



The Messenger

Ascension Lutheran Church

Vol. 39, No. 12

December 2018

MINISTERS

"As a progressive and open church, we boldly make Christ's vision known."

STAFF

Julie Bailey, Pastor
 Bob Aldrich, Education Coordinator
 Jennifer Salowitz, Musician/Choir Director
 Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse
 Cheryl Huebner, Secretary
 Dawn Dalton, Custodian
 Lisa Mlujeak, Custodian
 Nicole Crump, Nursery Attendant
 Melissa Durow, Nursery Attendant

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Kris Friend, President
 Steve Salowitz, Vice President
 Charleen Boland, Treasurer
 Kathy McNally, Secretary

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays 8:00am & 10:30am
 Wednesdays 7:00pm

Phone (989) 781-2170
 ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net
 Website - www.ascensionlc.org

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JULIE

I've always been struck by the statement "practicing medicine." It could be any profession or skill, but when I look for a doctor, I'm not looking for one who is still practicing. But then I think, should I be?

Recently, one of the youth at a retreat asked me about how one might continue to grow in faith, making faith and God more a priority in their life. Maybe that is a question we all have had, or should have had. Maybe we all need to be practicing discipleship—that is how we come to know and trust God as the priority in our life that God commands.

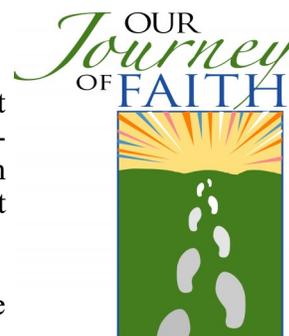
Practicing discipleship involves intentionally paying attention to all aspects of our life and faith. It isn't just a Sunday or Wednesday night thing. It isn't just when convenient. Practicing discipleship pulls us out of our comfort zones until it becomes routine. It is learning new things—like someone who practices medicine. It makes us better at the skill, no matter how good we are when we begin.

The areas of discipleship that are focused on are worship, prayer, study, serving, giving, encouragement, and inviting. Some of these practices we have studied on Sunday mornings. I think we have talked about them all at some time or another.

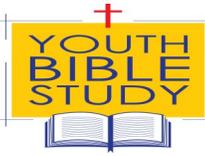
Most of us have become comfortable in our faith and our practice of faith. Since our salvation doesn't rest on what we do, what difference does it make? Faith practices are not about salvation, at least in the context of going to heaven. What our faith practices do help is our life on earth, our response to real life situations, and our joy!

As we begin this new church year, I encourage you to practice discipleship; intentionally put God first in your life and these discipleship practices. Choose one you really need to focus on and push yourself. Get up earlier; come to worship, open your Bible, pray. Stretch your giving a bit, go serve in a place you are interested in, encourage the community of faith and invite others to join us.

So begin today, and practice discipleship!



YOUTH



SUNDAY MORNING HIGH SCHOOL STUDY

Our next study and fellowship will be Sunday, December 9th at 9:15 a.m. in the Youth Room. All are welcome!! Invite your friends!!

CONFIRMATION CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

All confirmation youth, their parents, families, and all those who have served as Guardian Angels are invited to come and celebrate the Birth of Jesus and a successful revamping of the program with a night of games, fellowship, food and song on Sunday, December 16th at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a dessert dish to pass for our Dessert Smorgasbord and your own drinks. Each confirmation student can bring a gender-neutral gift to participate in a fun gift exchange, if he/she would like. Please sign up on the Kiosk in the Gathering Area if you plan on attending.



YOUTH FUNDRAISER

Please help support our Youth Group in a Yankee Candle Fundraiser. You can order through January 9th online at www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and enter 990046905 for the group number. We receive 40% of the proceeds. Thanks for your support!!!

CHARGE 2019

Registration is open for the Middle School CHARGE Gathering. Registration cost is \$160 if registered by January 18th—cost covers event, housing, and the water park. Last year this event sold out during the early registration phase, so if you want to go, register early. Registration forms and money can be turned in to Pastor Julie. Forms are available on our website and on Ascension's Facebook page.



