

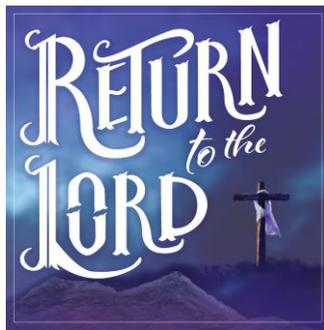


THE HEART OF ASCENSION

February
2021

Congregation Meeting

A congregation meeting will be held on **Sunday, February 7, 2021** following the worship service. There will be a special vote for Synod allowing districts to hold their conventions in 2021 or 2022 and moving the national convention to 2023.



“Return to the Lord” Lenten Worship Series

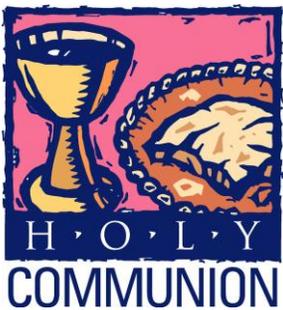
In the Book of Joel, the prophet paints a vivid picture of the coming judgment of God, the Day of the Lord. The imagery is bold and terrifying: hordes of locusts swarming over the land and decimating everything. Joel’s prophecy has teeth even today as wars rage, natural disasters threaten and destroy, and our culture seems to be unraveling. But right in the middle of this frightening portent, we find a tender invitation from the Lord: “Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster” (Joel 2:13). God’s invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personifies and accomplishes all that God declares. During this season of Lent, we will consider the theme “Return to the Lord” and examine how the call to return played out in practical ways for the people who walked alongside Christ as He demonstrated and carried out God’s grace and mercy on our behalf, taking God’s wrath upon Himself, setting the stage for God to “turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him” (Joel 2:14).

Each sermon in this series focuses on a particular event in the Passion, with a special focus on the people involved in the event. Studying the events and people helps to connect the hearers with their own sinful nature, to emphasize how we have turned away from the Lord, and to reinforce and rejoice in God’s call for us to return to Him with all our heart. © 2020 Concordia Publishing House. Scripture: ESV®.



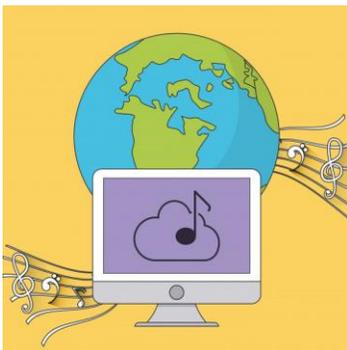
Lent begins on **ASH WEDNESDAY, February 17, 2021**. There will be two worship services with Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday. The daytime service will be at 1:00 PM and the evening service will be at 7:00 PM. The 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday service will be live-streamed.

Mid-week Lenten Services will be held at 7:00 PM on Wednesday evenings. The dates of the mid-week Lenten services are February 24, March 3, 10, 17, and 24, 2021.



PRIVATE COMMUNION SERVICES are available to members who should not attend or who are not yet ready to return to worship in person due to Covid-19. Appointments will be made every 20 minutes on Tuesday's between 7:00-9:00 AM and Friday's between 4:00-6:00 PM. Please email Pastor Thompson at pastor@ascensionpgh.com to make your appointment. If you are unable to email, please call the church office at 412-364-4463.

GET TO KNOW YOU VISITS – Have you scheduled your get to know you visit with Pastor Thompson yet? There are three options— Zoom (Tuesdays-Fridays from 2:00-7:00 PM meeting times, as available), in person, or if neither of those options work, a telephone call option. For scheduling, please email Pastor Thompson at pastor@ascensionpgh.com. If you are unable to email, please call the church office at 412-364-4463.



Tech Help Needed – We are looking for one or two people who would like to help in our worship/tech area. Basic computer knowledge is all you need. Training will be provided. Interested? Contact Vanessa Candreva (vcandreva@ascensionpgh.com) or Cherie Shaginaw (cshaginaw282@gmail.com).



