



# THE MESSENGER

## ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

AUGUST 2024

### WEEKLY EVENTS

- Sunday Worship - 10:30 AM
- Sunday School - 9:30 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 &  
Tuesday evenings (Spring-Fall)



### 2024 COUNCIL EXECUTIVES

- President – Jeff Williams
- Vice President – Jason Eager
- Secretary – Thom Kruse
- Treasurer – Bob Thompson

### 2024 COUNCIL LIAISONS

- Christian Education  
Jason Eager
- Communications & Publications  
Jason Eager
- Finance & Stewardship  
Kelly Bryan
- Mutual Ministry  
Jeff Williams
- Personnel  
Thom Kruse
- Property  
Phil Spano
- Fellowship, Social Ministry  
& Evangelism  
Sharon Giza
- Worship & Music  
Thom Kruse
- Youth  
(open)

### Next Council Meeting

Tuesday August 13 at 7:00 PM

## Speaking the in LOVE Ephesians 4:15

# TRUTH

*A message from Interim Pastor Clagg*

*Dear friends in Christ,*

We have many opportunities to speak. When with friends, enemies, family or strangers speaking is bound to be part of our experience. When someone is in danger speaking to save a life is heroic. When another is broken, the right word spoken may bring healing and wholeness.

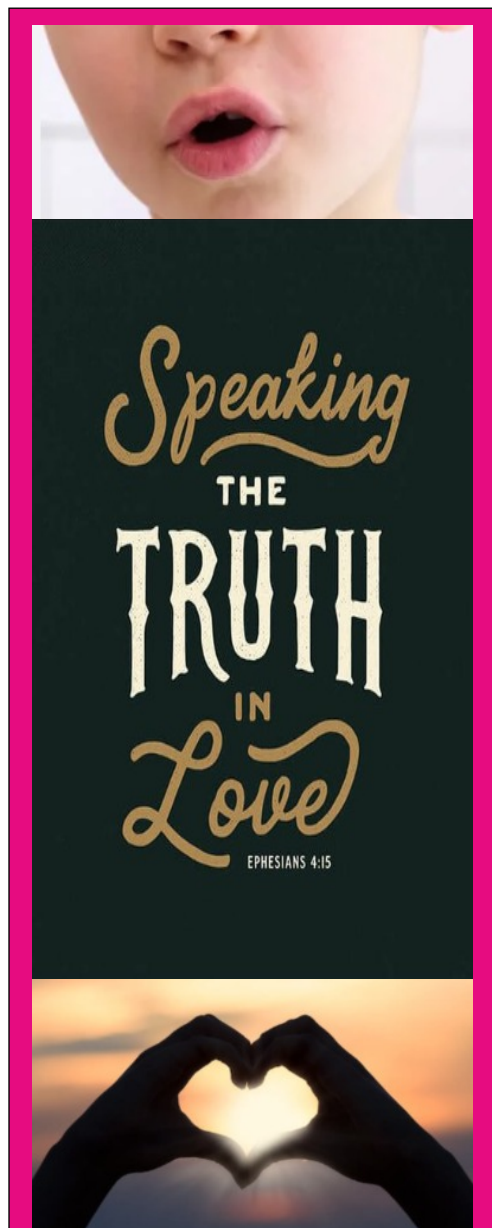
God's truth is spoken through Holy Scripture. God is feeding humanity heavenly food, giving nourishment for growth in Christ. Being present in the situations of our living, requires us to show up and to speak up.

Humility is our clothing, as God's word uncovers our own shortcomings. Absent are pride and boasting as we are moved to speak into a situation.

Extremes can be very popular and unloving. We are silent to avoid conflict or we speak too harshly with self-righteousness. Neither extreme speaks truth in love.

Dear Jesus, because you speak life into me, your child, I will not be silent nor hate-filled as you cause me to grow. Help me to speak your truth in love. Now and forever. Amen.

