



The Messenger

Ascension Lutheran Church

Vol. 41, No. 11

November 2020

MISSION

"As an open and progressive congregation, we boldly make Christ's vision known."

STAFF

Julie Bailey, Pastor
Bob Aldrich, Education Coordinator
Jennifer Salowitz, Musician
Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse
Dawn Dalton, Custodian
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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.

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SEEK THE WELFARE OF THE CITY

Listening to an address on national unity from Gettysburg, I felt renewed gratitude for the privilege of teaching at the (then) Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and walking that sacred battlefield. I came away with more than the names of talented seminarians, some of whom I am honored to serve alongside as pastors in this Synod. I also came away with an almost visceral connection to the sacrifice our forebears on both sides made for the sake of our nation and in pursuit of freedom. As your bishop, I have walked the halls of Congress, met our senators, representatives, and, most inspiring of all, their very young staffers, and visited the White House. I was privileged to address soldiers at Fort Leonard Wood, thanking them for their service and pledging to pray for them and their families—a promise I have kept. Serving as a bishop strengthens my sense of patriotism.



Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord God declared, "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (29:7). If God would have Israel pray for Babylon, where they were exiled, how much more would God have us pray for the United States of America, where we are privileged to live. The separation of church and state is a doctrine aimed at protecting religion from government interference. It is not an excuse that relieves people of faith from fulfilling our responsibility as citizens. So, as we approach Election Day and move farther into fall toward winter, I ask you to do two things in addition to praying for the welfare of your city, our state, and our nation.

First, to seek the welfare of the city, state, and nation, vote. Make your plan. Vote in a way that is best for you. But vote.

Second, to seek the welfare of the city, sacrifice. I recently saw a documentary on the home front during World War II and was brought up short by the way those Americans sacrificed for the sake of our nation. We refuse to wear masks and keep social distance. We complain that we can't get into our church buildings, sing songs, and drink coffee. We accuse our pastors of being lazy and not working when they won't do things our way. We are unwilling or unable to sacrifice.

I know it's tough. I have not seen my daughter since December. I have not presided at or received Holy Communion since March. I continue to work remotely. Synod staff continues to work remotely.

(Continued on page 2)

The ELCA Churchwide Organization will not consider returning to the office until January. We have not deemed it appropriate to return to visiting congregations in person. It's hard. To be honest, without preaching, presiding, and wearing the bishop garb, and instead fielding complaints, this gig isn't a ton of fun. "But seek the welfare of the city," God declares. Stay home. Keep social distance. Wear a mask. So 200,000 more don't die by the end of the year.

When I grow weary of sacrificing, I hear words of Jesus, which reduce me to a puddle. Jesus prayed, "While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost" (John 17:12). Mindful that I will one day stand before God and give an account, I don't want to have to explain why I made decisions that resulted in even one of you whom Jesus protected with his life being lost. I suspect many pastors, deacons, and faithful Christians feel this same way. "Seek the welfare of the city, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." Pray. Vote. Stay home. Keep social distance. Wear a mask. Sacrifice. Please. For Jesus' sake.

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

FROM
THE
PASTOR



GIVE THANKS

Autumn usually brings a return to school and the resumption of a fuller schedule of congregational activities. It's an opportune time to wonder where we stand before God. What is it that God wants from us? How can we be shaped again and again by God's word in our worshiping assemblies? What is this life with God that Jesus came to bring? This year has not been usual. We are worshiping together, with fewer in our physical space, but more participating online. Being a worship leader has become more complicated as I balance the requests that we loosen our decision on numbers in worship, masks, singing, or coffee hour; and the concern that people have that they want to attend, but are worried and concerned that even though we have the practices in place, maybe not all are following for whatever reason. My decision is that we are doing what we do for the sake of each other, and if our decisions are too strict, the outcome is better than if we decided to do some things that increases the risk. I had no idea that in my lifetime, and certainly not in the time that I would be leading a church, that these decisions would need to be made and continually talked about, and that I would need much thicker skin than over almost anything else I have faced in public ministry.

