



THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

November 2025

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Worship - 11:00 AM

Sunday School - 10:00 AM (*adult & child*)

Drum Class - Tuesdays 5-8 PM Apr-July

NA Meeting - Wednesdays at 7:30 PM

AA Meeting - Saturdays at 10:00 AM

- Mondays at 7:00 PM

Soccer Shots - Saturday mornings &

Wednesday evenings (*Spring-Fall*)



2025 COUNCIL

President – *Sharon Giza*

Vice President – *Deb Whitfield*

Treasurer – *Bob Stathers*

Secretary – *Jason Eager*

2025 COUNCIL LIAISONS

Christian Education

Jason Eager

Communications & Publications

Sharon Giza

Finance & Stewardship

open

Mutual Ministry

Bob Stathers

Personnel

Kelly Bryan

Property

Bob Thompson

Fellowship, Social Ministry

and Evangelism;

Worship & Music

Jeff Williams

Youth

Debbie Whitfield

Call Committee

Sharon Giza

Council Member: *Bill Whitfield*

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday November 11 at 7:00 PM

Sharing the love of God

A message from Interim Pastor Ryan Kobert

Dear friends in Christ,

Please read this vital notice from our synod secretary, Rev. William Schaefer:

“At the August 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, amendments were made to the ELCA constitution. Those amendments resulted in amendments to the Model Constitution for Synods and the Model Constitution for Congregations.

The Model Constitution for Congregations, like the other governing documents of this church, reflects the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news, and share the love of God in the world. Each expression of this church — churchwide, synod, and congregation — is held together in a relationship of interdependence that encourages each to respond to its context. These documents also demonstrate our commitment to seeing ourselves with others as part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. As such, the Model Constitution for Congregations is deeply rooted in Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of this church and its predecessors.

Pursuant to *C16.04. of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both required and non-required amendments made to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be voted and adopted by a single vote at the next meeting of your congregation, provided the congregation is given 30 days notice of the revisions prior to the meeting. If your congregation has not recently reviewed or updated its constitution, this would be a good time to do so.”

Pastor Kobert's NOTES

There are some required changes that will need to be made to the constitution for congregations so that they are in line with the governing documents of the churchwide constitution. This means that our own congregational constitution will need to be amended at one of our annual meetings.

There are fifteen provisions that were amended in the model constitution, with two being optional and thirteen being required changes. The changes made were mostly for clarity sake, either by reformatting a provision - adjusting a cross-reference to be within the congregation constitution rather than reference the synod constitution - or to keep language consistent with other provisions.

continued on page 3

MOUNT CALVARY CEMETERY

1715 Middletown Road | McKees Rocks, PA

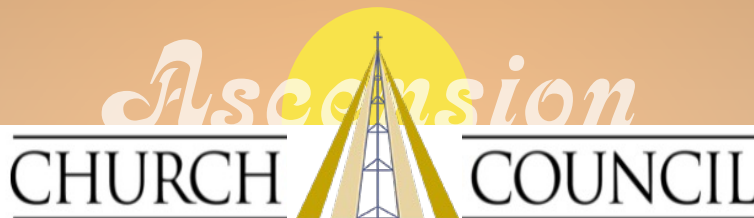
Robert J. Dudek, Supervisor
mtcalvarycem@alcpgh.com

Mount Calvary Cemetery Board Members

Judy Henry • Bob Hughes • Bette Ann Kallay

George C. Kasich • Joyce Leister

Pastor Ryan Kobert • Deb Whitfield



ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council meeting was held Tuesday October 14, 2025

Call to order: 7:02 pm Attendance: All except Bob S. & Kelly

October devotion: Deb Sept. minutes reviewed/approved.

Old Business: new locks & camera installation by end of October
Council Nominations due Oct 26; Elections Nov. 9; Congregational Meeting Dec. 7

New Business: Committee recommendations from those who explored possible alternatives to the ELCA was tabled until Nov. 11 council meeting due committee members not present tonight; Council to meet regarding renewal of pastor contract.

