

Ascension Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod



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April 25, 2021
Pastor: Rev. Adam Thompson
pastor@ascensionpgh.com
Secretary: Barbara Marcellus
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Music Director: Vanessa Candreva
music@ascensionpgh.com

Welcome To Our Guests

It is a great joy to have you here today. We pray that your time with us has helped to deepen your faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ. If we can be of service to you or your family, we invite you to talk to us at your convenience. You will always be welcome here. Please do us the honor of signing the guest sheet at the podium at the front of the church or at the entrance from the Education Wing.
Thank you for coming!

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 25, 2021

Worship Service - 9:30 AM

WELCOME

PRELUDE

AS WE GATHER

Of all the animals that could have been used to portray humanity, does it feel strange to be called a sheep? After all, it is not the most honorable creature. There are no defense mechanisms to escape a predator, no intimidating roar, and limited ability to fend for one's self when it comes to seeking nourishment, water, and safety. Yet these things reveal the point we are called to understand. It may not be good to be a sheep on our own, but it is great to be a sheep with a Good Shepherd to care for the flock. Jesus is our perfect shepherd who protects and defends, feeds and nourishes, leads and provides all we need in this body and life. Together as His flock, we are blessed to follow Him as by His Word and Means of Grace He leads us to streams of living water and paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

(stand)

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING HYMN: "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" LW 412, vs. 1, 2, 4, & 6

**The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His,
And He is mine forever.**

**Where streams of living water flow,
My ransomed soul He leadeth
And, where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.**

**In death's dark vale I fear no ill
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me,
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.**

**And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.**

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 23; John 10:11*

Pastor: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

People: **Lord Jesus, our Good Shepherd, we confess to You that we have been ungrateful for all You give us to sustain our bodies and lives. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.**

Pastor: He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

People: **Like sheep, we are distracted and tend to wander and scatter. We forget who we are as baptized children of God and fail to respond to Your shepherding in our lives. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.**

Pastor: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

People: **We confess that in difficult times of life, we sometimes struggle to be confident in Your presence and protection, seeking to find our own comfort. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.**

Pastor: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

People: **As we journey through this sinful world, we overlook the goodness and mercy that flow into our lives from You. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.**

Pastor: Jesus, our Good Shepherd, hears our cries and says to us, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." Receive the forgiveness won for You through Christ's laying down His life and rising from death in victory. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

GREETING ONE ANOTHER

At this time, turn around and greet each other with the peace of Christ. Please do so by waving and remaining where you are seated.

(sit)

FIRST READING: Acts 4:1–12 (*Peter and John witness before the council.*)

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE: 1 John 3:16–24 (*Love one another.*)

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(stand)

HOLY GOSPEL: John 10:11–18 (*Jesus the Good Shepherd*)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

Congregation reads together:

¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from My Father.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY: “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

(sit)

THE APPLICATION OF GOD’S WORD FOR TODAY

Pastor Adam Thomson

(stand)

CATECHISM *Explanation of the First Article*

Pastor: Shepherds provide for all the needs of their flock. Out of His love, our creating God provides not only for our spiritual needs of faith and forgiveness, but also for all that we need for our physical, emotional, and social well-being. Believing in God the Father as creator of all is the focus of the Small Catechism's explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed, which we confess together:

People: **I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

Pastor: What does this mean?

People: **I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.**

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true.

(sit)

OFFERTORY MEDITATION SONG: "The Good Shepherd"

(stand)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Shepherd of Israel, in Your Son, Jesus Christ, You have sought out Your sheep and gathered us with them into Your flock. Keep us always in Your fold, and guard us from every wolf and snare. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: O God, as You breathed new life into the world through the resurrection of Your Son, so now by Your Holy Spirit breathe new life into Your Church that, freed by His Gospel, we may always confess the name of Jesus Christ, the only name given among men by which we must be saved. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, Your Son has called us to love our brothers. Turn us in love toward the neighbors closest to us, especially within our own homes, that we may daily show our confidence in God by deed and truth, laying down our lives as Christ first did for us. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Eternal Lord, through the Paschal Lamb You have wrought peace between man and God. By Your gift of good government, grant peace and good days also to our citizens and between the nations of the world, that we and all our neighbors may lead quiet lives in godly contentment. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, by the firstfruits of Christ's life from the dead, You secured forgiveness for our troubled consciences. Bless also with temporal health and well-being those who suffer among us, [*especially . . . individual prayer requests may be spoken at this time followed by the petitioner saying "Lord, in Your mercy" after each request*]. Grant them aid in this moment and, even more so, true, immortal health in the world to come. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, our Shepherd, You calm all fears in this valley of the shadow of death, and You prepare the holy table of Your Son's testament in the presence of our enemies. Grant us repentant and faithful hearts. In every tribulation or besetting sin, lead us to find comfort and strength in Your overflowing mercy given us here in this Sacrament. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord God, out of Your fatherly goodness You have remembered us poor, miserable sinners and given Your beloved Son to be our Shepherd — not only to nourish us by His Word, but also to defend us from sin, death and the devil. Grant us Your Holy Spirit, that even as this Shepherd knows us and helps in every affliction, we also may know Him, trust Him, seek help and comfort in Him, heartily obey His voice and obtain eternal salvation; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

