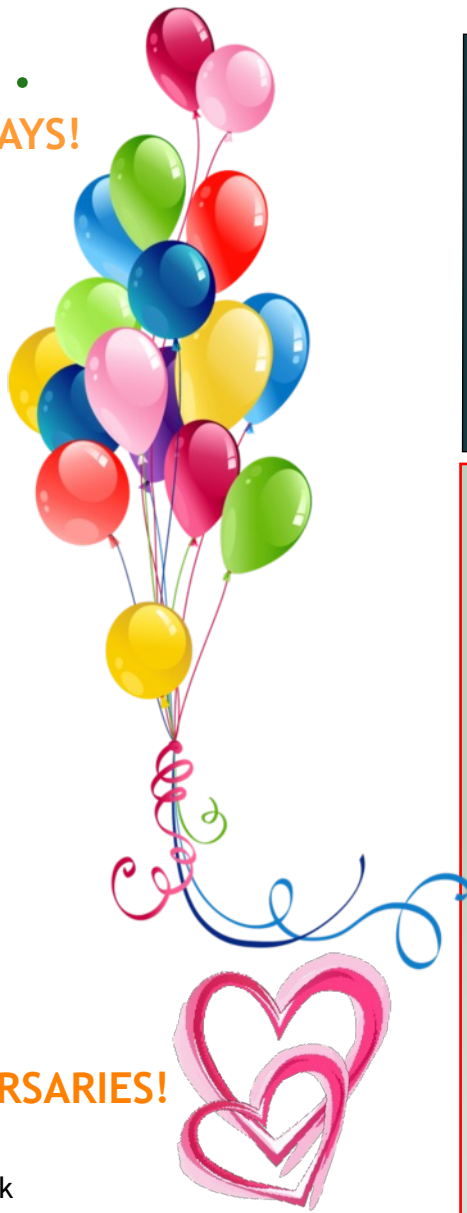
~ PJ

Best Wishes . . .

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member/Friend

- 1 Emily Lescallette
Joel Randal
- 2 Bill McEwen
- 4 Andrew Burkholder
- 7 Suzy McEwen
- 8 Leslie Rickerd
- 10 Darlene Ganley
- 17 Dolly Morrow
- 18 Bryce Adams
Kayleigh Adams
- 19 Allison Bayer
- 22 Kathleen Bowman
- 23 Dirk Stathers
- 25 Holden Tomchak
- 26 Dee Lightner
Gib Palmgren
- 29 Linda Siemons



NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES!

Date | Members/Friends

- 15 Dave & Deb Walenchok

. . . and Blessings to ALL!

Help the food bank - help your neighbor

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

(Acts 20:35)

This is the season for THANKS and GIVING. As we prepare for our holiday gatherings, we remember those who may be dependent on the generosity of others. This is why throughout the month of November, we collecting special items for the Inter-Church food bank in McKees Rocks. Items of particular need include: Canned yams, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix and instant mashed potatoes. Help us make the season brighter for others. Collection begins November 1st and ends November 27th.



Lunch Bunch



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

From Shakespeare's to Harold's, the Lunch Bunch rides again . . .

Forsooth! Seventeen merrie gentlemen and ladies of the Ascension Lunch Bunch enjoyed Shakespeare's Castle in October. Although Shakespeare was not at home, the banquet provided was great, especially for those who ordered the pumpkin bisque. The weather was perfect and the trees along the route to Ellwood City were at their peak.

On Thursday November 17 the Bunch will journey to Harold's Inn in Hopewell. As a disclaimer, I'm pretty sure this is not the Harold from the Christmas carol "Hark the 'Harold' Angels Sing," nor is this the inn at which there was no room; so, don't expect any singing (unless we do it ourselves), and don't expect any wise men (just the usual wise guys). But DO expect the food to be heavenly though, so let Jerry Wessel (412-787-1213) or Nancy Schreiber (412-859-3969) know by Tuesday, November 15 if you plan to attend so that we can be sure that there IS room at the Inn for everyone. Harold's address is 2134 Brodhead Road, Hopewell, PA 15001.

As is customary, those meeting there should plan to arrive at 11:30 AM and those carpooling should meet at church around 10:45 AM. See you in the inn!

