

THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 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 - Tuesday evenings (*Spring-Fall*)



2024 COUNCIL EXECUTIVES

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

2024 COUNCIL LIAISONS

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

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday October 1st at 7:00 PM

GOD'S Faithfulness FAVOR

A message from Interim Pastor Clagg

Dear friends in Christ,

The book of Esther helps us to celebrate God's faithfulness, especially when we find ourselves far from the comforts of home. Esther, an orphan who is living in the anti-Jewish Persian world, risks her own life to protect her people in obedience to God's saving ways. It seems the lot of hatred has selected the Hebrew people for persecution and hardship. However, Esther is led by God in a bold and obedient path which reveals God's people being selected for a feast of new life.

Certain widespread persecution is turned into an occasion for thanksgiving, generosity, and celebrations. The festival of Purim, celebrated in the month of March, continues to be an important time for God's people to remember and to relive the faithful generosity of God's saving presence.

Perhaps it is odd to mention Purim at this time of year. Yet, I am aware that some of my sisters and brothers in Christ are experiencing displacement when the plethora of fall feasts and Halloween celebrations purposely exclude Jesus.

Be encouraged by the witness of God's faithful in Esther. God's favor is selecting us in faithful obedience as we enter into these celebrations of our time. Like the family of God in Esther's time, we can wear costumes and masks, raise alms for our neighbors, and be generous to one another as we enter the feasts.

Let our witness be bold and clearly evident, we believe God is blessing us with opportunities for celebrating Christ's life.

Pastor Gregory Clagg

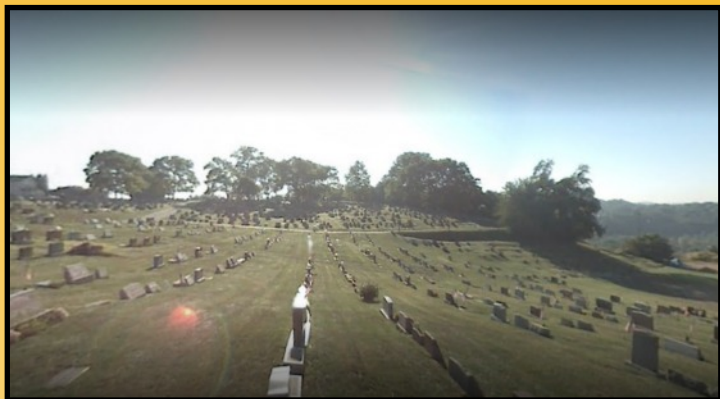
The Book of ESTHER



*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 September 10, 2024

AED check has been added to the monthly agenda

Call to order: 7:04pm

Attendance: Jeff, Jason, Sharon, Bob, Phil, Pastor Clagg, Joyce

Jeff read the September devotion.

Minutes of Last Meeting reviewed and approved.

Old Business: AED update and e-Sign update.

New Business: Call Committee MSP Form review approved; Council Nominations in October; Congregational Meeting in December.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education, Jason: Kids' Sunday School will move to a once-per-month class schedule

Fellowship, Social Ministry & Evangelism, Sharon: Rally Day successful. Majority stayed for lunch.

Next event is outdoor campfire on October 12.

Property, Phil S: New rope lights for the outdoor cross

Personnel, Thom: evaluations by the end of December
Meeting adjourned 8:14pm

Next Council meeting: Tuesday, October 1 at 7 pm



Council President's
CORNER

NEW PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

We have completed the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) in our search for new pastoral leadership.

It may be time to reflect on some key questions:

- What do you look for in a pastor? •What talents are you willing to share with our ministry? •Do you consider yourself a disciple?

The readings of scripture concerning disciples seem to focus on learning, being taught, and following. We hope our new pastor can help us to be better disciples.

THANKS FOR YOUR CARE!

I would like to again thank all those who visit our homebound and members in assisted living settings.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES

I want send a big thank you to all those who keep the church functioning! We all appreciate those "behind-the-scenes" things done in service to our congregation.

PASTORAL CARE

Remember our interim Pastor Clagg is available if you have a need for prayers or support. If you're an early bird, I highly recommend attending the early service (8:30am) at Grace Lutheran in Rochester, where Pastor Clagg regularly serves.