2020 has been a tough year, and I would not want a repeat of it. I also know it isn't over. I am in prayer over what will happen during this month of November as our country votes on governmental leadership. I am in prayer that once a vaccine is found, people will be so out of the habit of worshipping together that church attendance could forever be changed. I am in prayer about the people in our congregation that are continually isolated and alone, and visitation is not allowed. I am in prayer with people who have ongoing health issues, life-threatening issues, and economic challenges related to unemployment or underemployment. There is no lack of things to pray for.

Yet, I also know that there are things to lift up in prayers of thanksgiving. I pray in thanksgiving for the way so many people of Ascension have stepped forward to reach out to those in and outside our community of faith to help where there is need. I pray in thanksgiving for the staff and leadership of Ascension, who have been in this together. I pray in thanksgiving for the reminder that life is fragile, and the tending of relationships is nothing to be taken for granted. I pray in thanksgiving that our outreach ministries continue. I pray in thanksgiving for you all, to whom and with whom in ministry there is much to be thankful.

Your thanksgiving may look different this year, but don't forget to use this time to be thankful in the midst of trial. And give thanks to God, for God does marvelous things.

WORSHIP AND EDUCATION

WORSHIP UPDATE

We continue to worship on Sundays at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Worshippers are asked to register ahead of time, wear a mask and maintain physical distancing.

Please note that we will not have worship on Wednesday, November 25th.

Those who are worshipping at home via the taped service may call the church for a time to come and receive communion. We will no longer be serving from 11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, however, you can make an appointment for those times if that works.



PREPARING FOR THE ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SEASONS

We will plan on decorating for the Advent season on Saturday, November 28th at 9:00 a.m. This includes putting up the tree and all the other decorations. Wear a mask and come help with a joy-filled spirit.

Wednesday Advent worship will be held on December 2nd, December 9th and December 16th (no worship on December 23rd). Our theme this year is a reflection called "Watch, Wait, and Wonder." Please join us for these worship services!!

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

We are continuing to meet at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom for our Bible Study. If you haven't attended before and are interested, let Pastor Julie know so that she can email you the invitation.



Blessings to Ethan Earnesty who received his First Communion on Sunday, October 11th. Welcome to the Lord's Table.



WORSHIP AND EDUCATION



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 CONFIRMANDS

Elizabeth Kolb William Salowitz
Diedre Haupt Ahren Awad
Mackenzie Morgan Sabrina Wagner
Noah Ryder



OTHER

Ways you can **IS GOD CALLING YOU TO STEP OUT IN FAITH TO SERVE IN A** **SERVE** LEADERSHIP POSITION?

It is time again that we will be asking people to serve in ministry with Ascension as members of the Congregation Council. Do you have a desire to prayerfully move our congregation forward? Do you feel that nudge that God could be doing something new in this community? Do you want to work with a team that works together for the good of the Church and world? Then this might be the opportunity to step up. It is a two-year commitment—so you aren't committing a lifetime to this ministry.

Positions available for election are:

- Vice President
- Minister of Congregational Care
- Treasurer
- Minister of Outreach

Please see a member of council if interested in knowing more. And keep our congregation in prayer as God identifies those called to serve for a time such as this!

OTHER

ORDER YOUR POINSETTIAS

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to decorate the Chancel for the Advent and Christmas season, please see the poster on the Kiosk in the Gathering Area. Cost is \$10 per plant and must be paid before the plant is ordered. Please leave your payment envelope in the basket in the Church Office. **Order Deadline is Sunday, November 22nd.**



SCRIP ORDERS

Christmas is coming and you can order gift cards through our SCRIP program and a portion of what you spend comes back to the church, at no extra cost to you!!! **Orders will be placed on Wednesday, December 2nd.** If you have any questions, please see Pastor Julie. Order forms are available on the table outside of the Church Office. You can also find them online at <https://www.ascensionlc.org/forms-communications/>. Payments by cash or check are accepted.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 13th at 11:15 a.m. (following our 10:30 a.m. worship service). We will be voting on a budget for 2021 and electing members to fill the following council vacancies: Vice President, Treasurer, Minister of Outreach and Minister of Congregational Care. Your presence is necessary and welcome.



