



# THE HEART OF ASCENSION

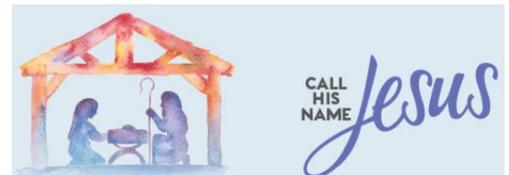
December  
2019



Advent is coming **December 1st**. There are Advent calendars for children available on the table in the Narthex. Please take one (or two or more) for the children in your life – children, grandchildren, neighbors, school friends. Evangelism/Outreach Board

## ADVENT DEVOTIONS

The 2019 Lutheran Hour Ministries' Advent Devotions are entitled "*Call His Name Jesus.*" The devotions focus attention on when God became one of us ... born poorly, humbly, and vulnerably into this world of sin and darkness. "This is the start of God's final act to save us," said Dr. Kari Vo, theological writer for LHM and the author of this year's devotions. These devotions can be received as an e-mail subscription throughout the holidays; they can also be read online or heard as a podcast at [www.lhm.org/advent](http://www.lhm.org/advent). **Copies are available on the table in the Narthex.**



**WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS TEA** – The LWML is once again sponsoring a Christmas Tea on Saturday, **December 7th** from 10 AM to Noon. Hope to see you there!

## Congregation Meeting

A Congregation Meeting will be held on Sunday, **December 8, 2019**, after the Education Hour (at Noon).

On Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24, 2019, at 7:00 PM, there will be a candlelight worship service. This will be Pastor Lee's last service with us. Please come celebrate the true meaning of Christmas during the Christmas Eve Worship Service!





**Holy Communion in December will be celebrated on December 1, December 22, and December 29, 2019.**

**DECORATE THE CHURCH** – Wednesday, **December 4**, we will be decorating the church for Christmas, from 9 AM to Noon. Hope you can help.



**CHRISTMAS AT CONCORDIA** – We will again be purchasing gifts for Concordia residents in Franklin Park. **We will give out names on Sunday, December 1st and December 8th.** Please have your wrapped gift returned to the church by **December 15th** with the paper that has gift ideas attached on the outside. Thank you for your generosity in advance. Any questions, please contact Cheryl Saffa at 412-366-9681 or Nancy Hughey at 412-367-1099.

**YOUNG AT HEART** – Our next Young at Heart get-together will be at Middle Road Inn on Tuesday, December 10, 2019, at **12:30 PM**. This is a casual get-together where we enjoy good food and fellowship. Please join us!! If you plan to attend, please call Sally Long at 724-449-2618.



**SOAR RESPITE NIGHT** will be held on Friday, **December 13, 2019** from 6-9 PM and **we will be having a birthday party for Jesus!** SOAR (**Special **Opportunities, **Ailities, and **Relationships**) is for children with special needs and their typical siblings ages 2-10. This free event is a “night off” for parents where children will have fun playing games, creating crafts, making music, and forming relationships with their buddy and other children. **We try to have a buddy for each child, so we can always use more volunteers!** If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please email [soar@ascensionpgh.com](mailto:soar@ascensionpgh.com) or see Emily Marcellus.******



*We wish you a Blessed and Christ-filled Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year!*



**THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** will be presented during the worship service on **Sunday, December 15, 2018** at 9:30 AM. In preparation for the pageant, there will be **NO children's Sunday School classes on December 8** in order to rehearse for the pageant and also there will be a dress rehearsal on **Saturday, December 14** at 10:00 AM.

**NO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES** – There will be no Christian Education classes on **December 15th** or **December 29th.**



**BAND OF BROTHERS** is scheduled to meet on Saturday, **December 21, 2019.** Fellowship starts at 8:30 AM and the Bible Study begins at 9:00 AM. This group is led by Bill Seitz and meets in the Fireside Room. All men (young and old) are welcome to attend!



Thank you to all who have contributed to the work of the Trustees. So many have offered their services, skills, knowledge, time and money, and we really appreciate all you have done!