Blessings to all,

Jeff Williams

Ascension Church Council president

• DATES to REMEMBER •

OCTOBER 2024

- All Month Veterans Clothing Collection
- All Month Creative Hands Blanket Crafting
- 1 Council Meeting
- 12 Campfire Fellowship
- Creative Hands Quilt packing
- 13 Creative Hands Quilt blessing
- 15 Call Committee Interview Training
- 27 Reformation Sunday

NOVEMBER 2024

- 5 Election Day
- 11 Veterans' Day
- 12 Council Meeting
- 28 Thanksgiving

Creative Hands are planning to ship our quilts on October 14, 2024. We sure could use some help on Saturday, October 12 bringing them up from the trailer to display them in the church. Anyone who helped to make the quilts is also welcome to get your pictures taken with them. We plan on doing this at 1:00 pm. We also need people to take the pictures.

These new quilts will be blessed during church service on Sunday, October 13. If we could also have some volunteers to help after worship folding the quilts, packing them in boxes, sealing and labeling, that would be very much appreciated. There are 75 quilts this year - more than we have ever made.

We will stack all of the finished boxes inside the front of the church. Bob Dudek and Frank McQuillan from Mt. Calvary Cemetery will then pick up and deliver them to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Zelienople on Monday, October 14.

Contact Judy Henry for any questions. Thanks everyone for your time, materials, boxes and support. God Bless. ~Judy Henry

Photos of this year's quilts will appear in November's newsletter!



**SOCIAL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES
a Special Event**

**Church Campfire Fellowship:
A Night Under the Stars!**

Join us for an evening of
faith, fun, and fellowship!

We're gathering around the campfire
for a night filled with:

- Delicious s'mores and mountain pies
- Joyful singing and laughter
- Warm conversations and new friendships

Date: Saturday October 12, 2024

Time: 6:00 PM

All ages are welcome!

Bring your family, friends,
and a heart ready for community.

#ChurchFamily #CampfireNight #FaithAndFellowship



"GOD BLESS YOU MORE!!"

Christian Assembly Church in Industry, Pa. made a mission trip to the Rosebud Indian Reservation in Mission, South Dakota.

The church sent their thanks to the Creative Hands group and Ascension Church member seamstress Darlene Witt, who coordinated the delivery of dresses to the children of the mission.

"Thank you so much for the dresses, the blankets and the doll. They were a success!!!! God bless you more!! The girls had pretty new dresses for the first day of school."

Some of the dresses were cleverly created from leftover quilt segments.



Happy Halloween! Thursday Oct. 31, 2024



Best Wishes . . .

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS!

- Date | Member/Friend
7 Suzie Bryan
8 Cayley Hughes
9 Rich Mussman
10 Callie Derbish
Rachael Hall
13 Jerry Wessel
20 Dave Walenchok
23 Myrtle Cairns
26 Thad Ritter



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES!

- Date | Members/Friends
4 Brian & Jeannette Tomchak
7 Mike & Jill Lescalette
12 Bob & Mary Hughes
15 Travis & Candace McEwen
21 Michael & Diane Bayer



. . . and Blessings to ALL!

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 – *medical issues*
- Janis McKinney, sister of Jeff Williams – *GI surgery*
- Thad Ritter – *health concerns*
- Nancy Jacobs – *recovering at home! Thank you for continued prayers.*
- Ellie Sturvist, friend of Bette Kallay – *recovering at Caring Heights*
- Frank Gillespie, friend of Amy Reckner – *cancer*
- Joyce Leister – *recovering from fractured foot*
- Bill McEwen – *multiple health concerns*

Lunch Bunch



A monthly gathering of members and friends of Ascension Church

**THURSDAY
OCT. 17
Shakespeare's
Castle**

In September, sixteen members of Ascension's Lunch Bunch went to "Wild and Wonderful" West Virginia for a meal at Dee Jay's. The "wild" part was the hoards of spotted lantern flies in the parking lot, but the "wonderful" included low gas prices, good company and great food. The special was a pulled pork quesadilla, which WAS very special, but just a bit too much to leave room for peanut butter pie ... bummer! George Kasich was re-baptized by the waitress, but fortunately, it was unsweetened iced tea, so George's personality didn't get any sweeter. If you missed September's gathering, you sure missed a good time! So now why not consider joining us in October . . .

On Thursday the 17th of October, the Bunch will make their annual visit to "Shakespeare's Castle." Medieval dress is *not* required, but if anyone would like to perform a scene from one of Shakespeare's plays, I'm sure that the patrons and staff would enjoy it almost as much as we enjoy the fantastic pumpkin bisque, a delightful offering served in October.

We'll meet at the Castle at 11:30 AM (1495 Mercer Road, Ellwood City, about a 45-minute drive from church through scenic countryside). Please let Jerry Wessel (412-787-1213) or Nancy Schreiber (412-859-3969) know by Tuesday Oct. 15 if you plan to attend so that a large enough room is reserved. Great food, great company, and as Will himself might say – "As You Like It." ~Jerry Wessel

☆☆VETERANS☆☆ CLOTHING DRIVE

Cleaning out your closets?