WORSHIP



ADVENT SERVICES

As we celebrate the season of Advent, we will worship and prepare with the following Wednesday services:

December 5th:	Hanging of the Greens
December 12th:	Holden Evening Prayer
December 19th:	Blue Christmas

Consider making these Advent services part of your preparation for Christ!

FAMILY CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Our Annual Family Christmas Worship Service is fast-approaching! The service will be held on Sunday, December 16th at 10:30 a.m. The rehearsal dates are as follows:

December 2nd:	Practice at 9:15 a.m.
December 9th:	Practice at 9:15 a.m. Full cast walk-through from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
December 15th:	Dress rehearsal from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
December 16th:	Costumes and final full cast walk-through at 9:15 a.m.



CONGREGATIONAL CARE

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

Eleven people completed the nine-week course on November 5th. Everyone was pleased with the program, but as one person said (and all others agreed), the younger you are when you take the course, the more you will benefit. We intend to host another session, maybe two, in 2019.

CAREGIVING

In October I attended a three-hour session in Frankenmuth that focused on how caregivers can make the best, or at least better, of a situation in which they and their care receivers are in. If you are currently a caregiver, thinking you are nearing the time when you will become a caregiver, or know of someone in either of these situations, consider checking out *The Caregiving Years* by Denise M. Brown from our Library. This book gives solid and practical guidance in each of the six caregiving periods:



1. The Expectant Caregiver
2. The Freshman Caregiver
3. The Entrenched Caregiver
4. The Pragmatic Caregiver
5. The Transitioning Caregiver
6. The Godspeed Caregiver

With respect to the first section, The Expectant Caregiver, this is applicable really to every adult. Consider the two introductory questions: Who might need your care in the future, and what questions can you ask now? Who might provide care for you in the future, and what information can you share now? Don't worry about the future, but do plan and prepare for it.

Larry Nuechterlein



A SHEPHERD LOOKS AT PSALM 23

Many of us have memorized all or most of the 23rd Psalm and we hear it regularly at funeral services. Nevertheless, if that is the only time we pay attention to it, we are likely to overlook the depth to which David understood as his true relationship and position with God. *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* is authored by W. Phillip Keller, a native of East Africa, one who himself was a sheep owner and sheep rancher. From his experience and understanding of the ways of a Middle Eastern shepherd, he brings great insight as to what David was expressing to his Lord, his Shepherd. We are promoting this book as a congregational read and will be placing a multiple-copy order for this book in the next month or so. If you would like to purchase a copy for yourself, you can sign up directly with Larry Nuechterlein or on a sign-up sheet that will be posted on the Kiosk in the Gathering Area. The anticipated cost is less than \$7.00.

The MESSENGER is published monthly by
Ascension Lutheran Church.

Deadline for the January 2019 issue is
Monday, December 17th at 12:00 noon.

Articles may be emailed to ascensionmessenger@yahoo.com.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Members in Christ,

The Council and Ascension Ministries have accomplished plenty this year and I am proud to share a few of them with all of you. I am sure I missed a few of your favorites; these are just a few that percolate to my frontal lobe.



- We have doubled our mission support since this time last year. We are currently giving 4% of our weekly offering.
- Thanks to the Trustees, we have saved \$2,823.54 over the last 16 months, thanks to their LED lighting initiative.
- We hosted for the first time, Financial Peace University. We are planning on continuing this program, as it was well received by all who attended.
- We hosted an informative safety event in January, inviting several area churches, with over 100 in attendance.
- We tackled an issue that hasn't been done in at least 20 years. We sent letters to our inactive members asking them to respond as to whether or not they wanted to keep their membership. This went well. We cleaned up our membership and inspired a few to return to the pews.
- We continue to make a positive impact on the community by sharing the kingdom of God (one of our "initiatives"). We did this several ways:
 - We hosted yet another successful soccer camp.
 - We gave away over 250 backpacks, socks/undies, and clothing at our Back to School Fair. Although not the most successful in numbers, it was appreciated by those who received.
 - We support 53 students from the Swan Valley, Hemlock, and St. Charles school districts with weekend backpacks for elementary students who receive free breakfast and lunches. These backpacks provide meals they may otherwise go without over the weekend. Did I mention we do this WEEKLY?
- We have worked within the 2018 budget, made payroll, and paid our bills. We ran a stewardship campaign. We are paying more on our mortgage principle than interest.
- We have put together a realistic 2019 budget, although it is a deficit budget. We have wants and needs, just like every household. We pared the budget down to our needs, and set our wants aside.