Thank you to Ronette Blake, Bob Booth, Jennifer Ciccone, Nancy Hughey and Vicki Wiegand for volunteering in the church office during Barb's vacation!

Thank you to Karen Booth and Glenna Powers for sending out birthday and anniversary cards to congregation members! Karen started in this ministry a few months ago.



February 14: Bob & Karen Booth – 45 years!



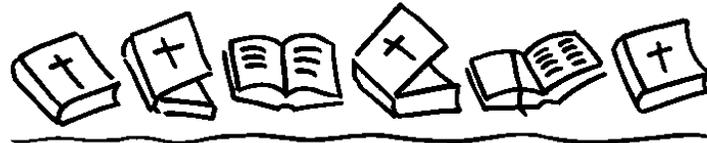
February Birthdays:

4	Charlotte Beiter	24	Lucas Mayes
4	Mark Bocian	25	Pam Davis
6	Grace Fiffik	25	Steve Diak
13	Rebecca Diak	26	Elijah Blake
13	Janet Seitz	26	Clay McClellan
16	Shannon Schroeder	26	Amanda Zdobinski
18	Chris Bocian	27	Bernice Yeager
20	Ron Davis, Sr.	28	Zac Schroeder
23	Sherri Kirk	29	Craig McMillin

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



THE PRAYER AND PRAISE GROUP meets via Zoom on ***Wednesdays*** at 10 AM until we are able to meet in person. If you have any questions or need prayer, please call me at 808-295-1835. In the Love of Jesus,
Bob Booth



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

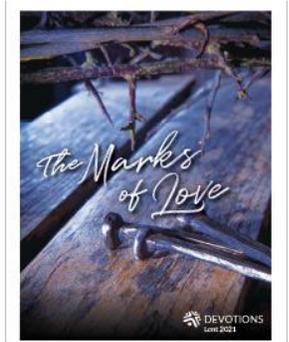
The Saturday Men's Study Group is scheduled to meet on Saturday, **February 13, 2021** in person and via Zoom. If you would like to attend in person, Mike Fiffik will be in the Fellowship Hall at 8:30 AM. The Bible study will start no later than 9:00 AM and that will be offered on Zoom as well.

Lenten Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

Following the narrative of Mark's Gospel, *The Marks of Love* explores the life and ministry of Jesus. The tragedy of Golgotha is met with the triumph of the resurrection on Easter morning. Along the way, we learn of Jesus' deep compassion for those He loved and served, including those who put Him to death.

No story in human history is like the narrative of Jesus' Passion. In it we see God in the flesh, coming to seek and to save the lost. In *The Marks of Love*, we meet a Savior who endured life's hardships, suffered our pain, and bore the weight of our sins. Each left its mark on Him as He pressed on to the cross, giving His life for ours, appeasing God's wrath against sin, and rising victorious over sin, death, and the devil.

Available to read online or as a podcast beginning February 17, 2021, *The Marks of Love* can also be received as an e-mail subscription throughout the Lenten season. The audio version will be available on the Daily Devotion page beginning February 17, 2021. For more information, go to www.lhm.org and visit their "Resources" tab. If you would like a printed copy, please call Barb at 412-364-4463 or email secretary@ascensionpgh.com. (from Lutheran Hour Ministries' website.)





In Christ we extend our love and sympathy to Linda and Gene Williams and their family. Linda's mother, Grace Eichelman, went to be with her Lord and Savior on January 6th. Please keep the Williams and Eichelman families in your prayers, and may God be with them and comfort them.

Congratulations and God's richest blessings to Rev. Brian Bocian who was ordained and installed on January 9, 2021 as an Associate Pastor at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Cabot, PA. Pastor Bocian is the son of Mark and Chris Bocian and he has led us in worship a few times while he was a Vicar at St. Luke's.



We received a Christmas card with the following note from Elva Fields and Sylvia Robinson:

Dear Members of Ascension Church and welcome Rev. Adam Thompson.