Bring them to church!

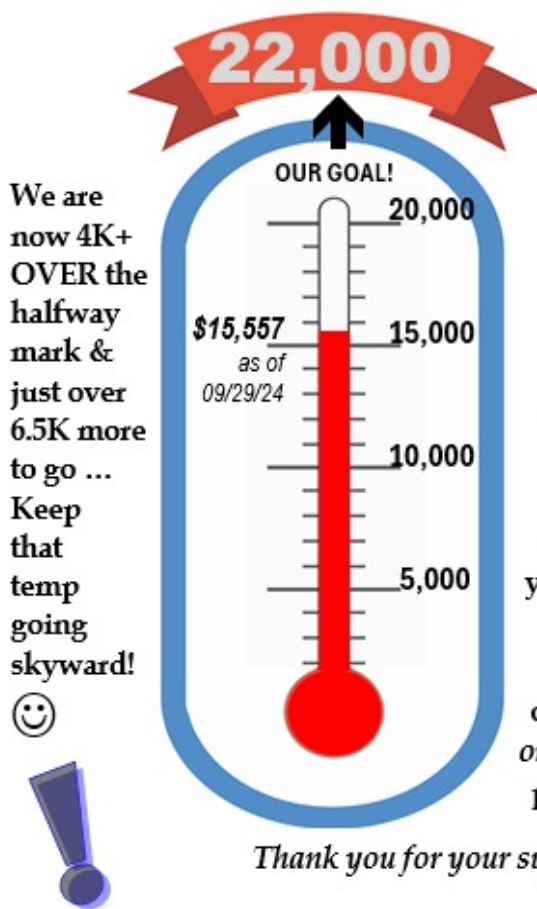
There will be a collection of new and gently used clothing during the month of October to donate to local veterans.

Both men's and women's items: Socks, T-shirts, sweatshirts and sweatpants are definitely needed.

Drop-off bins will be available at church.

Thank You for your donations for our vets!

ALMOST 3/4 OF THE WAY THERE!



Thank You for helping to fund this new Special Project by directing a portion of your Sunday offering to "OTHER" on your giving envelope or write "e-Sign" on your pew envelope offering.

Thank you for your support!

He is With Us Constantly ...

A reflection by Nancy Jacobs

It seems like since we were little kids in Sunday School, we were told that God wants us to be happy and enjoy life. Yeah, right! I spilled my morning coffee, stubbed my toe and the cat missed the litter box....what's to be happy about?? (You can add your own gripes here).

STOP! Remember some more of our SS teaching: *God has a plan for us and He is with us constantly.*

His plan covers all aspects of our lives -- good, bad or otherwise. It's a plan for when we are faced with turmoil and troubles or a scary situation.

His plan is that we forget about focusing on ourselves. His plan is that we focus on others — how we can help our church and our members, how we can help our friends and families, our community, the needy and downtrodden, the homeless and those with no hope.

Sounds like a really good plan but hard to follow --- unless we re-read the part that says *He is with us constantly!*

NEARING THE FINISH LINE ...

With the fund-raising goal for our e-Sign project nearly met (THANK YOU, EVERYONE!), Council has issued a challenge to raise \$3,000 in short order so that we can place an early deposit and get the process started before winter is upon us! Please consider designating your Sunday offering to "OTHER" so that we can meet this challenge.

★ T-H-A-N-K Y-O-U ★

FUN WITH FLEECE!

During the month of October, Ascension's Creative Hands group will be looking for volunteers to make fleece blankets. No crafting experience is necessary, only cutting and tying a knot is required. This event promises to be a fun craft project, especially for families.



NOTE: If anyone wants to learn how to make these fleece blankets for the clothing drive, Amy Kruse will be available after worship on Sunday October 6 to demonstrate this fun and easy technique!

NOTICE:

NO Adult Sunday School
Sunday October 13 & 27

Call Committee
Interview Training
with Pastor Asplin will be held
Tuesday Oct. 15 at 7:00 pm.

RALLY DAY 2024 WRAP-UP



RALLY DAY 2024 happened on Sunday September 8 and was a well-attended affair, from the morning service to the family gathering following worship. The Pittsburgh Steelers theme for the day proved to be good luck for the home team, who won 18-10 vs the Atlanta Falcons.



☺ **PUMPKINS** ☺ **PAINTING** ☺

☺ **PANCAKES** ☺

Please mark your calendars to join us for our upcoming

Pumpkin Painting and Pancakes event!!

Held during the Sunday School hour on

Sunday, October 27th at 9:30am

RSVP to Melissa at melissadecola@hotmail.com so that we can plan accordingly



Hope to see YOU there!