**OUR CHURCH AT WORK**

The Trustee Committee

**OFFICE HELP NEEDED** – Barb will be on vacation December 25, 2019-January 1, 2020. The church office will be closed on December 25 and January 1. We are looking for volunteers to come into the office for a half-day (9 AM to 1 PM) while Barb is on vacation (December 26, 27, 30, and 31) to answer the phone and the door. If you are able to help, please call or email Barb at 412-364-4463 or [secretary@ascensionpgh.com](mailto:secretary@ascensionpgh.com). Thank you!



**MORNING WITH THE LORD** – Join us for *Praise and Prayer Time* Wednesday mornings at 10:00 AM in the Fireside Room. We will not be meeting on Christmas Day or New Year's Day, but will resume on January 8, 2020. For more information, please see Bob Booth.



Thank you to our wonderful Trustees for the work they've completed to get new carpet and flooring installed. What a beautiful place for us to glorify God and eventually invite a future Pastor to visit. *Will you please help us by avoiding bringing in food or drinks to the Sanctuary where possible?*



As we prepare for a new year, we are in need of several volunteers to serve on the Altar Guild. This consists of serving for one month to prepare the altar for Communion twice during that month.

We are also in need of someone to help with the changing of the banners in the Sanctuary. This consists of climbing a ladder to put a banner on a rod on brackets behind the praise band equipment. This is usually done once a month.

Also, we need someone to coordinate the Easter Flower Sale. This consists of organizing the sale of flowers for Easter morning and arranging them in front of the altar.

Please see Janet Seitz if you are willing to help in any of these ways.

Congratulations to Pastor Lee who has qualified for the Boston Marathon!



Don't forget to save your cancelled stamps from your Christmas cards for LWML and also used printer cartridges. The cancelled stamps may be placed in Sandy Malarkey's mailbox in the Narthex. There is a basket under the mailboxes in the Narthex for the printer cartridges. Thank you!





# *Operation Christmas Child 2019*



Ascension had another successful year collecting shoeboxes for underprivileged children throughout the world. The goal this year was 200 boxes. By the grace of

God (and some last minute additions) we packed **204!!** That's 204 Gospel Opportunities (or GO boxes) to bring others to Christ. It's not only the children who receive these shoeboxes that are affected, but their friends, families, and neighbors may be saved by the boxes YOU packed as well. You are making an eternal difference! **THANK YOU** to everyone who packed a box or prayed for this program. Please continue to pray for Operation Christmas Child and all those who will be processing, packaging, transporting, and distributing these boxes. They are taken to remote areas of the world, war-torn countries, and countries that are hostile to the name of Christ.

Again,

**THANK YOU!!**





**As you prepare your Christmas cards, please remember our shut-ins:**

Elva Fields  
1927 Buena Vista Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15214

Helen Goettmann  
ManorCare  
1105 Perry Highway, Room 126A  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Lois Kitzki  
Elmcraft of Saxonburg  
100 Bella Court, Room 306  
Saxonburg, PA 16056

Phyllis Kitzki  
Concordia Lutheran Ministries  
134 Marwood Road  
Lund Four, Room 2035  
Cabot, PA 16023

Clay McClellan  
The Arbors at St. Barnabas  
85 Charity Place  
Valencia, PA 16059

Donald Sohngen  
The Arbors at St. Barnabas  
5827 Meridian Road  
Gibsonia, PA 15044

Richard Stauffer  
3091 Meadowbrook Court  
Gibsonia, PA 15044

Nadine Weber  
Concordia of Wexford  
125 Brown Road  
Wexford, PA 15090

Save the Date!



Vacation Bible School  
July 13-16, 2020  
5:45-8:15 p.m.