*Rev. Gregory Clagg  
Pastor Clagg also serves Grace Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in Rochester, Pa.*



# Mount Calvary Cemetery

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



**Mount Calvary Cemetery Board**  
Jason Eager Judy Henry  
Bob Hughes Bette Ann Kallay  
George C. Kasich Joyce Leister



## ALC Council Meeting Highlights

**Council meeting was held Tuesday July 9, 2024**

**Call to order: 7:05 pm**

**Review minutes of June meeting; minutes approved.**

- Updates of St. Andrew's.
- Need for inspirational messages for the road sign.
- AED unit in need of replacement.
- Donation of \$100 made to Forest Grove VFD.
- Motion passed to cover cost of repairs, replacement and labor for two A/C units in the sanctuary.

**Christian Education:**

- Need for volunteers to teach Children's Sunday School.

**Fellowship, Social Ministry and Evangelism:**

- Rally Day set for September 8.

**Call Committee:**

- Meeting on July 24, possible completion of MSP.

**Adjournment: 8:28 pm**

**Next meeting: Tuesday August 13 at 7 pm**



I hope everyone's had a great summer. We really appreciate the efforts Pastor Clagg has put together to help bless our elements, visit our hospital patients and attend to the needs of Ascension Church. I highly recommend – if anyone likes an early church time - to attend Grace Lutheran's 8:30 am service. (393 Adams Street in Rochester, Pa.)

### **CALL COMMITTEE**

As our Call Committee wraps up their efforts to complete our Ministry Site Profile (MSP), we will then have a clear idea of what kind of pastoral support we are looking for as we move forward as a church. When done, your council will review and we can submit the forms to formally begin our outreach for pastoral support.

### **ST. ANDREW'S UPDATE**

A few members have mentioned that we may want to investigate a two-point parish or sharing a pastor. I regularly meet with the president of St. Andrew's (Moon Township) church council to discuss this opportunity and to see where we have a common ground. Turns out that there are many similarities between our two congregations. At our next meeting, I will invite their council to come and tour the Mount Calvary Cemetery to see if it may meet their congregational needs.

### **PRAYER LIST**

As previously mentioned, now included in our monthly newsletter is the "Please keep in your prayers" list. Our shut-ins especially appreciate having that feature in the newsletter to help them stay in touch and in the know about their friends and their fellow members' families and friends who have requested prayers for their particular intentions.

Lastly, we should look forward to our Rally Day in September and to getting our Sunday School for both the children and adults started. The good news is that we have a new confirmand who was a Good Shepherd member. So very nice to gather in more of the flock from Good Shepherd.

Remember - God loves you!  
Blessings to all.

*- Jeff Williams*



Join us on  
**Sunday, September 8th**  
 for **RALLY DAY 2024!**  
 Sign-up sheets will be available in church.

**RALLY DAY ... WHAT IS IT?**

Rally Day in most Lutheran churches is a celebration that marks the start of the new Sunday School year. It also can be a day to celebrate new beginnings or to encourage more children, youth, and adults to participate in Sunday morning Christian Education classes. Rally Day can include activities such as:

- promoting students to the next level of education
- commissioning of teachers for the school year
- blessing of Sunday School participants for a successful new year, and of course,
- fellowship - including good eats, good music and good times.

*A Note of  
 Thanks  
 from  
 Nancy Jacobs*

A word of thanks for “services rendered” doesn’t always do the trick! “Words” can’t sufficiently express what is in our heart and that is where in the scope of life I am now. I have been in and out of hospitals and rehab places for about four months for a broken hip.

I have trouble walking - the right leg just won’t get going! But I am home now, continuing therapy and working on defeating the steps! Once I do that, I will be able to come and hug all of you! Hugs are better than words!

But I still need the “word” to thank you for all the prayers, calls, visits and cards that brightened my days. You can’t know how all of that has helped.

Hope to see you soon!

