



THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION Lutheran Church

April 2026

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
- Bible Study - Thursdays at 7:00 PM
- Soccer Shots - Saturday mornings &
Wednesday evenings (*Spring-Fall*)



2026 COUNCIL

- President – *Sharon Giza*
- Vice President – *Debbie Whitfield*
- Treasurer – *Bob Thompson*
- Secretary – *Katie Mercadante*

2026 COUNCIL LIAISONS

- Call Committee
Joyce Leister
- Christian Education
Jeff Williams
- Communications & Publications
Jeff Williams
- Fellowship, Social Ministry
& Evangelism
Debbie Whitfield
- Finance & Stewardship
Bob Stathers
- Mutual Ministry
Sharon Giza
- Personnel
Sharon Giza
- Property
Don Tarbert & Bill Whitfield
- Worship & Music
Katie Mercadante
- Youth
Katie Mercadante & Debbie Whitfield

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday April 14 at 7:00 PM

What can WE grow?



from Pastor Kobert's Desk

God is in the growing business. In the beginning God grew the universe from nothing, creating land and sea, then causing plants of all types to spring forth. Birds, fish, and animals were formed, and their populations grew. A garden filled with a multitude of

good things was planted, and people were tasked with tending to it.

In reading through the Bible, we can quickly see that God doesn't just help the flowers grow, God helps people to grow. God helps Moses and David and Samuel and Elijah and Elisha all to grow as leaders and prophets. God guides the Israelites and helps them to grow and become a mighty nation and continues to tend to them when they become scattered. God worked with the disciples and helped them grow into the apostles they became.

God tends to both the flowers of the fields and to the people and creatures that inhabit God's world. God provides for them everything they need and helps them to flourish, and God does this for us too. Every day of our lives we are given the gifts of life, food and water, shelter, and clothing. Each day enough to live and grow. How are we to then go about our lives from there?

Again, we can look to the garden of God. Plants grow, produce fruits and flowers, and eventually seeds to begin the cycle again. Seeds do not benefit the parent plant, but are the building blocks of a new one. The fruit is for the benefit of others.

We are nourished by God and given a life of abundance, and we live that out in our service to others. What fruits do we grow? What blessings do we show to the people and community around us? *What can we grow?*

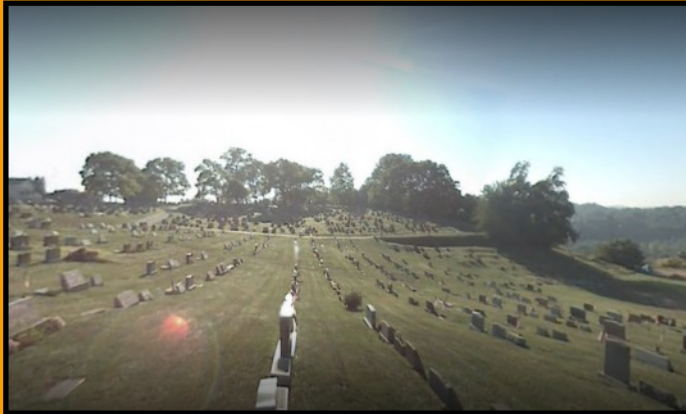
Consider some of the various ministries that have flowed through Ascension over the years. Supplies are collected for the McKees Rocks food bank and for students going back to school. Young children learn the basics of soccer, and neighborhood families enjoy the pavilion and playground. AA and NA groups gather here to support one another in their journey. Quilters share fellowship as they enjoy a hobby together, sending the work of their hands to places in need of comfort. The entire neighborhood is invited during the Yard Sale, and many more will be invited as the "Let it Shine" initiative begins to glow.

But we won't know exactly who will be blessed by our space unless seeds are planted, and connections made. This is where *you* come in. You have been blessed by God, and know what a blessing this congregation has been, is, and can be to our community. You have connections. You have friends. You see people who are looking for a place to take root and grow. Why not invite them to see the blessings God is causing to flow through this place?