**December Anniversaries:**

- 20 Ron & Ruth Gredlein (50 years!)
- 27 Clay & Diane McClellan

**December Birthdays:**

- |    |                    |    |                   |
|----|--------------------|----|-------------------|
| 3  | Abel Debner        | 21 | Dan Skrastins     |
| 4  | Bonnie Clark       | 21 | Kathy Stuckler    |
| 7  | Maggie Larrow      | 22 | Reed Gaertner     |
| 8  | Samuel Rajendaran  | 22 | Mark Koorsen      |
| 11 | Vicki Wiegand      | 23 | Jack Connolly     |
| 12 | Craig Preisendefer | 23 | Evan McMillin     |
| 13 | Oak Gaertner       | 25 | Our Savior, Jesus |
| 15 | Gene Williams, Jr. | 28 | Connie Letters    |
| 19 | Mariann Kaczmarek  | 29 | Kim Zdobinski     |
| 19 | Tim Koontz         | 30 | Linda Williams    |
| 21 | Glenna Powers      |    |                   |

**IF WE MISSED YOUR BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 412-364-4463.**

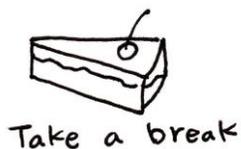


*Happy 50th Anniversary to Ron and Ruth Gredlein on December 20, 2019! May God richly bless you with many more happy years together!*

**FOR SALE:** Casio Keyboard and stand LK-40 for \$75.00. It has built-in 100 rhythms, 100 tones, 100 song bank, and a key lighting system. E-mail or call Marty Dodson at [MLDodson63@aol.com](mailto:MLDodson63@aol.com) or 724-624-5538.



**THANK YOU** for all the thoughts, prayers, and cards I received concerning my eye operation! They were greatly appreciated. It was a success and the eye is healing nicely. Bob Marcellus



The **Ascension Community Fellowship Luncheon** is taking a break in December due to the busyness of the month. Stay tuned for information on the next date!

**THRIVENT POP TAB CHALLENGE ENDS DECEMBER 3RD.**

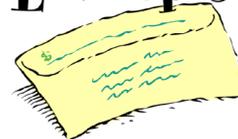
Collection containers are on the table in the Narthex and on the shelf by Barb's desk by the Fireside Room.



The 2020 flower chart will be posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex shortly to order Altar flowers. The cost is \$35 per arrangement. We purchase our Altar flowers from West View Floral Shoppe.

**Don't forget to pick up your new 2020 offering envelopes! They will be available soon in your mailboxes in the Narthex. Please do not use these new envelopes until January.**

**Offering Envelopes**



Concordia's Annual Live Nativity will be held on Sunday, **December 15, 2019** at 148 Marwood Road, Cabot, PA 16023 (Entrance #5, Haven II). Performances are scheduled for 4:30, 5:15 and 6:00 PM. This event is free and open to the public. This live nativity will consist of Concordia staff and residents and live animals. Live Christmas music, hot beverages and refreshments will be provided indoors as well as a gift for children 12 and under. This will be a "walk-through" nativity, so guests are encouraged to dress warmly. Parking will be available at Entrances 5 and 6. For more information, call 724-352-1571, extension 8343, or visit the Events page at [www.concordialm.org](http://www.concordialm.org).

The Eastern District's electronic communications (weekly E-newsletters, etc.) are open to anyone interested. If you are interested in receiving their newsletters, etc., please notify Barb in the church office at [secretary@ascensionpgh.org](mailto:secretary@ascensionpgh.org) so that she can notify the Eastern District and they will add you to their distribution list.





### **HEALTH & HEALING**

Grace (broken hip – mother of Linda Williams); Bob Marcellus (retina surgery recovery); Kim (breast cancer – friend of Lynn Gunther); Jeff (blood clot – friend of Sandi Weber); Eileen Vogel (recovery from surgery); Shut-ins: Elva Fields, Helen Goettmann (recovering from a fall), Lois Kitzki, Phyllis Kitzki, Clay McClellan, Don Sohngen, Nadine Weber

### **FOR STRENGTH & COMFORT**

For all those who lost loved ones, especially Cheryl Sedar and family on the loss of her brother; Pete and Vanessa and the Candreva family on the loss of Pete's brother, Mike; Laura (friend of Sandi Weber); for the citizens, survivors, relief workers, missionaries, and families affected by hurricanes, earthquakes, terrorist attacks and disasters worldwide

### **FOR THANKSGIVING**

For the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; the gifts of love and God's Word; family and friends; our country

### **FOR SAFETY/PROTECTION**

For our college students; missionaries; our armed forces; unborn children

### **FOR DIRECTION AND FAITH**

For those who are experiencing a crisis of faith; women with unplanned pregnancies