*PS - If you know of anyone who can assist with doing laundry, please let me know!  
 412-331-5923. Thank you!*

**Please keep in your prayers:**

- JoAnne Erwin, Dee Gratzmiller, Mary Honath, Norma Kohnen, Lottie Lodge, Jean Marion, Betty Simpson, Rose Rahner, Betty Borden – *shut-ins*
- Mary Jane McGinnis – *health concerns*
- Cole Powers, son of Amy Reckner’s co-worker – *health concerns*
- Bob Thompson – *health concerns*
- Mary Miller, friend of Sharon Giza – *multiple medical issues*
- Janis McKinney, sister of Jeff Williams – *GI surgery*
- Rachel Potts – *36-yr-old mother of 3 with terminal cancer*
- Thad Ritter – *health concerns*
- Nancy Jacobs – *recovering AT HOME! Thank you for continued prayers.*
- Ellie Sturvist, friend of Bette Kallay – *recuperating at Caring Heights*



# Best Wishes . . .

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member / Friend

- 1 Katy Thompson
- 4 Nancy Jacobs
- 6 Nolan Cropper  
Mary Jane McGinnis
- 7 Emily Paladino
- 9 Bonita Stephenson
- 10 London Rickerd
- 12 Raleigh Rickerd
- 14 Abigail Lescalette
- 15 Finn Randal
- 17 Matt Bryan
- 24 Jessica Rodriguez
- 25 Tom Lightner
- 28 Rose Marie LaQuinta



## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES!

Date | Members / Friends

- 2 Bob & Judy Bryan  
Bill & Suzie McEwen
- 3 John & Brittany Bielewicz
- 17 Phil & Dolly Spano
- 25 Drew & Joyce Leister  
Thad & Avis Ritter
- 26 Tom & Darlene Ganley



# ... and Blessings to ALL!

# READ ALL ABOUT IT!

# GO NEWS?

If you have pictures, articles, or ideas to submit for the **SEPTEMBER 2024** Newsletter, please email your info to [office@alcpgh.com](mailto:office@alcpgh.com).

# CONGRATULATIONS to Ascension's

# Class OF 2024 GRADUATES:

**Arianne Marnich & Brielle Marnich**  
*Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School*

**Charlie McMahon** – *Montour High School*

**Rachael Hall** – *Duquesne University - B.S. in Physics*

A CELEBRATION was held on SUNDAY JULY 14

Thanks to all who joined in to  
WISH OUR GRADS GOOD LUCK!



# Call Process: a Search for Leaders

The Call Process in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is a search process for church workers, such as pastors, teachers, and school administrators. It's a prayerful partnership between the congregation's leaders and the bishop's staff that aims to identify leaders who God may be calling to serve the congregation. The process involves talking with church workers, praying for guidance, and encouraging the congregation to participate.

The Call Process begins when the Synod's Office of the Bishop approves the Congregational Profile. The congregation then selects a Call Committee, who receive the names of potential candidates in a confidential process. The committee interviews the candidates and hears them preach, and then recommends one candidate to the Council. If the Council agrees, they call a special congregational meeting to vote on the candidate. The candidate then has time to consider whether to accept the call or stay in their current position.

Call Process is the way that the ELCA's 65 synodical bishops engage their congregations, church-related organizations, rostered leaders and candidates for rostered ministry in a time of thoughtful assessment and prayerful discernment about their work together in ministry and mission. The Mobility Database System (MDS) allows information from the Call Process forms to be summarized, searched and shared quickly and effectively. It greatly enhances the

## DATES to REMEMBER

Call Committee Meeting  
Wednesday August 28<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Rally Day 2024  
Sunday September 8<sup>th</sup>

Congregational Meeting |  
Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> after worship

church's ability to engage in the common work of Call Process. Each bishop is responsible for the way Call Process is managed within their respective territory.

The ELCA has a Call Process website that includes forms, a database to link the forms, and information about current openings. Call Process Online (at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)) supports the work of Call Process within the ELCA. This web site brings together the various forms used within Call Process and links them to a church-wide database – the Mobility Database System (MDS). The MDS allows information from the Call Process forms to be summarized, searched and shared quickly and effectively, greatly enhancing the church's ability to engage in the common work of Call Process.