(sit)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

THE BLESSING

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make His face to shine upon us and be gracious unto us.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace.

CLOSING MEDLEY: “Just a Closer Walk” / “He Leadeth Me”

Pastor Go in peace and

People: serve the Lord.

LOOKING AHEAD: The assigned readings of the Church Calendar for next week are Acts 8:26-40, 1 John 4:1-11 (12-21), and John 15:1-8.

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
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Missouri Synod

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

APRIL 25, 2021	WORSHIP SERVICE IN-PERSON AND LIVE-STREAMED	9:30 AM
	CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOLLOWS WORSHIP	
	CONFIRMATION CLASS	1:00 PM
TUESDAY	OUTREACH TEAM	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	PRAYER AND PRAISE GROUP VIA ZOOM	10:00 AM
	CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TEAM	6:30 PM

ASCENSION NEWS

IMPORTANT – **EVERYONE please sign in** on one of the attendance sheets located at the Narthex or the Education Wing entrances.

FACE COVERINGS – Please wear face coverings indoors in all parts of the building (those who are over age two [2] and medically able to do so). If you forgot a face covering, there are some available in the Narthex and at the office entrance.

OFFERINGS – Since the offering plate will not be passed during the service, an offering plate will be available in the Narthex for you to present your gifts as you exit or arrive.

SOCIAL DISTANCING – Please practice social distancing in the Sanctuary (six [6] feet between households), and seating in every other pew. Please do not linger inside the building entrances/exits prior to and following worship services. Please enjoy the beautiful weather outside as you visit from six (6) feet apart!

HAND SANITIZER – Hand sanitizer is available in the Narthex, Fellowship Hall, and at the office entrance for your use.

HOLY COMMUNION – On Communion Sundays, there will be three (3) choices for Communion based on your comfort level regarding COVID. First choice, there are individually sealed kits available in the Narthex as you walk into church. You may take one and during the time of Communion be communed from your location in the pew. Second choice, you may take the individually sealed kit and bring it with you to the railing during Communion and partake at the railing but serve yourself the elements from the kit. Third, you may come up to the railing as normal and receive Communion from the Pastor and Assisting Elder. Pastor and Elders will be masked and gloved during Communion up front and social distancing guidelines will be observed at the railing.

BUILDING RESTRICTIONS – To limit the need for cleaning and disinfection, the classroom areas will be taped off. *If anyone needs to comfort a child, we will temporarily ask parents to use the Narthex.*

ACOLYTE: Kayla Arnett
ALTAR GUILD / APRIL: Janet Seitz
ELDER ON DUTY TODAY: Darryl Gunther
LAY READER: David Dille
USHERS: Lynn Gunther / Jim Obringer
ATTENDANCE 04/18/21: WORSHIP 57; **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:** 33

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

April 27: Karen Booth, Steve Vogel; April 28: Bj Astridge, Jeannie Connolly, Mark Kitzki, Matt Shaginaw; April 29: Edie Krom; April 30: Mark Farris

ALTAR FLOWERS are placed on the altar to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Ruth and Jim Templer, parents of Cheryl Saffa and Nancy Hughey.

IN CHRIST WE EXTEND OUR LOVE AND SYMPATHY – On April 20th our brother in Christ, Roy Wiegand, was called to his heavenly home. Please keep Vicki and the family in your prayers as they grieve. We also pray for the peace and the hope of the resurrection. He is now face to face with his Lord and we will see him again.

ACTIVITY BAGS FOR PRESCHOOLERS – We have tote bags available for preschoolers to use during the worship service. These have books, crayons, and small toys to keep them busy during the service. They are located in a basket in the Narthex of the church. Please return them to the wicker basket marked “Used Worship Bags” after the service.