### **GENERAL PRAYER, GUIDANCE, AND PROVISION**

For the Gaertner family; Operation Christmas Child recipients and participants; SOAR Respite Nights and participating families; Gene Williams, Jr. and DiscipleMakers; Pastor Eric Andræ and Campus Ministry in Oakland; seminary students; the residents and staff of Concordia Lutheran Ministries; Shepherd's Heart Fellowship; Food For The Poor; Christian Counseling Associates counselors and their clients; those with special needs (physical, mental, or emotional)

**\*Please note that prayer requests will remain on the prayer list for 60 days and then be removed unless an extension is requested by notifying the church secretary.**



**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**  
**LCMS Stewardship Ministry**

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, is teaching those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry: worshipping a false god. This is because worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and to what we're devoted. It reveals what we trust in.

This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

But you say: "I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell." Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument.

Your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds and clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you when you are worth more than they are?

For you know that you are worth more than them. You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did he descend and take on the form of a bird? No!

He came down from heaven and became a man: flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

God became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserve because of it. He was raised again on the third day to overcome sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about this and find security in it, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God is risen from the dead, lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that God – who created you, redeemed you by the death and resurrection of His Son, and sanctifies you by His Spirit – will not keep His promises of sustaining you in this life.

Jesus says this: Seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness. God's kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need – food and clothing, house and home, etc. – and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. Those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you.



[www.lcmsfoundation.org](http://www.lcmsfoundation.org) 800-325-7912 Ext 1684

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## Preparations

Home decorations have transitioned from pumpkins to turkeys, and now to snowmen and sparkly trees. Children of all ages treasure year-end holidays. Memories kindle warmth of glowing fires etched in our family and emotional rooms.

Churches celebrated Reformation and Thanksgiving. Advent's expectation is that the Savior of the World is arriving! With décor changes, God's people prepare their hearts to receive their King.

Mary, chosen to bear God's son in the flesh, was told to get ready. After the angel's visit, Mary exclaimed, "*All generations will call me blessed, because **He has done great things for me!***" Mary recognized the Giver and Gift.

*"God's good things are merely gifts which last for a season; but His grace and His regard are our inheritance which lasts forever. Truly, the grace of God is eternal life,"* wrote Martin Luther.

Year-end preparations include planning and arranging. Many organize their lives to get ready for what lies ahead. What else can we put in order besides tangible and perishable presents that adorn our Christmas trees and represent our human love?

Martin Luther also said, "*God would not have us put our trust in His goods and gifts, spiritual or temporal (provision and protection) however great they be, but in His grace and in Himself (providence), yet without despising the gifts.*"

The time-based clutter of life pulls us toward temporal concerns. Statistics indicate that less than 10% of Americans have included a charitable gift in their estate plans. One reason might be due to an uncomfortable visit with an attorney.

Have you considered allowing a fellow LCMS Gift Planning Counselor as a trustworthy guide to help you to prepare for expressing the enduring intent of your faith and love?

Contact Robert Wirth, LCMS Foundation Gift Planner at [robert.wirth@lfnd.org](mailto:robert.wirth@lfnd.org) or 716-863-4427 for more information.



## Upcoming Lutheran Hour Broadcasts

**December 1, 2019: “Enough with the Self-Talk”** We are not always who we say we are. What you say to yourself about yourself may or may not be what's true. Dr. Michael Zeigler says, "Enough with the self-talk!" Who does God say you are? You'll find that you are worse than you thought, and yet, more loved than you could ever imagine. (Luke 18:9-14) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

**December 8, 2019: “God's Yes”** Loved and Sent Series – “If we say that God's purpose is simply to take our souls to heaven when we die, we might miss God's bigger ‘yes’ ... God's ‘yes’ to putting bodies and souls back together again in the resurrection; God's ‘yes’ to creation as He intended it to be.” (Romans 8:18-39) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

**December 15, 2019: “Love is Enough”** Loved and Sent Series – God shows us a different kind of love. It's love for the world that is not of this world, love that is focused outward, love that gives without requiring anything in return. (Matthew 22:35-40) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

**December 22, 2019: “Christmas”** Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

**December 29, 2019: “Dreams”** (Jeremiah 23:24) Guest Speaker: Pastor John Nunes

Lutheran Hour broadcasts can be heard on **WWNL/1080 AM** on **Saturdays at 3:30 PM** and on **Sundays at 8:00 AM**. You may also read the sermon or listen to it at <https://www.lutheranhour.org/sermon.asp>.