Want to hear more about our plans for 2019? Want to have a "say" in who helps navigate? Come learn about our needs and wish list. Attend the December 2nd Budget & Election Meeting to hear more about the Strategic Plan, the 2019 budget and to select your 2019 Council.

In Christ's Service,

Kris Yackel-Friend

OTHER

FROM THE TREASURER...

Any donations that you want recorded for 2018 must be given to the church by Sunday, December 30th. Also, if you have any bills that you need to be reimbursed for, please turn those in by Sunday, December 30th as well. Thank you!!!

OTHER

SCRIP CARDS

SCRIP Cards are a great Christmas gift for friends and family!! Please see the order forms on the table in the Gathering Area. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Durow at 860-2716.



CAN YOU HELP?

We are looking for someone who is willing to make the baptism banners that we give to each child baptized at Ascension. This requires ironing, detailed cutting, and using hot glue. If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Pastor Julie.

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

We continue our Tuesday morning Bible Study of the book of Acts. The class is held from 10:00 a.m - 11:00 a.m. All are welcome to join.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Congregational Meeting to approve the budget and elect council members will be held on Sunday, December 2nd at approximately 11:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Please attend to see our working plan for the financial resources to meet our goal to Boldly Make Christ's Vision Known.

FAMILY MOVIE AND POPCORN NIGHT

Join us on Sunday, December 9th at 5:00 p.m. as we prepare for the Christmas celebrations as we watch the movie "The Christmas Tree Miracle". The movie will start at 5:05 p.m. This is a family friendly movie.

Real movie theatre popcorn will be provided, but bring your own soda/drink (in a spill-proof container). Friends are welcome!!!



SHUT- IN CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Everyone is invited to help put together Christmas baskets for our shut-ins on Tuesday, December 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The baskets will be filled with homemade baked goods, jellies, hand cream or a little gift. We are looking for donations of baked goods or whatever you wish for each basket. This will be a fun evening and a wonderful way to remember our members that can't worship with us on a regular basis. If you have any questions, please contact Edna Bell at 642-8130.

OTHER



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Mark your calendar...we are going Christmas Caroling! Join the choir on Thursday, December 13th for an evening of caroling in our community. We will meet in the church parking lot between 5:30 p.m. - 5:40 p.m. and then carpool over to Swanhaven Manor Retirement Community. They expect us at 6:00 p.m. From there, we will carpool over to Shields Comfort Care; they expect us at 7:00 p.m. Musical experience is not necessary—just joyful good cheer. All ages are welcome!

HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL ITEMS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS PACKAGES

We are participating with Swan Valley High School to collect household and personal products for Christmas packages for families in need. Items needed are shampoo, conditioner, soap, laundry soap, dish soap, dryer sheets, tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning supplies, lotion, body wash, shaving cream, razors, feminine products, deodorant, etc. Please place items in the Gathering Area by Sunday, December 16th. Thank you!!



A DAY OF LEARNING AND SHARING SKILLS—JANUARY 12TH

What skills do you have? What skills would you like to learn? Some ideas are basic knitting, crocheting or other crafts, beginning yoga/Zumba/exercise, makeup skills, decorating cookies, photography or how to use tools. I am looking to see if there is interest in this and for people willing to share their skills. Please contact Charleen Boland at charboland52@hotmail.com or 781-5623.

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER

December 2nd	<i>Flowers Needed</i>
December 9th	Given to the Glory of God by Jack and Delila Colpean
December 16th	Given in Memory of John Cavendish by Bonnie Cavendish
December 23rd	<i>Flowers Needed</i>
December 30th	<i>Flowers Needed</i>



The Flower Chart is posted in the Gathering Area on the Usher/Acolyte Room door. The cost is \$25.00. A payment envelope will be mailed to you. These arrangements are placed in the Sanctuary each week for worship and may be picked up after the late service on Sunday morning.