What can we grow? Or maybe, what can we see God growing through us? ■

Mount Calvary Cemetery

1715 Middletown Road
 McKees Rocks, PA 15136
 Robert J. Dudek, Superintendent
 mtcalvarycem@alcpgh.com



Mount Calvary Cemetery Board Members
*Judy Henry • Bob Hughes • Bette Ann Kallay
 George C. Kasich • Pastor Kobert • Joyce Leister
 Debbie Whitfield • Jeff Williams*

Holy Week & **EASTER** schedule of services

MAUNDY THURSDAY
6:00 pm April 2, 2026
St Paul's Sewickley

GOOD FRIDAY
6:00 pm April 3, 2026
Ascension Church

EASTER SUNDAY
11:00 am April 5, 2026
Ascension Church

SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE APRIL - MAY 2026

Date	Supply	Assisting Minister	Communion Assistant	Lector	Usher	Acolyte	Sunday (or special)	color
Apr 3	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jennifer Burkholder	n/a	Multiple TBA	Volunteer	Volunteer	GOOD FRIDAY 6:00 PM	NO COLOR
Apr 5	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jeff Williams	Al Morrow	Gib Palmgren	Volunteer	Volunteer	EASTER SUNDAY	WHITE
Apr 12	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Mary Thompson	Bob Thompson	Rich Mussman	Volunteer	Volunteer	2 ND EASTER	WHITE
Apr 19	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Daniel Giza	Avis Ritter	Thad Ritter	Volunteer	Volunteer	3 RD EASTER	WHITE
Apr 26	Kathleen Howells	Jennifer Burkholder	Jeff Williams	Melissa DeCola	Volunteer	Volunteer	4 TH EASTER	WHITE
May 3	Carol Emch	Jeff Williams	Deb Walenchok	Jason Eager	Volunteer	Volunteer	5 TH EASTER	WHITE
May 10	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Mary Thompson	Bob Thompson	Sharon Giza	Volunteer	Volunteer	6 TH EASTER	WHITE
May 17	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jennifer Burkholder	Al Morrow	Emilia DeCola	Volunteer	Volunteer	7 TH EASTER	WHITE
May 24	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Jeff Williams	Avis Ritter	Thad Ritter	Volunteer	Volunteer	PENTECOST	RED
May 31	Pr. Ryan Kobert	Mary Thompson	Bob Thompson	Gib Palmgren	Volunteer	Volunteer	THE HOLY TRINITY	WHITE



Council President's **CORNER**

A message from Council President Sharon Giza



As we enter this Easter season and celebrate the resurrection of our Risen Lord, it is a wonderful time to reflect on our mission as a church. Many hands came together to beautify our sanctuary and church grounds in preparation for Holy Week, and we are grateful for the care and dedication shown by all who helped.

Over the past month, letters were sent to members we have been missing, inviting them back to worship and fellowship with us. We are also in the process of updating our church directory so we can better celebrate, recognize, and stay connected with every member of our Ascension family.

Our **"Let It Shine"** initiative has officially begun, and we are excited to continue reaching out to our community through a variety of efforts and new ideas. As part of this work, our church brochure has been completely reformatted and updated to clearly share who we are as Ascension Lutheran Church. A heartfelt thank-you to **Katie Mercadante** for completing this project — her work looks fantastic.

Finally, on **April 12**, we will hold a **Special Congregational Meeting** to vote on approving our next "Special Project": repairing our parking lot. If approved, a capital campaign will begin to repay the interest-free loan that will fund the work.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful and blessed Easter season.

Sincerely,
Sharon Giza



ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council meeting was held Tues. Mar. 10, 2026

Call to order: 6:59pm by Sharon

Attendance: Sharon, Bob T, Bob S, Jeff, Don, Katie, Joyce, Pastor Kobert, Deb W, Bill W

AED Check: Validated by Jeff W.

Review/Approve Minutes of Last Meeting: approved.

Pastor Report & Office Admin's Report presented

Officer Reports by President, VP, Treasurer presented

Old Business: Special Project ideas, Parking Lot chosen. Ascension to join Lutheran Church Extension Society (\$50 fee) to take advantage of their 0% interest loan program. Special Congregational Meeting to vote on this will be held April 12th.

New Business: Vacation Bible School dates and curriculum; scheduled for week of Aug. 10.

Committee Reports presented by: Christian Education; Communication & Publication; Fellowship, Social Ministry & Evangelism; Finance & Stewardship; Personnel; Property; Worship & Music; Youth.

Important dates:

-Clean-up Day scheduled for 3/28 (Saturday before Palm Sunday), Noon to 4pm.

-April 2nd thru 5th Holy Week Services/Easter

-Saturday June 6: Yard Sale

Motion to adjourn: Katie, Jeff.

Next Council Meeting: Tues. Apr. 14, 2026 at 7 pm

ASCENSION CHURCH **BIBLE STUDY**

**EVERY THURSDAY
at 7:00 pm**

Under the guidance of longtime spiritualist and Ascension Church member Rich Mussman, sessions promise to be friendly, interactive, and "just right." Come for a perfect evening of reflection!