RADICAL COMMITMENT

“What is radical commitment? Here are three examples from the Bible:

◦ **Commitment on the job.** It seems that in the past, employers valued their workers and workers appreciated their employers. The workplace today is often more adversarial. Employees are critical of their bosses and do the minimum to get by. Bosses have expected increasing amounts of work while taking their workers for granted. Is this God’s way? No. He calls for working together. Paul says: “Obey your earthly masters...always with an eye to obeying the real master, Christ...work heartily, keeping in mind you are really serving God.” (Eph. 6:5-8) Who is your boss?

◦ **Commitment at church.** Many Christians adopted a cafeteria approach toward the church—pick what we like and leave what we don’t. Membership in Christ’s church is a covenant relationship with a community of believers who love and pray for one another and fulfill the great commission together. “Go and make disciples...” (Matthew or I Cor. 12:12-31).

◦ **Commitment to Christ.** Christ is not looking for half committed followers! “If any of you wants to be My follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily and follow Me.” You follow Christ and His will, not your own way. What is His will for you? That is radical commitment; you are called to it.

Take some time to rethink how you live—how you spend your time, your gifts and your money. These are all His gifts to us! Follow His way.”

Source: The Word for You Today, July 2020, Bob Gass Ministry

Turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily and follow Me.” Luke 9:23

Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse

OTHER

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR NOVEMBER

November 1st	Given to the Glory of God by Susan Kelley
November 8th	<i>Flowers Needed</i>
November 15th	Given to the Glory of God by Scott and Tanya Blehm
November 22nd	Given in Memory of Mike Kelly by Bob and Dawn Dalton
November 29th	<i>Flowers Needed</i>



The Flower Chart is posted in the Gathering Area on the Usher/Acolyte Room door. **The cost is \$30.00.** 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.

HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Health Highlights by Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse



COVID-19 SAFETY OVER THE HOLIDAYS

Because of COVID-19, the holidays will be different this year. We can still celebrate with family and friends but we must do so in a safe, caring way.

Here are some suggestions:

- Instead of attending in-person church (especially if the virus numbers are up), try watching a virtual service. If you do attend in person...wear a mask and social distance. If at all ill, stay home!
- Instead of flying to visit relatives, try driving or postponing your trip. If flying, plan for busy airports and security lines that put you very close to others. Respect mask and social distancing rules. Traveling by car...ride with people from your household. Follow CDC guidelines when stopping for fuel, food and restrooms.
- Instead of big parties, try smaller parties with those from your household, or that you trust not to have the virus. Droplets from sneezing, coughing, talking, and singing are more concentrated indoors and in large groups. Those who are ill, experiencing a fever, or have been exposed to the virus should quarantine and stay away.
- Instead of kissing, hugging and handshaking, try communicating in other ways. Instead of physical contact, offer caring, kindness and love, greeting others that keeps some space between you. Crossing your arms over your chest can mean, "I love you", "I wish I could hug you". Call, send cards or e-mail those you have not seen for a while—especially if they are alone, depressed or anxious.

Source: MYBLUE MEDICARE Fall 2020 From the APA, CDC and U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

MEMBER NEWS

November Birthdays

2nd	John Robishaw	19th	John Whelton
4th	Jan Faerber	20th	Barb Yancer
	Samantha Leffler	21st	Mason Friend
	Karen Nuechterlein		Carol Hall
	Micaela Richardson	22nd	Joyce Storm
5th	Rick Hamilton, Jr.	23rd	Madison Huston
6th	Kathy York	24th	Heidi Osterloh
7th	Jason Enright	25th	Richard Borm
	Johnny Whelton		Makenzie Collier
10th	Connie Dutcher		Peggy Darling
11th	Jayde Wakeman	26th	Nathan Gottlieb
12th	Bob Watz		Emerson Hendrick
13th	Delila Colpean	28th	Lindsay McNally
	Eric Lentner		Erin Peters
15th	Bryan Joslyn	29th	Bonnie Dalton
	Russell Morgan		Nick Espinoza
17th	Dylan Gottlieb		Ruth Jakes
18th	Kayla Berg	30th	Andrew Dunn
	Waylon Earnesty		
	Donna Fries		