Committee Reports:

Communications, Sharon: Training on e-Sign Oct. 14

Fellowship, Social Ministry & Evangelism, Jeff:

recent visits with shut-ins; Oct. 12 Campfire had 40 attending

Property, Bob T: Cleanup Day scheduled for 10/25

Youth, Deb: Pumpkins & Pancakes 10/26

Important Dates:

• Church Clean-up - October 25th

• Pumpkins, Painting, and Pancakes - October 26th

• November 9, 2025, Church Council and Cemetery Board voting

• Budget Meeting and next Council Meeting - November 11, 2025.

• Congregation Meeting for 2026 Church & Cemetery Budget - December 7, 2025

Meeting adjourned. Closing prayer.

Next Council meeting: Tuesday, November 11 at 7:00 pm



REMEMBER TO "FALL BACK" at 2 a.m.
Nov. 2 as Daylight Savings Time ends!



As we enter the month of November, we have a few meaningful events and opportunities to support our church and community:

Sunday, November 9th – Church/Cemetery Elections

Following the worship service, we will hold elections for new Church Council and Cemetery Board members.

Thank you to all who have graciously accepted nominations. Your willingness to serve is deeply appreciated.

Food Drive for McKees Rocks Pantry – Throughout the month, we will be collecting **nonperishable food items** to support the McKees Rocks [Inter-Church] food pantry. Your donations will help meet the needs of families in our local community. Please bring items to the designated collection area at the church.

On October 9th, the Church Council honored our dedicated Administrative Assistant, **Darlene**, with a large mum and a gift card to Olive Garden in recognition of her **five years of faithful service** to Ascension Lutheran Church. Darlene is a cherished member of our team, and we are deeply grateful for all she does to support our congregation!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in our **Fall Church Cleanup!** With many helping hands, we tackled a variety of projects throughout the church, social hall, and outdoor areas. Your time, energy, and care are truly appreciated — our church shines brighter because of you!

As we enter the season of thanksgiving, we are reminded of the many blessings we share as a church rooted in faith, love, and service. November invites us to pause and reflect — not only on the goodness of God, but also on the gift of each other.

Sincerely,

Sharon Giza

Ascension Lutheran Church Council President

• November DATES •

Tuesday	04	Election Day
Sunday	09	Council & Cem. Board Voting
Tuesday	11	Veterans' Day
		Council Meeting 7pm
Thursday	20	Lunch Bunch
Thursday	27	Thanksgiving Day

This is the season of
THANKS & GIVING.

As we prepare for our holiday gatherings, let us remember those who need our help by donating to the **Inter-Church Food Bank** of McKees Rocks.

FALL FOOD DRIVE



ANY non-perishable FOODS
are greatly needed and gratefully accepted!!

Some examples:

- **canned veggies & fruits**
- **canned & dry soups**
- **flour, sugar, honey**
- **rice, pasta, noodles**
- **cereals, granola**
- **PB&J, crackers**

Collection of non-perishable food items
will be conducted through
Sunday December 7, 2025

Please fill the bins in the narthex

THANKS for GIVING!



Pastor Kobert's NOTES (continued from pg 1)

For the two provisions that do not fall under this umbrella of changes for clarity sake, one is an optional change and the other is simply changing the provision from optional to required. The change in C10.02 is optional, and it allows congregations to call a special congregation meeting at the request of a percentage of the voting members. Currently it calls for a specific number of voting members.

The provision that is changing from an optional one to a required one is C9.15. This provision allows for "a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the ELCA officially has established a relationship of full communion [to] serve temporarily as pastor of [the congregation] under a contract between [the congregation] and pastor."

With pastors of other denominations serving as interim pastors in Lutheran congregations, and vice versa, this amendment was changed to increase the ability of bishops and congregations to have interim pastors during a time of calling a pastor.