Thank you for your prayers for my mother throughout the year. God bless you all.

Elva Fields and Sylvia Robinson



Did you know that Concordia Lutheran Ministries' home healthcare employees served over 23,000 people last year? They made over 600,000 visits and traveled over six million miles—2,150 trips across the width of the United States. Please continue to keep Concordia Lutheran Ministries, its staff, and all the people they serve (residents and homebound) in your prayers. (Above statistics were obtained from the Christmas video message from Concordia's President and CEO, Keith Frndak.)



OUTREACH COMMITTEE – At least 50 Thrivent t-shirts were delivered to Shepherd’s Heart before Christmas. These shirts were left over from various projects and it was decided donating them to the residents there would be a very good use of them. They were pleased and grateful to receive them.



LUTHERAN WOMEN’S MISSIONARY LEAGUE (LWML) NEWS: The **LWML National Convention** will be held on June 24-27, 2021 in Lexington, KY. All of the registration and hotel information is in the Winter Quarterly. If you are interested, but don’t get the Quarterly, see Janet Seitz.

The Eastern District **Fall Retreat** will be at Lutherlyn Camp in Butler, PA on September 24-26, 2021.

Mites need to be sent in by March 31 to meet the fiscal deadline for the 2019-2021 grants. **Please bring your mites or donation by March 7.** You can put them in the big mite box on the table in the narthex or give them to Janet Seitz. You can also send a check, made out to LWML – Pittsburgh Zone, to Janet at 2204 Rockledge Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.

Stamps for Missions: Please remember to cut 1/2 inch around each cancelled stamp; but if you got too close to the edge, just be sure the perforations are all intact.



ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS: Thrivent Choice® is Thrivent’s charitable grant program. As a Thrivent member you can designate your Choice Dollars to Ascension Lutheran Church. **Choice Dollars designated to eligible benefit members in 2020 must be directed before March 31, 2021.** To designate your Choice Dollars, or for more information, visit Thrivent.com/choicedollars or call 1-800-847-4836.



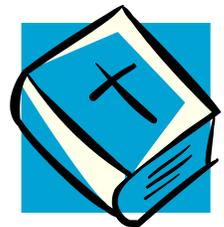
If you are not attending in-person worship services and do not have access to a computer for online services, the Lutheran broadcast **"God With Us" is available on WORD-FM 101.5 on Sundays at 10:30 AM.** "God with Us" features Rev. Dr. Daniel A. Hahn Jr., Pastor of Tri-Parish (St. John's, Bethel and Zion, Lawrenceville).



Live-Streamed Worship Services Available On YouTube

In addition to our in-person 9:30 AM Sunday worship service, the service is live-streamed and hosted on Ascension's YouTube Channel. Go directly to our [YouTube Channel](#) and click on the VIDEOS tab. Or for directions on how to view the live-stream, click [HERE](#). If you are unable to watch during the 9:30 AM worship service, you may view the video later.

Lutheran Bible Translators announced on January 9, 2021 that they reached a milestone to celebrate – the 700th full Bible translated! For information about their ministry, visit www.lbt.org.



*The Perry-Highland Women's Association is accepting applications for a \$2,000 Scholarship. Applicants must live in the North Hills area and be enrolled in a college or technical school for either summer 2021 or fall 2021. To receive application materials, please email phwa.scholarship@gmail.com. The application deadline is **March 26**.*

Child and Parent Place at Anchorpoint (C.A.P.P.) at Anchorpoint Counseling Ministry offers the following care and support that is affordable for all, regardless of insurance:

- ADHD / Anxiety / Depression
- Family Therapy / Parent Counseling
- Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)
- Play / Sand Tray Therapy
- Suicide Prevention
- Social Skills and Parenting Groups
- Trauma-informed Counseling
- Tutoring / Mentoring



Anchorpoint
Counseling Ministry

For more information, call 412-366-1300 or visit anchorpointcounselingministry.org.



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry

“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.

The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It’s not so much that we stop giving, but we don’t put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it.

On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is a sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God’s Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Divine Service. Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.