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE PLANNED

YES, we're updating our church directory, and we need YOUR help. We are trying to make this EASY to do. In the coming weeks, you will receive an email with a link to a Google Form to submit your directory information. We're asking for the usual: Name, Address, Phone number, and have also included some spaces to include things like hobbies and birthdays.

Sherman



P. Sherman

123 Wallaby Way

Sydney, Australia, 12345

412-151-3600 (cell)

Preferred Contact: Text

Hobbies: Swimming

Birthday: May 30, 2003

The basics *are* required so that we can update our records, but do share as much as you would like people to know! We are NOT partnering with a company to do this, so don't worry about finding time in a narrow window to come for pictures, or a sales pitch to buy a photo package. Simply supply your own photo via email OR let us know that you need one taken. We will be in touch to coordinate! Now are you asking yourself, *what is a Google Form?* Don't worry - we will have printed copies of the update sheet in the hallway if you would prefer to submit your information that way. Questions: see Katie Mercadante or Don Tarbert (in the back row).

Special Congregational Meeting Sunday, April 12

Church Council has approved our next Special Project: repairing the church parking lot.

Because this project requires congregational approval, we will hold a Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, April 12, immediately following worship.

To support this project:

Offerings designated in "Other" or "Special Project" will go directly toward the parking lot repairs. The church will be using an interest-free loan, and we will need to begin a capital campaign to repay the loan.

If you would like more details or have questions, please speak with a member of the Property Committee or Church Council.



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*
- Tom Walenchok – brother-in-law of Deb Walenchok – *lung & brain cancer*
- Silas – 9-year-old grandson of Cy & Kathleen Howells – *recovery from brain tumor*
- Nancy Jacobs – *recovering at home!*
- Sharon Snatchko – John's mother – *currently undergoing cancer treatment*
- Deb Walenchok – *lung cancer*
- Lynn Broman – friend of Pr. Deb Thompson – *hospice care*

APRIL

APRIL BIRTHDAYS!

- Date | Member/Friend
- 2 Avis Ritter
 - 5 Dee Gratzmiller
 - 7 Judy Bryan
Jennifer Palmgren
 - 8 Leo Rickerd
 - 12 Christopher Paladino
 - 15 Samantha Siemons
 - 19 Kristin Bryan
 - 23 Mike Lescallette
 - 30 Mary Ann Groskova



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES!

- Date | Members/Friends
- 7 Leo & Leslie Rickerd
 - 29 Don & Val Tarbert




Ascension Church
YARD SALE
and Bake Sale!
SATURDAY JUNE 6, 2026
8:00 AM to NOON

- ◆ \$10 per area (approx 10'x10')
- ◆ You keep all of the \$\$\$ from what you sell!
- ◆ We provide the space, you provide your own table/set-up and treasures to sell.
 - ◆ Registration begins April 15
 - ◆ Register by calling the church office (412) 859-3711 or by e-mailing Ascensionyardsale@gmail.com

Ascension Lutheran Church | 1290 Silver Lane
Robinson Township PA 15136 | 412-859-3711



Lunch Bunch



A monthly gathering of members and friends of Ascension Church

FUN awaits Lunch Bunch April 16th

In March, a lucky thirteen people celebrated Spring eve with other Lunch Bunchers at The Yard in North Fayette. The food and companionship were good, although no one thought to recite, "Spring is sprung, the grass is ris, I wonder where the flowers is." If you missed that lunch, alas, you'll have to wait until next Spring eve.

However, you don't need to wait that long to join the next Lunch Bunch for a good lunch and fellowship. On Thursday April 16th at 11:30 AM, the Bunch will meet at Firebirds Wood Fired Grill. It's at 201 Millers Run Road - right off the Bridgeville exit from Hwy 79. You don't need to own a Firebird to attend, but if you have one, we would love to see it! Or even a leather jacket with "Firebirds" on the back would be cool to see too. As is our custom, please let Jerry Wessel (412) 787-1213 or George Kasich (412) 726-1645 know by Tuesday the 14th if you plan to attend so sufficient Firebird parking spots and seats at tables for the gang can be reserved. Now that Spring IS sprung, it's a good chance to enjoy a lunch out with the Lunch Bunchers. ~ Jerry Wessel

LUCKY US! We had a terrific time at our annual "Lucky to be Lutheran" Family BINGO event on Mar. 15th. (photo below) Thanks to all who stayed after worship to enjoy some fun and fellowship!



American 'IDLE'?