To review the full list of changes, copies of the amendments made at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly are available upon request, along with Rev. Schaefer's letter explaining the process of adopting these changes. Documents also may be found at ELCA online <https://resources.elca.org/>

Happy Thanksgiving! Thursday Nov. 27

SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE - NOV. 2025

<u>Date</u>	<u>Supply</u>	<u>Assisting Minister</u>	<u>Communion Assistant</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Usher</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Sunday (or special)</u>	<u>color</u>	<u>Council Update</u>
Nov 2	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jeff Williams	Bob Thompson	Sharon Giza	Volunteer	Volunteer	ALL SAINTS Sunday	WHITE	Bob Thompson
Nov 9	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jennifer Burkholder	Avis Ritter	Thad Ritter	Volunteer	Volunteer	PENTECOST 22	GREEN	Kelly Bryan
Nov 16	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Dan Giza	Jeff Williams	Rich Mussman	Volunteer	Volunteer	PENTECOST 23	GREEN	Sharon Giza
Nov 23	Carol Emch	Mary Thompson	Al Morrow	Gib Palmgren	Volunteer	Volunteer	CHRIST THE KING PENTECOST 24	WHITE	Bob Stathers
Nov 30	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jeff Williams	Bob Thompson	Charlotte DeCola	Volunteer	Volunteer	ADVENT 1	BLUE	Jeff Williams
Dec 7	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jennifer Burkholder	Avis Ritter	Thad Ritter	Volunteer	Volunteer	ADVENT 2	BLUE	Deb Whitfield

Best Wishes . . .

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member / Friend

- 1 Emily Lescalette
Joel Randal
- 2 Bill McEwen
- 4 Andrew Burkholder
- 6 Suzy McEwen
- 8 Leslie Rickerd
- 10 Darlene Ganley
- 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



Please keep in your prayers:

- JoAnne Erwin, Dee Gratzmiller, Norma Kohnen, Lottie Lodge, Jean Marion, Betty Simpson, Rose Rahner, Betty Borden – *shut-ins*
- Mary Jane McGinnis – *health concerns*
- Thad Ritter – *health concerns*
- Bill McEwen – *multiple health concerns*
- Linda Younkers, mother of Kathleen Howells – *stage 4 cancer*
- Hogan Moody, friend of Cy & Kathleen Howells – *cancer*
- Pastor Joe Murdy *serving his 9-month Army tour of duty in Kuwait*
- Norma Kohnen – *recent hospitalization for pneumonia*
- Tom Walenchok – *brother-in-law of Deb Walenchok – cancer*
- Amy – *friend of Deb Walenchok – rare form of cancer*
- Betty Simpson – *recovering in rehab facility from a recent fall*
- Rev. Tom Moog – *prayers for family, friends upon his passing*

Lunch Bunch



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

Dee Jay's in Weirton awaits Lunch Bunch visit Nov. 20

In October, ten Elizabethan wanna-bes from the Lunch Bunch took the road to Shakespeare's Castle. Although no one volunteered to act a scene from King Lear, the Bunch dined like royalty (the food was great as usual) and enjoyed conversing in Olde English (or new American).

If you missed it, there's always next year!

This month on November 20th, the Bunch will bunch up at Dee Jays, 380 Three Springs Drive, just off Highway 22-30 in Weirton WV. It sounds far away, but its only about 30-35 minutes from Ascension and the food is always worth the trip. If you want a spot saved for you, please let Jerry Wessel (412)797-1213 or George Kasich (412)726-1645 know by Tuesday, the 18th of November. Dee Jay's is famous for their ribs (though there are many other good things on the menu) and the Bunch is famous for their conversations, so if you're free that day, come on and give it a try – all are welcome!