AUTISM SPEAKS 2024 - Pittsburgh Walk was held Saturday September 28 at Acrisure Stadium. Participants walked a one-mile loop around the stadium, located on Pittsburgh's North Shore. Ascension Church was represented and a donation was made with the monies collected at the Autism Awareness event held at Ascension back in April. Team "Jacob's Journey" included members of the extended Thompson family.

LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

October 4

Francis of Assisi, *renewer of the church*, d. 1226

Born into the family of a wealthy merchant, Francis gave up his inheritance to serve poor people. He formed the Order of Friars Minor (OFM, called Franciscans). Francis had a spirit of gratitude for all of God's creation.

Theodor Fliedner, *renewer of society*, d. 1864

Fliedner helped to bring about a revival of the ministry of deaconesses among Lutherans. The motherhouse he founded in Kaiserswerth, Germany, inspired many around the world to take up this ministry.

October 6

William Tyndale, *translator, martyr*, d. 1536

Tyndale was ordained a priest in England; his life's desire was to translate the Bible into English. He was opposed by King Henry VIII, causing him to flee to Germany. He completed the New Testament in 1525, but before he could finish the Old Testament, he was tried for heresy and burned at the stake.

October 7

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, *pastor in North America*, d. 1787

Divided Lutherans in America asked leaders in Europe to send someone who could take charge and unite their work. Muhlenberg was sent, and was effective in organizing the American Lutherans. His liturgical principles became the basis for the Common Service of 1888.

October 15

Teresa of Ávila, *teacher, renewer of the church*, d. 1582

Teresa of Ávila (AH-vee-la) is also known as Teresa de Jesús. She chose the life of a Carmelite nun and worked to reform her monastic community in Ávila. Her reforms asked nuns to maintain life in the monastic enclosure without leaving it and to identify with the poor by not wearing shoes.

October 17

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, *martyr*, d. ca. 115

Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch in Syria, the city where the name "Christians" originated. The letters of Ignatius encouraged Christians to live in love, yet stand firm in true doctrine. When his own martyrdom approached, he wrote, "I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. . . . Do not stand in the way of my birth to real life."

October 18

Luke, *Evangelist*

St. Luke is identified as the author of both Luke and Acts. Some of the most loved parables, including the good Samaritan and the prodigal son, are found only in this gospel. Luke's gospel has also yielded some of its most beautiful songs, including the *Magnificat*.

October 23

James of Jerusalem, *martyr*, d. ca. 62

One of three early-church leaders named James, this man is identified in the New Testament as a brother of Jesus. Scholars are uncertain whether this means a blood brother. He was a leader of the church in Jerusalem.

October 26

Philipp Nicolai, d. 1608; **Johann Heermann**, d. 1647; **Paul Gerhardt**, d. 1676; *hymnwriters*

These great hymnwriters all worked in 17th-century Germany in times of war and plague. Nicolai, a pastor, lost 1,300 parishioners to plague, 170 in one week. He wrote "O Morning Star, how fair and bright." Heermann's hymns, including "Ah, holy Jesus," often express the emotions of faith. Gerhardt, perhaps the greatest Lutheran hymnwriter, was a pastor in Berlin.

October 28

Simon and Jude, *Apostles*

In New Testament lists of the apostles, Simon the "zealot" or Cananaean is mentioned, but he is never mentioned apart from these lists. Jude, sometimes called Thaddeus, is also mentioned in lists of the Twelve. A traditional story says that they traveled together on a missionary journey to Persia and were both martyred there.

October 31

Reformation Day

By the end of the seventeenth century, many Lutheran churches celebrated a festival commemorating Martin Luther's posting of the *Ninety-five Theses*, a summary of the abuses in the church of his time. At the heart of the reform movement was the gospel, the good news that it is by grace through faith that we are justified and set free.

Source: www.sundaysandseasons.com

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE - OCTOBER 2024

Date	Supply	Assisting Minister	Communion Assistant	Lector	Usher	Acolyte	Sunday (or special)	color	Council Update
Oct 6	Pr. Deb Thompson	Mary Thompson	Bob Thompson	Gib Palmgren	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 20	green	Sharon Giza
Oct 13	Janice Jeletic	Jerry Wessel	Bob Dudek	Jason Eager	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 21	green	Kelly Bryan
Oct 20	TBA	Jennifer Burkholder	Al Morrow	Rich Mussman	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 22	green	Bob Thompson
Oct 27	Pr. Dona Van Eck	Jeff Williams	Amy Kruse	Dan Giza	Volunteer	Volunteer	Pentecost 23 Reformation	green or red	Phil Spano



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

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