FOR HEALTH & HEALING

Roy Wiegand (pneumonia and other health issues); Amanda (Gene Williams' great-niece); Susan Stewart and Barbara Howe (cancer – sisters of Carolyn Walker); Tim Koontz (depression); Ruth Miller; Elva Fields; Sandi Weber; for all those ill with coronavirus; Joe (mass on heart – Cheryl Sedar's son); Gene Williams (mesothelioma); Helen Goettmann; Clay McClellan; Nadine Weber

FOR STRENGTH & COMFORT

For all those who lost loved ones, especially Linda and Gene Williams and family on the death of Linda's mother, Grace Eichelman; 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 all affected by the coronavirus pandemic; healthcare workers; college students; school students, teachers, staff and bus drivers; 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 Pastor Thompson's transition; our country and leaders; Pastor Lee and his family; the Gaertner family; SOAR Respite Nights families; Megan and Gene Williams, Jr. and DiscipleMakers; Pastor Eric Andrae 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.

Upcoming Lutheran Hour Broadcasts

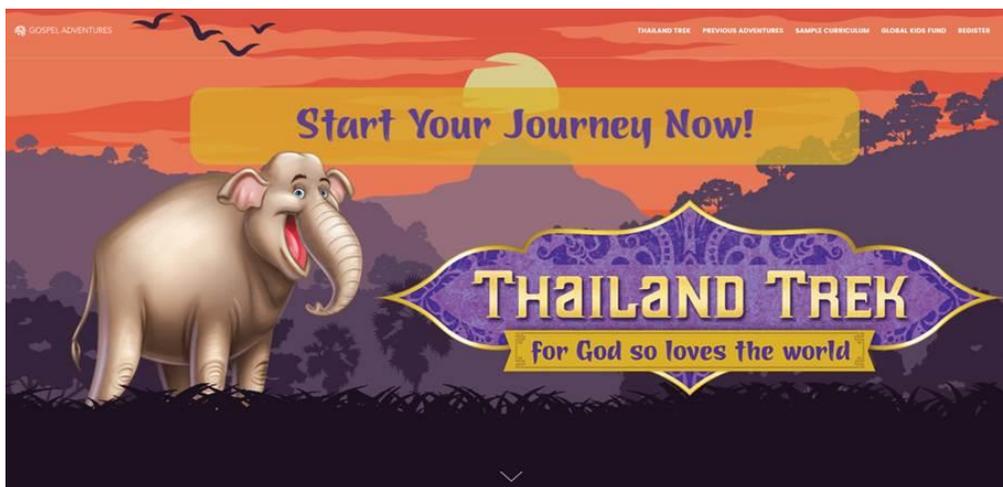
February 7, 2021: “Stories Around the Table” Dr. Michael Zeigler shares a story about people who had more in common than they thought. (Mark 6-8) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

February 14, 2021: “Shines and Saves” Jesus surpasses all expectations as we see Him revealed on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Mark 9:2-13) Guest Speaker: Rev. Cody Cooper

February 21, 2021: “Do You See Anything?” The world wields power with blunt force, but God hides His power in suffering, weakness, and humility. Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

February 28, 2021: “Where a Kid Can Be a Kid” An impossible situation need not be a hopeless one. (Mark 10) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Lutheran Hour broadcasts can be heard on WWNL/1080 AM on Saturdays at 3:30 PM and on Tuesdays at 12:30 PM. You may also read the sermon or listen to it at <https://www.lutheranhour.org/sermon.asp>.



Gospel Adventures 2021 Thailand Trek is available now!

This interactive 5-day curriculum is completely FREE at www.gospeladventures.org now.

Register TODAY and take a virtual trip to Thailand!

When you register at www.gospeladventures.org, you will find the videos quite enjoyable and educational.

Blessings in Christ,

Lou Marting
949 770 8420
818 404 6447

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

Address Correction Requested

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

9:30 AM Worship Service

10:30 AM Adult Bible Study (in person & Zoom)

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.

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