Holiday Office Hours

The Church Office will be closed
Monday, December 24th - Tuesday, January 1st.
Regular Office hours will resume on
Wednesday, January 2nd.



MEMBER NEWS

December Birthdays

2nd	Josh Crump Sarah Wagner Ginny Whelton	16th	Alexis Richardson
		18th	Sue Denman Jacob Moore
3rd	Melissa Czubaj	19th	Gene Burchfield Hannah Webb Joscelyn Whelton
4th	Bari Clauss Jacob Dawson Adam Robishaw	20th	Megan Wakeman
5th	Charleen Boland Chris Crump Carol Lange	23rd	Melissa Briggs Amora Dreyfus
6th	Brayten Mack	24th	Pastor Julie Bailey
7th	Bruce Collier Steve Elvin Jon Leffler	25th	Alexandria Randall
8th	Don Arndt Donna Hayes	26th	Jacob Hostetler
10th	Elaine Clifford	27th	Rita Bolger Melanie Dancer Colton Kittle Helen Nothelfer Lisa Randall
13th	Scott Blehm Wayne Mayou Dan Roth Michelle Wardlow	28th	Robert Beyerlein Joan Ford Lori Page
14th	Lynn Schomaker	31st	Jack Richardson Louise Roby Melissa Turner
15th	Barry Wiggins		
16th	Braxten Mack		

Anniversaries this Month



9th	Bob & Cathy Watz
12th	Tom & Mary Erskine
13th	William & Emily Edsall
27th	Roger Koppenhofer & Vicki Lundstrom
28th	Paul & Susie Nielsen Jack & Joyce Richardson
31st	John & Sue Nelson

PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE ON ASCENSION'S CARE LIST

These are members who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis, who need to be remembered by their family at Ascension. Mail a card, plan a visit, or say a prayer for these members of our church family.

Ron Schultz - 10400 Swan Creek Rd., Saginaw, MI 48609

Bob Foley - Great Lakes Rehab, 4181 Tittabawassee Rd., Saginaw, MI 48604

Frances Edie - 4850 Gratiot Rd., Apt. D2, Saginaw, MI 48638

Peggy Lockhart - 6143 Longmeadow Blvd. North, Saginaw, MI 48603

Nancy Holvey - Serenity Springs, 1413 Gratiot, Saginaw, MI 48602

Gene Burchfield - 4354 Mt. Hope Road, Apt. 106, Williamsburg, MI 49690

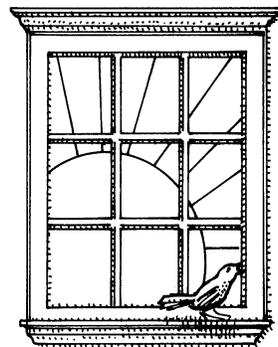
Helen Nothelfer - 302 Fulton Street, Room 108, St. Charles, MI 48655

Heidi Osterloh - 9345 Geddes Road, Saginaw, MI 48609

Ray Sundeck - 770 Cheryl Street, Saginaw, MI 48609

Marcy Schafer - 8049 Area Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609

Marv Yancer - 8936 N. Brookshire Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609



MEMBER NEWS



Collin William Edsall, son of William and Emily Edsall, was baptized on Sunday, November 18th. Sponsors are Lori Schramke and Holly Fouchia. May God bless Collin with His gift of grace.

HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Health Highlights by Sharon Boyd

HELPING THE ELDERLY DURING THE WINTER MONTHS

Here are some tips to help the elderly:

Stock emergency resources in their homes:

- Have emergency kits in an easily accessible place.
- Have at least a seven-day supply of water and prescription medications.
- Have non-perishable food on hand.

Eliminate fall risks:

- Create slip proof paths and make sure they wear shoes or slippers that grip.
- Keep driveways clear of snow.

Practice safety precautions in their car:

- Make sure they have emergency snow supplies in their car, including heating packs, blankets, and water, as well as a car phone and charger.
- Keep the gas tank full.

Keep an eye on their nutrition:

- Be sure your loved ones are getting meals. Keep extra food on hand in the freezer, as well as bottled and canned fruit juices.