HELP NEEDED – We are looking for volunteers to wipe down the handrails after the services. Please see Pete Candrea if you can help.

ACOLYTES, ELDERS, LAY READERS, AND USHERS – Please check your mailboxes in the Narthex for the May 2021 schedules. Thank you all for your dedicated service!

VBS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – Mystery Island VBS 2021 is coming to Ascension **July 12-15 from 6:00-7:30 PM!** In order to make this happen, we need our fantastic volunteers! Please read and complete the following **Google Form** (<https://forms.gle/M2iCq2h12jo6MpABA>) to let us know of your interest in volunteering this year. Please complete this form **by Friday, April 30th**. Any questions - email Lisa and Emily at ybs@ascensionpgh.com. Thank you!

TO BE RESCHEDULED – **ATTENTION TEENS:** The kayaking event that was scheduled in May was cancelled and will be rescheduled. Stay tuned for more information.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER – The National Day of Prayer will be held on Thursday, **May 6**. This year marks the 70th anniversary of this event! Gathering will begin at 5 PM and the **service will start at 5:30 PM** on the front porch. Please join us to pray for our community and our nation. (Snacks will be provided if you wish to stay for the concert at 7 PM.)

COMMUNITY OF FAITH CONCERT – Ascension will be hosting a concert of local Christian artists who will perform hymns and contemporary songs as a celebration of our faith. A collection will be taken for a local cause that will provide healing for those who have experienced hardship during the pandemic. Please join us at **7 PM on May 6th in the sanctuary** for uplifting music and stories of faith.

BULLETINS and **CHILDREN'S BULLETINS** are available on our website: www.ascensionpgh.com.

ONLINE GIVING – The new page for online giving will soon be activated (if it hasn't already). Vanco has updated their interface, so when you go to the online giving page, it will have a completely new look. It's just as easy to use (if not easier). Give it a try! If you already have an account or a recurring donation set up, you don't need to do anything. Everything will transfer over automatically. If you have any questions, contact Bob Marcellus at finance@ascensionpgh.com or give him a call. Thank you.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS – The first quarter contribution statements are in the mailboxes in the Narthex. If you have not been attending in-person services, statements have been mailed out to you. If you have any questions, please contact Bob Marcellus at finance@ascensionpgh.com. Thank you.

PRAYER AND PRAISE GROUP is meeting via Zoom. Join us on **Wednesday** (April 28) from 10 AM to 11 AM and then every Wednesday thereafter 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

NEWSLETTER – If you would like a printed copy of the May 2021 issue of *The Heart of Ascension* mailed to you, please call Barb in the church office at 412-364-4463.

HAVING A MEETING, GROUP STUDY, OR GATHERING AT THE CHURCH? If so, you should request access to the church building by contacting the secretary at secretary@ascensionpgh.com or by contacting a trustee at trustees@ascensionpgh.com. We are here to help make your function go smoothly.

VOLUNTEER CLEARANCES – Volunteers must have state-required clearances to serve in ministry involving minors (VBS/SOAR/Sunday School/Youth, etc.). ***Information about obtaining these clearances is available in the Narthex.*** If you have been a resident of Pennsylvania for 10 or more years, all clearances for volunteers are free. Clearances are valid for five years. If we already have your clearances and they are current, you do not need to apply for clearances again. Volunteers not providing copies of clearances to Ascension cannot serve until they comply with Pennsylvania State Law.

LUTHERAN LIFE MAGAZINE – We received complimentary copies of the Winter 2021 issue of *Lutheran Life* magazine from Concordia Publishing House. They are available on the table in the Narthex for anyone who would like a copy.

LCMS STEWARDSHIP NOTE – **John 10:14** – “**I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.**” What does it mean to know the Lord? It starts with being known by the Lord. He claims us as His own and calls us by name. Then, once we are His, we learn to know Him. In knowing Him, we learn to imitate Him. That is how the Christian life of good works and generosity grows from the Lord’s grace.

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 Tuesdays between 7:00-9:00 AM and Fridays between 4:00-6:00 PM. Please email Pastor Thompson at pastor@ascensionpgh.com to make your appointment.

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.

LIVE-STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICES – Our worship services are live-streamed on our YouTube Channel. Just click on this link https://www.youtube.com/channel/Ucu_ARgzTTcfZZXuZAeyEVQ/videos or search in YouTube for Ascension Lutheran Church PGH. More detailed directions are available on our website (www.ascensionpgh.com). If you have any questions, feel free to contact Vanessa Candreva at music@ascensionpgh.com.