Source: [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

## SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE - AUG. - SEPT. 2024

Date	Supply	Assisting Minister	Communion Assistant	Lector	Usher	Acolyte	Sunday (or special)	color	Council Update
Aug. 4	Kathleen Howells	Jennifer Burkholder	Jerry Wessel	Melissa DeCola	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 11	green	Kelly Bryan
Aug. 11	Pr. Larry Mort	Jeff Williams	Al Morrow	Jeff Williams	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 12	green	Phil Spano
Aug. 18	Kathleen Howells	Mary Thompson	Bob Thompson	Gib Palmgren	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 13	green	Jason Eager
Aug. 25	Pr. Melissa Stoller	Jerry Wessel	Bob Dudek	Jason Eager	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 14	green	Sharon Giza
Sept. 1	TBD	Jennifer Burkholder	Amy Kruse	Rich Mussman	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 15	green	Jeff Williams
Sept. 8	TBD	Jeff Williams	Al Morrow	Dan Giza	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 16	green	Bob Thompson
Sept. 15	TBD	Mary Thompson	Bob Thompson	Jerry Wessel	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 17	green	Kelly Bryan
Sept. 22	TBD	Jerry Wessel	Jeff Williams	Melissa DeCola	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 18	green	Phil Spano
Sept. 29	TBD	Jennifer Burkholder	Jerry Wessel	Emilia DeCola	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 19	green	Jason Eager

OVER HALF-WAY THERE . . . !



# Lunch Bunch

**JOIN US THURSDAY AUG. 15!**

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

Last month on Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, fourteen eager Ascension Church "Lunch Bunchers" descended upon "The Italian Kitchen" (otherwise known in Italian circles as "La Cucina") on Three Springs Drive in Weirton, W.Va. It was quite a noisy group – until the food was served, and promptly turned into a calm Bunch Munch. Who knew (certainly not me) that someone could order a "small" lunch (as I did), eat only half of it (as I also did), and still have room (that would be me as well) for a BIG dessert (yum)? La Cucina always has great-looking (and great-tasting) desserts! We had plenty of room on this trip, and could have used a few more Bunchers and Munchers – so read on for your chance to join our August event.

On Thursday August 15<sup>th</sup>, the hungry group will visit 255 Camp Horne Road for lunch at a favorite spot, "Sunny Jim's" – not to be confused with "sunny gyms" which are workout places with lots of windows. Well, only our jaws will be getting a workout that day, enjoying mouthful after mouthful of Sunny Jim's excellent menu items.

Make it a date! Call Jerry Wessel (412) 787-1213 or Nancy Schreiber (412) 859-3969 by Tuesday August 13 if you'd like to join the bunch for the Aug. 15 lunch. Carpoolers usually gather at church around 11am (depending on the travel distance) and trek to the venue of the month to arrive for an 11:30 seating. Please let Jerry or Nancy know if you'll be coming, so that they can warn Jim in advance of how many to plan for, and so that he therefore can remain "Sunny." It wouldn't be good for business if he had to change his name to "Grumpy Jim's."

We hope to have you along, Thursday August 15<sup>th</sup>!

*~ Jerry Wessel*

## CREATIVE MINDS NEEDED:

We are open to all great suggestions for our roadside messages!

We'd like to keep a library of inspirational and clever messages for our roadside sign, which soon will be replaced with an electronic version!

Send your suggestions to Jeff Williams at [jeffctsvmanw@gmail.com](mailto:jeffctsvmanw@gmail.com)

# CREATIVE HANDS WANTED: BIG BOXES!

Ascension's Creative Hands group is wrapping up the 2024 quilting season and are in need of LARGE boxes to pack the 75 quilts which will be shipped to charity organizations for distribution to those in need. So, please save those BIG boxes and bring them to church!

# LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

**August 8 - Dominic, d. 1221** *founder of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans)*

Dominic was a Spanish priest who saw the wealth of the clergy as a stumbling block for the church, so he formed a movement, the Order of Preachers (commonly called Dominicans) devoted to itinerant preaching and living in poverty.

**August 10 - Lawrence, d.258** *deacon, martyr*

As one of the seven deacons of the church at Rome, Lawrence was responsible for the church's financial matters and for the care of the poor. Asked by the emperor to gather the church's treasure, he presented a collection of orphans, lepers, and the like. The enraged emperor Valerian had him put to death.