Eliminate potential fire risks:

- Candles are always a risk; keep Christmas trees watered.
- Ensure smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms have fresh batteries and are placed appropriately throughout the house.

Provide your loved one with a cell phone:

- Be sure to show them how to charge it and use it.
- Be sure to provide them with emergency numbers pre-programmed in their phone.
- Additionally, provide a list of phone numbers that you can leave on the refrigerator and/or another easily accessible place in the home.



Source: www.Bostonmagazine.com/health/2014

The measure you give will be the measure you get back.—Luke 6:38



BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Mark your calendar for blood pressure screenings by the Parish Health Committee. The next one will be held on Sunday, December 9th after each worship service.

Health Highlights are brought to you by the Parish Health Committee whose members are Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse, Sharon Boyd, Jennifer Deaton, Dr. Steve Haupt, Marie Stuart, Joan Ford, Kris Friend and Traci Collier, DC.

SERVING IN DECEMBER

Head Ushers--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.

- 2 Tim Wilson/Dave Dawson & Dave Huston
- 9 Marv Lentner/Andy Friend & Bob Beyerlein
- 16 Edna Bell/Dawn Dalton & Jeff Whelton
- 23 David Witker/Tom Page & Jim Stuart
- 30 Tim Wilson/Dave Dawson & Dave Huston

Readers--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.

- 2 Joan Ford/Barb Van Marter
- 9 Patty Hamilton/*No Reader*
- 16 Dick Schomaker/*Christmas Worship*
- 23 David Witker/Chris Crump
- 30 *Lessons and Carols*

Acolytes--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.

- 2 Mackenzie Morgan/M. Whelton & S. Milbrandt
- 9 *No Acolyte*/Lyric & Diedre Haupt
- 16 Maliyah Johnson/V. Durow & A. Richardson
- 23 *No Acolyte*/Brooke Richardson
- 30 *No Acolyte/No Acolyte*

Video Screen Operators--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.

- 2 Melissa Czubaj/Bob Aldrich
- 9 Melissa Czubaj/Ben Salowitz
- 16 Kris Friend/Bob Aldrich
- 23 *Volunteer Needed*/Ben Salowitz
- 30 Larry Nuechterlein/*Volunteer Needed*

Prayers of the Church--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.

- 2 Lynn Schomaker/Chris Crump
- 9 Ruth Schomaker/Shelly Dawson
- 16 Charleen Boland/*Christmas Worship*
- 23 David Witker/Tom Page
- 30 Lynn Schomaker/Chris Crump

Sound Board Operators--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.

- 2 Tom Bailey/Rusty Van Marter
- 9 Dan Roth/Steve Salowitz
- 16 Tom Bailey/Rusty Van Marter
- 23 Marty Debozy/Steve Salowitz
- 30 Marty Debozy/Josh Crump

Friendly Callers

- 2 David Witker
- 9 Sue Bailey
- 16 Bonnie Cavendish
- 23 David Witker
- 30 Sue Bailey

Hospital Callers

- 2 Roger Koppenhofer
- 9 Bettie Lyle
- 16 Sandy Graham
- 23 Rick Hamilton
- 30 Carol Lange



*****If you are interested in serving on Christmas Eve at either the 4:30 p.m. service or the 7:30 p.m. service, please see the sign-up sheet on the Kiosk in the Gathering Area. Thanks!!!**

WEDNESDAYS

Head Ushers	Readers	Sound Board/Video Screen	Prayers
5 Glen Mack	5 <i>Hanging of the Greens</i>	5 R. Van Marter/Ben Salowitz	5 <i>Hanging of the Greens</i>
12 Bill Gottlieb	12 <i>Holden Evening Prayer</i>	12 J. Schroeder/ <i>No Video</i>	12 <i>Holden Evening Prayer</i>
19 Bill Gottlieb	19 <i>Blue Christmas</i>	19 R. Van Marter/Connie Dutcher	19 Connie Dutcher
26 <i>No Service</i>	26 <i>No Service</i>	26 <i>No Service</i>	26 <i>No Service</i>

Thank you to everyone who participates in these important ministries.

If you are unable to serve on your assigned day, please let the Church Office know who will be filling in for you.