Anniversaries this Month



1st	Mike and Jan Faerber Chris and Ashley Howe
2nd	Brian and Cheryl Huebner
8th	Bryce and Megan Wakeman
12th	Bob and Tracy Aldrich
19th	John and Nancy Whelton
24th	Brad and Kelly Phillion

PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE ON ASCENSION'S CARE LIST

Mail a card, plan a visit, or say a prayer for these members of our church family.

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

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

Heidi Osterloh - 9345 Geddes Road, Saginaw, MI 48609

Marcy Schafer - 3400 Hardwood Heights, Prescott, MI 48756

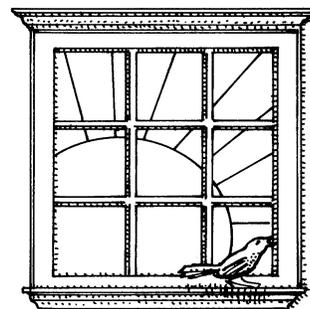
Marv Yancer - 8936 N. Brookshire Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609

Delila Colpean - 302 Fulton Street, Room 103, St. Charles, MI 48655

Leslee Arnst - 2815 N. Orr Rd., Hemlock, MI 48626

Bev Daubert - Meridian Acres, 2905 Meridian Road, Sanford, MI 48657

Kay Ballien - Healthsource, 3340 Hospital Road, Room 525, Saginaw, MI 48603



SERVING IN NOVEMBER

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

- 1 Tim Wilson/Dave Dawson & Dave Huston
- 8 Ken Schian/Andy Friend & Bob Beyerlein
- 15 *Volunteer Needed*/Jeff Whelton
- 22 David Witker/Gus Hendrickson & Jim Stuart
- 29 Tim Wilson/Dave Dawson & Dave Huston

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

- 1 Patty Hamilton/Chris Crump
- 8 Susan Kelley/Linda Lentner
- 15 Larry Nuechterlein/Karen DeLaRosa
- 22 Edna Bell/Lynda Goward
- 29 Joan Ford/John Whelton

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

- 1 Charleen Boland/*Volunteer Needed*
- 8 Melissa Albosta/Bob Aldrich
- 15 Kris Friend/*Volunteer Needed*
- 22 Melissa Albosta/Bob Aldrich
- 29 Kris Friend/Bob Aldrich

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

- 1 Dan Roth/*Volunteer Needed*
- 8 Dan Roth/Makena Whelton
- 15 Madison Morgan/*Volunteer Needed*
- 22 Madison Morgan/Makena Whelton
- 29 Dan Roth/Bob Aldrich

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

- 1 Ruth Schomaker/Lisa Espinoza
- 8 Lynn Schomaker/Shelly Dawson
- 15 Charleen Boland/Karen DeLaRosa
- 22 Charleen Boland/Chris Crump
- 29 Lynn Schomaker/Lisa Espinoza



WEDNESDAYS

Head Ushers	Readers	Sound Board/Video Screen	Prayers
4 Mike Clifford	4 John Schroeder	4 John Schroeder/Glen Mack	4 Connie Dutcher
11 Glen Mack	11 Joyce Richardson	11 John Schroeder/Glen Mack	11 Donna Malburg
18 Mike Clifford	18 Mike Clifford	18 John Schroeder/Glen Mack	18 Mike Clifford
25 <i>No Service</i>	25 <i>No Service</i>	25 <i>No Service</i>	25 <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.*

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Deadline for the December 2020 issue is
Monday, November 16th at 12:00 noon.
Articles may be emailed to ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net.