EMAIL ACCOUNTS – Please use the email addresses below for contacting these individuals/groups:

Pastor Thompson	pastor@ascensionpgh.com
President (Russ Lucas)	president@ascensionpgh.com
Treasurer (Patti Lopresto)	treasurer@ascensionpgh.com
Financial Secretary (Bob Marcellus)	finance@ascensionpgh.com
Elders	elders@ascensionpgh.com
Board of Christian Education	education@ascensionpgh.com
Board of Trustees	trustees@ascensionpgh.com
SOAR Respite Nights	soar@ascensionpgh.com
Music Director (Vanessa Candreva)	music@ascensionpgh.com
Media (Cherie Shaginaw)	media@ascensionpgh.com
Vacation Bible School	vbs@ascensionpgh.com
Youth (Ronette Blake)	youth@ascensionpgh.com
Secretary (Barbara Marcellus)	secretary@ascensionpgh.com

SOCIAL MEDIA – Ascension is on Facebook (www.facebook.com/AscensionPgh) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/AscensionPgh). You don't have to have accounts to view our pages online. Please do check us out (and “Like”/follow us).

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

“GOD WITH US” ON THE RADIO – 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).

THE LUTHERAN HOUR is on WWNL/1080 AM on Saturdays at 3:30 PM and on Tuesdays at 12:30 PM. Read or listen to the sermon at www.lutheranhour.org. **May 2, 2021: “Laughed At”** Speaking out against the prevailing culture might prompt ridicule but it could also produce repentance. (Jonah 3) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

KFUO RADIO, a media ministry extension of LCMS congregations, shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on **KFUO.org** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music. You can find programs on demand at kfu.org and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: @**KFUOradio** on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). **This week on KFUE.org**, study 1 Peter 4 through 2 Peter 1 on Sharper Iron's "The Imperishable Inheritance" (weekdays at 8:00 a.m. CT), learn about 1 Kings 4-7 on Thy Strong Word (weekdays at 11:00 a.m. CT), and study our Lutheran Confessions on Concord Matters (Saturday at 10:00 a.m. CT).

RETIREMENT LIVING OPEN HOUSES OFFERED AT CONCORDIA LOCATIONS:

Concordia Haven Apartments (112 Marwood Road, Cabot, PA 16023) **on Monday, April 26** – 2 or 3 p.m., **Friday, April 30** – 2 or 3 p.m. or **Saturday, May 1** – 2 or 3 p.m. To RSVP, call Admissions Counselor Peggy Trettel at 724-352-5378.

Concordia of the South Hills (1300 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243) **on Sunday, May 2** – 1 or 2 p.m. or **Monday, May 3** – 1 or 2 p.m. To RSVP, call Director of Marketing, Christie Wahlen at 412-294-1351.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATES is a full-service counseling center committed to using the resources of the Christian faith in helping individuals and families achieve emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being. Licensed and certified professional counselors provide all services. Available services include help for those seeking professional help for emotional and life challenges such as depression, anxiety, marital problems, addictions, grief, trauma, or any mental health concern. CCA offers services to adults, children, adolescents, and families. Christian counseling engages a faith-based process of change that can equip individuals to overcome the challenges they face. CCA accepts many different health insurances for payment and offers a sliding fee scale if there is no insurance. Ascension provides office space for CCA. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 724-396-1510.

LIFE QUOTE: “Death is the one thing no Christian has to do on his or her own. Jesus has already been through suffering and death before us. He knows the way through death and the way back to life, too. Our friends and family cannot go with us—but Jesus can. He will never let go of our hands. And He will bring us back to life with Him, because He has promised, and He will never lie.” *Dr. Kari Vo, Lutheran Hour Ministries – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • www.lutheransforlife.org

PRAYER REQUESTS – April 25, 2021*

“And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” (James 5:15-16)

FOR HEALTH & HEALING

Glenna Powers (recovery from rotator cuff surgery); Kelly Vogel (recovery from surgery); Ruth Miller (adjustment to new home); Elva Fields; for all those ill with coronavirus; Gene Williams (mesothelioma); Clay McClellan; Nadine Weber

FOR STRENGTH & COMFORT

For all those who lost loved ones, especially Vicki Wiegand and family on the death of Roy; 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; all our guests; the gifts of love and God's Word; family and friends; our country

FOR SAFETY/PROTECTION

For all affected by the coronavirus pandemic; frontline workers; 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 our country and leaders; the Gaertner family; SOAR Respite Nights families; Megan and 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)

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” (Colossians 4:2)

***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.**