Ascension's Youth and Family Committee has planned an exciting calendar of events ahead:

2025

Nov - College Care Packages

Nov 16 - Service project w/Creative Hands group
will take place during Sunday School @ 10am

Dec - Presents for Patients



Dec 14 - Cookie Exchange



2026

Jan 17 - Family Ice Skating



Feb 15 - Family Bowling



Mar 15 - "Lucky to be Lutheran" Family Bingo

Apr 19 - Spring clean-up, creating planters,
Chalk the Walk



May - Activity Bingo



THANK YOU!

A big **THANK YOU** to all who helped last month to make our church sparkle inside and out as we conducted our **Fall Clean-up Day on Oct. 25!**

Thanks to 19 Ascension members who helped perform many cleaning and organizing tasks.

Soup/sandwiches were a great and welcome finishing touch to the day.

A special thank-you to **Clay Marnich** and the boys from Greenscape Landcare for trimming shrubs and ornamental grasses around our parking lot, church, and trailer.



Some "Before & After" outdoor photos from 2025 Clean-up Day and a few indoor illustrations of the great work accomplished on Saturday October 25. *photos by Bob Stathers*

*Do you have a
COLLEGE STUDENT
who could use some encouragement
from their church family?*

Our Youth & Family committee is planning for

"College Mailings"

If you have a family member that you would like to receive a package, please email their name, their relation to you, and their school mailing address to Katie at katie.mercadante@gmail.com

OR see Katie in the back row!

We will be collecting names thru Sunday, Nov. 2nd

Pumpkins, painting, Pizza



Pastor Kobert checks out the artistry of Ascension kiddos during the "Pumpkins, Painting & Pizza" event which took place following worship on Sunday October 26.

photo by Melissa DeCola

Pastor Plans to take the Lutherlyn PLUNGE!

"On **December 6th** I'm taking the **PLUNGE!** at **Lutherlyn** to help provide camperships for kids next summer! Help me reach my \$1,000 goal by sponsoring my icy adventure into the lake at www.lutherlyn.com/plungeme. Every contribution will help me reach my goal, and help get kids to camp!" ~Pastor Ryan Kobert

The goal is for each "plunger" to raise \$1,000 from friends, family, coworkers, and members of their congregations and social networks. All the proceeds help provide financial aid for kids who otherwise would be unable to attend Lutherlyn's summer camp programs. Lutherlyn will provide hot chocolate and s'mores for all spectators and plungers to enjoy!

THANK YOU ONE & ALL

The **Creative Hands** group offers thanks to everyone who pitched in to display the 100+ hand-crafted quilts which were made this year! Thanks to Pastor Ryan Kobert for blessing the quilts at the Sunday October 12 worship service and to all who lingered after worship to help pack them into shipping boxes. The boxes then were taken from the church by Mt. Calvary's Bob Dudek and Frank McQuillan, who delivered them the next day to the next stop on the way to their final destinations.

Thanks, everyone!



Pictured above, Creative Hands quilting magicians (from left) Jennifer Burkholder, Judy Henry, Darlene Witt and Lynn Kinney (seated). The 100+ quilts were all hand-crafted throughout 2025, blessed, boxed and shipped to various charities through Lutheran World Relief.

S'mores 'n More!



Ascension families and friends gathered around the campfire in the cool of the evening on Sunday, October 12 for a night of fellowship, faith and fun.

photos by Sharon Giza

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. 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 carried out much of his ministry in private settings, working on behalf of the poor and homeless. Miguel and his two brothers were arrested, falsely accused of throwing a bomb at a government official's car and executed by 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