A reflection by Nancy Jacobs

If it isn't one thing, it's ten of another. My car won't start. Well, no wonder. It's been sitting idle for several months when it was too cold to go out. And I sat "idle" along with it.

"Idle" - not doing anything constructive or otherwise.

I am idle in many ways - mopping, dusting and vacuuming, and occasionally in my daily devotions. How do we get idle about being Christian? We forget to ask our friends if they need help of some kind, we forget to support Meals On Wheels or to donate to the Food Bank or - and here's the biggie - we forget how we can help our church grow.

For me, being somewhat housebound, frustration comes easily to me - there is much I cannot do actively, so "idle" is the "devil in denim" for me.

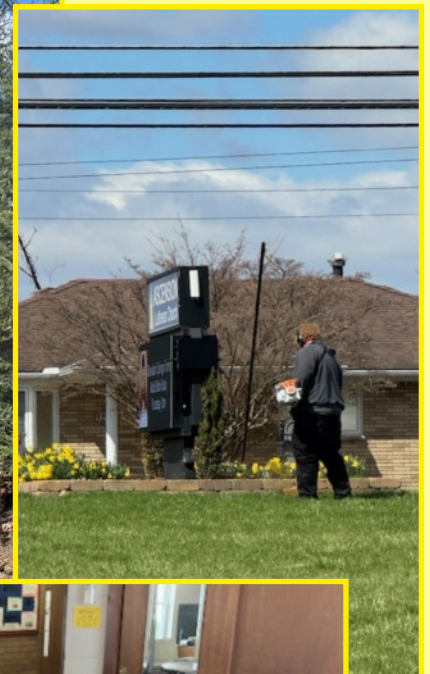
But with God's intervention maybe that could soon change. I pray (and ask you, too) that the doctors will find the cause of my poor balance. Then I will be balanced - both physically and mentally!!!

God Bless!

Nancy

Clean up, Clean up!

A hardy crew of helpers gathered at Ascension Church campus on Saturday March 28 to clean up, tidy-up and spruce up 1290 Silver Lane. Work proceeded both inside and out at noon that day and was rewarded with tasty treats at the end of the worthy endeavor. THANKS to all who gave up their Saturday afternoon to help beautify our spiritual home.



LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

April 4 Benedict the African
Confessor d. 1589

Born a slave on the island of Sicily, Benedict first lived as a hermit and labored as a plowman after he was freed. When the bishop of Rome ordered all hermits to attach themselves to a religious community, Benedict joined the Franciscans, where he served as a cook. Although he was illiterate, his fame as a confessor brought many visitors to the humble and holy cook, and he was eventually named superior of the community. A patron saint of African Americans, Benedict is remembered for his patience and understanding when confronted with racial prejudice and taunts.

April 6 Albrecht Dürer, d. 1528; Matthias Grünewald, d. 1529; Lucas Cranach, d. 1553
Artists

These great artists revealed through their work the mystery of salvation and the wonder of creation. Dürer's work reflected the apocalyptic spirit of his time. Though he remained a Roman Catholic, he was sympathetic to Martin Luther's reforming work. Grünewald's paintings are known for their dramatic forms, vivid colors, and depiction of light. Cranach's work includes many fine religious examples and several portraits of Martin Luther. Cranach was also widely known for his woodcuts.

April 9 Dietrich Bonhoeffer
Theologian, d. 1945

Bonhoeffer was a German theologian who wrote profoundly, yet in an accessible manner. In the Second World War, he became a leader of the Confessing Church in Germany that resisted the Nazi movement. Linked to a plot to kill Hitler, he was hanged shortly before the end of the war.

April 10 Mikael Agricola
Bishop of Turku, d. 1557

Consecrated bishop of Turku, Finland, without the approval of the pope, Agricola began a reform along Lutheran lines. In only three years, he translated the New Testament and worship texts into Finnish, in the process establishing the rules of Finnish writing that are still used today.

April 19 Olavus Petri, priest, d.1552; Laurentius Petri, Bishop of Uppsala, d.1573;
Renewers of the church

These two brothers studied with Luther at the University of Wittenberg and then returned to their native Sweden to introduce the Lutheran reforms. Olavus published a catechism and hymnal; Laurentius was a professor who de-fended the office of bishop and later became one.

April 21 Anselm
Bishop of Canterbury d. 1109

This eleventh- and twelfth-century Benedictine This eleventh-century monk was one of the greatest theologians of the Middle Ages. He is remembered for emphasizing the maternal aspects of God, and for the theory that the Son of God became human in order to make the necessary payment for our sin.