Here are some Christmas videos for children from Lutheran Hour Ministries:



The Christmas Journey  
<https://vimeo.com/54943512> .

Red Boots for Christmas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Skv0KUDsoJE>



## Tournament of Roses Parade's Lutheran Hour Float (Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>)

The Lutheran Hour Float's theme is: “Jesus Our Hope” (based on Hebrews 6:19 “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.”). The overall parade theme is: “Power of Hope.” The Tournament of Roses Parade can also be seen on HGTV, Hallmark, and KTLA. It can be viewed on the Internet at: [www.KTLA.com](http://www.KTLA.com) (Note: KTLA rebroadcasts throughout the day.)

2020  
Lutheran Hour Ministries | Anchored In Jesus



# Make a Pine Cone Angel



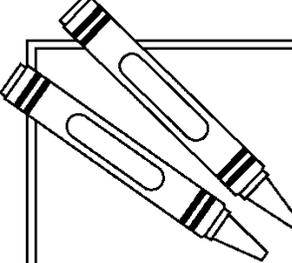
**You need:**

- a pine cone
- an acorn
- cardboard
- 2 beans or seeds
- black marker
- 1 white pipe cleaner
- small piece construction paper
- gold pipe cleaner or piece of foil
- yarn
- glue



**How to make:**

- Cut circle from cardboard for the base.
- Glue the wide part of the pine cone to the cardboard.
- Glue the beans or seeds to the cardboard for feet.
- Glue the acorn to the pine cone for the head.
- Make eyes with marker.
- Wrap pipe cleaner around for arms.
- Glue yarn on for hair.
- Use gold pipe cleaner for halo or make one from foil.
- Make book in hands from paper and glue.



## Just for KIDS

# The Birth of Jesus Foretold

The prophet Isaiah foretold the birth of Jesus Christ. Isaiah knew that Jesus would be called a peacemaker, but that He would also be called by other names.

Use the code to find out what Isaiah said Jesus would be called.

**CODE:**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

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Z	M	W	S	V	D	R	O	O	Y	V

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U	Z	G	S	V	I	K	I	R	M	X	V														

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L	U	K	V	Z	X	V																			

**Isaiah 9:6, NIV**

Answer: And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
8225 PEBBLES ROAD  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15237**

**Address Correction Requested**

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE:**

Prayer time at 8:45 AM in Fireside Room  
Worship Service: **Sunday at 9:30 AM**  
Christian Education: **11:00 AM**

**Office Hours:**

Monday – Friday **9:00 AM-Noon; 1:00-4:00 PM**

**OUR MISSION AND VISION  
STATEMENT:**

Acknowledging the great gift of God the Father in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior, we the people of Ascension Lutheran Church, as guided by the Holy Spirit, are committed to the furtherance of God's Kingdom. We will share and live the Gospel in our homes, our church, our community, and the world. Motivated by Christ's love for us, we are dedicated to spiritual growth and unity, worship and fellowship, and compassionate service. We recognize this as our common purpose and pray that God will enable us by His strength and wisdom to seek His will.

**THE HEART OF ASCENSION**

A monthly publication of  
Ascension Lutheran Church.  
Barbara Marcellus is the Editor.

**INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR:**

Rev. Martin Lee

**CHURCH OFFICE:**

**412-364-4463 / 412-364-5636**

**FAX NUMBER:**

**412-369-0599**

**PASTOR'S E-MAIL:**

[martin@churchorganizers.org](mailto:martin@churchorganizers.org)

**SECRETARY'S E-MAIL:**

[secretary@ascensionpgh.com](mailto:secretary@ascensionpgh.com)

**MUSIC DIRECTOR'S E-MAIL:**

[vcandрева@ascensionpgh.com](mailto:vcandрева@ascensionpgh.com)

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