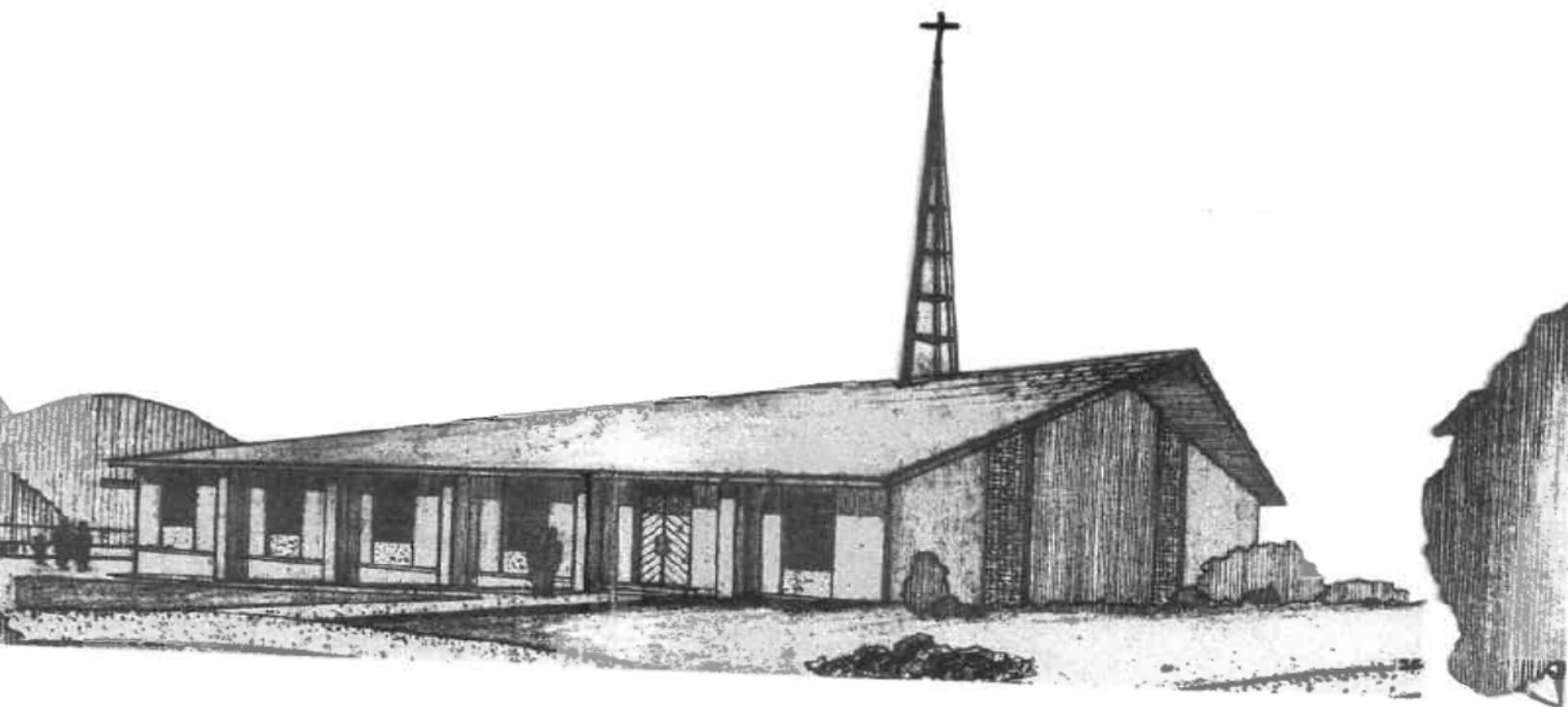
Not only was **Falckner** the first Lutheran ordained in North America, but he also published a catechism which was the first Lutheran book published on the continent. **Jones** was the Lutheran church's first African American pastor and carried out missionary work in Philadelphia which led to the formation 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.



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



Contact Us
(412) 859-3711

office@alcpgh.com
mtcalvarycem@alcpgh.com
pastorstpaulsrew@gmail.com

Ascension Lutheran Church

1290 Silver Lane
McKees Rocks, PA 15136
(Robinson Township)

Visit us on the web at
www.alcpgh.com

Ascension Lutheran Church
1290 Silver Lane
McKees Rocks, PA 15136

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