~ Jerry Wessel

HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER



Join us for midweek Advent services

7 p.m. WEDNESDAYS: Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14 and 21

Join us as we await the newborn King throughout the season of Advent through our midweek services of Holden Evening Prayer. This unique contemplative worship service originally was written during the winter of 1986 while the composer, Marty Haugen, was in residence at Holden Village in the North Cascade mountains of Washington state. A remote wilderness community and retreat center, Holden is rooted in the Lutheran tradition which welcomes all people.

Ascension Church has long enjoyed this beautiful service (about 30 mins). We hope that you will join us on Wednesdays - Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14 and 21 throughout this sacred season. Unsure of driving in the dark? Don't! Please ask for a ride. Come take a break from the busy world and join us for worship.

CHRISTMAS *Worship*

Christmas Eve
Saturday, December 24th
at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Traditional Worship

Christmas Day
Sunday, December 25th at 10:30am
Christmas pajamas welcome!!!!

All Saints: Remembrance planned for Sunday, November 6



Once a year, the church pauses to remember the saints who have gone before us - not just those noted on special feast days who are remembered for the extraordinary, but those ordinary saints who have touched our lives in extraordinary ways. Traditionally the church only announces by name those who have died in the past year who have entered the church triumphant.

Over the past few years, we have embraced the tradition of creating an *Ofrenda*, a table which displays a collection of pictures and objects to remember those who have died. This thoughtful tradition comes from Latin America, namely Mexico.

All Saints is technically on Tuesday, the 1st of November, but we will observe this celebration on Sunday, November 6th. Everyone is invited to bring pictures, flowers, or items belonging to deceased loved ones to place around the altar. Join us as we celebrate and remember those who now rest from their labors in the loving embrace of God our Father. Feel free to bring them on Nov. 6th or call the office to arrange bringing them earlier.

NOVEMBER

LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

November 1 *All Saints Day*

The custom of commemorating all of the saints of the church on a single day goes back at least to the third century. All Saints Day celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who make up the body of Christ. On this day or the following Sunday, many congregations will remember the faithful who have died during the past year.

November 3 *Martín de Porres, renewer of society, d.1639*

Martín was the son of a Spanish knight and a freed black slave from Panama. As a lay brother in the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), he engaged in many charitable works in Lima, Peru. He founded an orphanage, a hospital, and a clinic for cats and dogs.

November 7 *John Christian Frederick Heyer, d.1873; Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, d.1719; Ludwig Nommensen, d.1918; missionaries*

Heyer was the first missionary sent out by American Lutherans. After teaching at Gettysburg College and Seminary he was assigned to the Andhra region of India. A worker among the Tamil people on the southeast coast of India, **Ziegenbalg** was opposed both by local Hindus and by Danish authorities who favored a different missionary style. He was known for caring about the welfare of the whole person. **Nommensen** was born in northern Germany and was sent to Sumatra as a Lutheran missionary. Working among the Batak people, he translated the scriptures into their language, and honored their native culture.

November 11 *Martin, Bishop of Tours, d.397*

Martin's pagan father enlisted him in the Roman army. Approached by a beggar, Martin cut his cloak in half and gave part to the man, whom he later understood as representing Christ. He asked to leave the army, but was jailed instead. After his release, he became a preacher, and later a bishop.

November 11 *Søren Aabye Kierkegaard, teacher, d.1855*

Kierkegaard was a Danish theologian whose writings also gave rise to the modern philosophy of existentialism. He frequently attacked the complacency of the state church of his day, as well as its desire to be accepted by polite society rather than be a stumbling block.

November 17 *Elizabeth of Hungary, renewer of society, d.1231*

Born in Hungary, Elizabeth was betrothed to the son of the Landgrave of Thuringia, and at age four was taken to be raised with him at the Wartburg Castle. Ten years later they were married. She was very generous to the poor, and after her husband's death she lived in cruel hardship until her own death at age twenty-four.

November 23 *Clement, Bishop of Rome, d.ca.100*

Clement was the third bishop of Rome. He is best remembered for a letter he wrote to the congregation in Corinth, still struggling with the same problems that led to Paul's letters to them. As did Paul, he focused on the need for love among Christians.