April 23 Toyohiko Kagawa
Renewer of society d. 1960

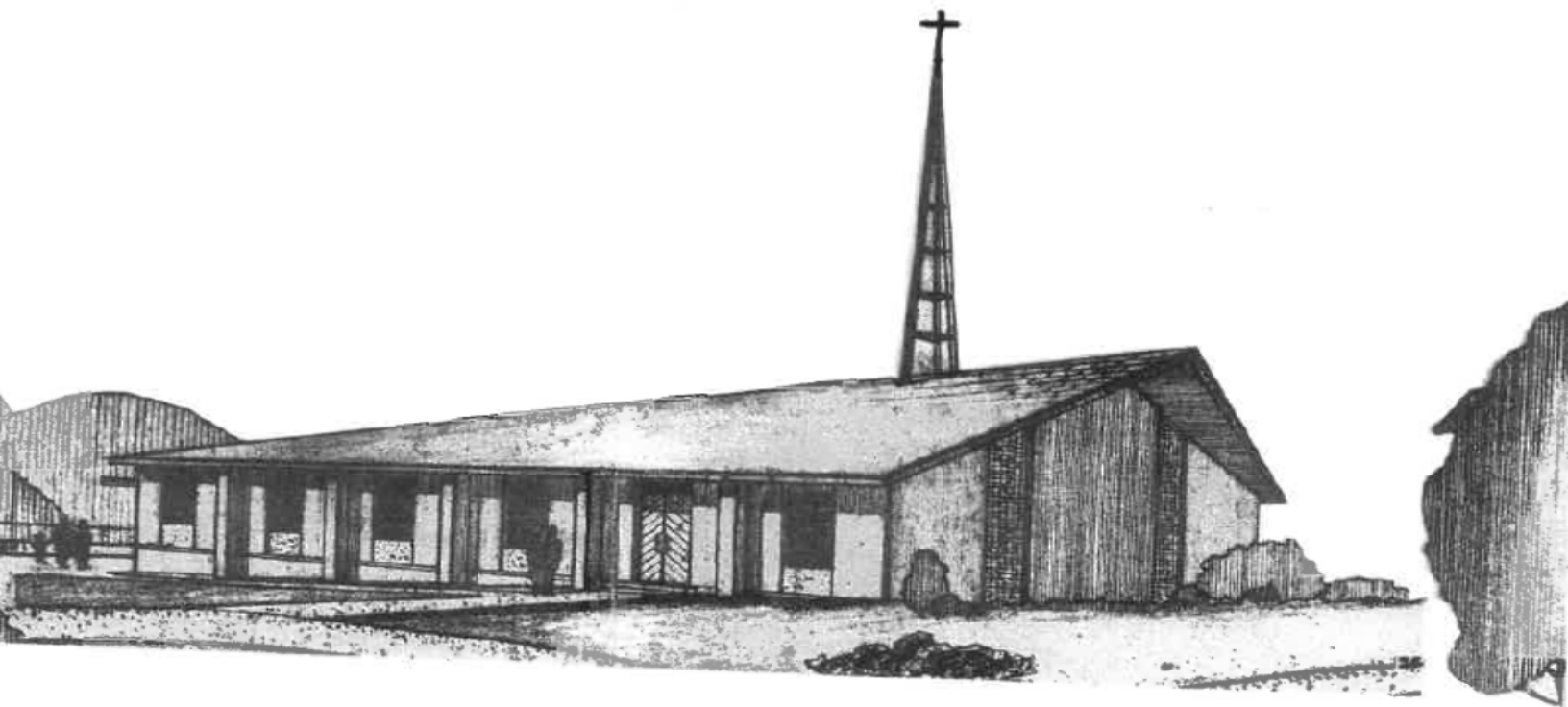
Born in Kobe, Japan, Kagawa was orphaned as a young child. Later, when he became Christian, he was disowned by the rest of his family. Wishing to bring Christian principles into society, he worked among poor people, established schools and hospitals, and worked for peace.

April 25 Mark
Evangelist

Though Mark himself was not an apostle, it is likely that he was a member of one of the early Christian communities. It is possible that he is the John Mark of Acts 12 whose mother owned the house where the apostles gathered. The gospel attributed to him is brief and direct. It is considered by many to be the earliest gospel.

April 29 Catherine of Siena
Theologian d. 1380

A member of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), Catherine was the first woman among Roman Catholics to receive the title Doctor of the Church. She was a contemplative and is known for her mystical visions of Jesus. Catherine was a humanitarian who worked to alleviate the suffering of the poor and imprisoned. She was also a renewer of church and society.



*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