**August 11 - Clare of Assisi d. 1253** *Abbess of San Damiano*

At age eighteen, Clare of Assisi heard Francis preach a sermon in a church in town. From that time, she determined to follow in his example of Christian living. With Francis's help (and against the wishes of her father) she and a growing number of companions established a women's Franciscan community, called the Order of Poor Ladies, or Poor Clares. She became a confidante and advisor to Francis, and in standing up against the wishes of popes for the sake of maintaining complete poverty, she helped inspire other women to pursue spiritual goals.

**August 13 - Florence Nightingale d. 1910; Clara Maass d. 1901** *renewers of the church*

**Nightingale** was born in England, and horrified her wealthy family by deciding to become a nurse. Trained at Kaiserswerth, Germany, with a Lutheran order of deaconesses, she led a group of nurses in ministering in the midst of the Crimean War, and worked for hospital reform. **Maass**, a native of New Jersey, also was a war nurse, and volunteered as a subject for research on yellow fever. She died of the disease.

**August 14 - Maximilian Kolbe, d. 1941; Kaj Munk, d. 1944;** *martyrs*

**Kolbe** was a Franciscan priest, born Raymond Kolbe. After spending some time working in Asia, he returned in 1936 to his native Poland, where he supervised a friary that came to house thousands of Polish war refugees, mostly Jews. The Nazis were watching, however, and he was arrested. Confined in Auschwitz, Kolbe gave generously of his meager resources and finally volunteered to be starved to death in place of another man who was a husband and father. After two weeks, he was executed by a lethal injection.

**Munk**, a Danish Lutheran pastor and playwright, was an outspoken critic of the Nazis, who occupied Denmark during the Second World War. His plays frequently highlighted the eventual victory of the Christian faith despite the church's weak and ineffective witness. The Nazis feared Munk because his sermons and articles helped to strengthen the Danish resistance movement. He was executed by the Gestapo on January 5, 1944.

**August 15 - Mary, Mother of Our Lord**

The church (including Martin Luther) honors Mary with the Greek title *Theotokos*, meaning God-bearer. Origen first used this title in the early church, and the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon upheld it. Luther upheld this same title in his writings. The honor paid to Mary as *Theotokos* and mother of our Lord goes back to biblical times, when Mary herself sang, "from now on all generations will call me blessed" (Luke 1:48). Mary's life revealed the presence of God incarnate, and it revealed God's presence among the humble and poor. Mary's song, the Magnificat, speaks of reversals in the reign of God: the mighty are cast down, the lowly are lifted up, the hungry are fed, and the rich are sent away empty-handed.

**August 20 - Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, d. 1153**

A Cistercian monk, Bernard was a man of great spirituality who wrote mystical works and criticized those whom he thought took an overly intellectual approach to the faith. He became an abbot, and wrote several hymns that are still beloved today.

**August 24 - Bartholomew** *Apostle*

Mentioned as one of Jesus' disciples in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Bartholomew's name is replaced in John's gospel by Nathanael, leading many to believe that the two are different names for the same person. Little is known about his work, though some traditions place him later in India or Armenia.

**August 28 - Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, d. 430**

Augustine was one of the greatest theologians of the Western church. Born in North Africa, he was a philosophy student in Carthage, where he later became a teacher of rhetoric. Much of his young life was a debauched one. As an adult he came under the influence of Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, and through him came to see Christianity as a religion appropriate for a philosopher. Augustine was baptized by Ambrose at the Easter Vigil in 387. He was ordained four years later and made bishop of Hippo in 396. Augustine was a defender of the Christian faith and argued, against the Donatists, that the holiness of the church did not depend on the holiness of its members, particularly the clergy, but that holiness comes from Christ, the head of the church. Augustine's autobiography, *Confessions*, tells of his slow movement toward faith and includes the line "Late have I loved thee."

**August 28 - Moses the Black d.ca. 400** *monk, martyr*

Converted from life as a thief and a robber to Christianity, Moses was an Ethiopian who became a desert monk at Skete. The change in his heart and life had a profound impact on his native country. He was murdered when Berber bandits attacked his monastery.



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

**Contact Us**  
(412) 859-3711

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PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