November 23 *Miguel Agustín Pro, martyr, d.1927*

Pro grew up among oppression in Mexico, where revolutionaries accused the church of siding with the rich. He was a Jesuit priest who served during a time of intense anticlericalism, and therefore he carried out much of his ministry in private settings. He worked on behalf of the poor and homeless. Miguel and his two brothers were arrested, falsely accused of throwing a bomb at the car of a government official, and executed by a firing squad. Just before the guns fired, he yelled, "¡Viva Cristo Rey!" meaning "Long live Christ the king!"

November 24 *Justus Falckner, d.1723; Jehu Jones, d.1852; William Passavant, d.1894; pastors in North America*

Not only was **Falckner** the first Lutheran ordained in North America, but he also published a catechism which was the first Lutheran book published on the continent. **Jones** was the Lutheran church's first African American pastor and carried out missionary work in Philadelphia which led to the formation there of the first African American Lutheran congregation (St. Paul's). William **Passavant** created and nurtured a new level of organized social ministry in western Pennsylvania. Now known as Lutheran Services in America. Passavant and his legacy sought to serve the poorest of the poor, providing shelter, medical, and living assistance.

November 25 *Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, d.1748*

Thought by many to be the greatest hymnwriter in the English language, Isaac Watts was born in England to a family of nonconformists. He wrote about six hundred hymns, many in a two-year period beginning when he was twenty years old. Some of Watts's hymns are based on psalms, a nonconformist tradition. Ten of Watts's hymn texts are in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, including "O God, Our Help in Ages Past."

November 30 *Andrew, Apostle*

The first of the disciples to be called by Jesus, Andrew quickly began to bring others to the Savior, including Simon Peter. The Bible also shows him leading some Greeks to meet Jesus, and he brought forward the boy with five loaves and two fish, with which Jesus fed thousands.

"Thanksgiving" games!

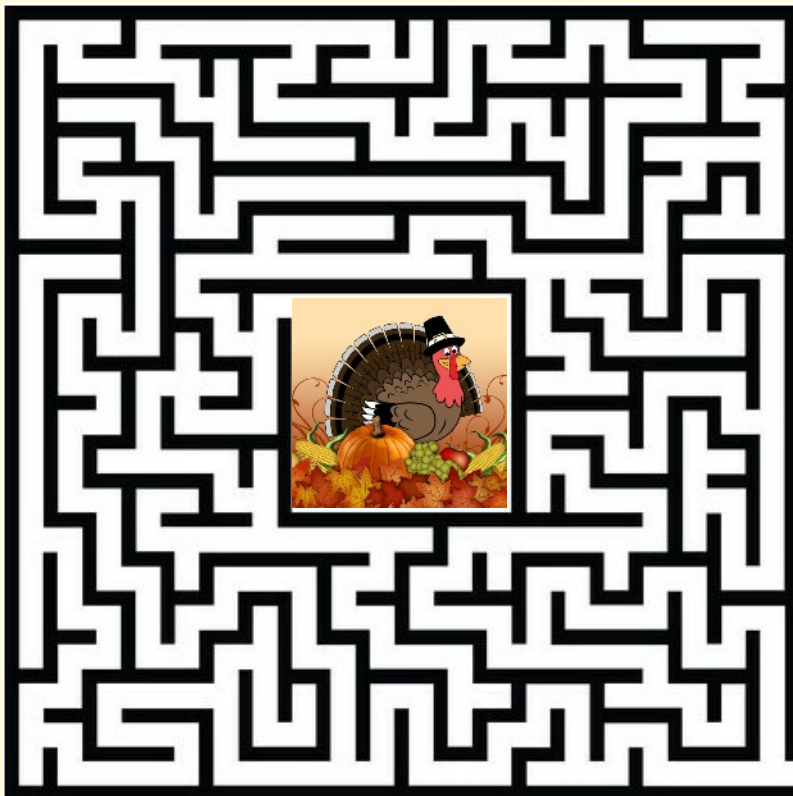
Word Search

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Carve | 11. Holiday |
| 2. Celebrate | 12. November |
| 3. Colonist | 13. Pilgrim |
| 4. Cornucopia | 14. Platter |
| 5. Cranberry | 15. Pumpkin |
| 6. Dessert | 16. Thanksgiving |
| 7. Farmer | 17. Tradition |
| 8. Feast | 18. Turkey |
| 9. Gather | 19. Vegetable |
| 10. Harvest | 20. Worship |



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FIND YOUR WAY TO THE TURKEY!



START!



*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

