



The Messenger



Ascension Lutheran Church

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



Our Congregational Budget and Election Meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 10th at 11:30 a.m.** (following our 10:30 a.m. worship service). We will be voting on a budget for 2024 and electing members to fill council vacancies.

December 2023

Volume 44, Number 12

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Please prayerfully discern the nomination of members to serve on our Congregation Council. Positions currently available are:



President
Secretary
Financial Secretary
Minister of Finance & Resources
Minister of Spiritual Health

This is your opportunity to step up to this two-year commitment as we follow Jesus' call and lead the congregation forward in boldly making Christ's vision known. If you have questions, please contact a Council Member.

****Voting Members** as defined by the Ascension Lutheran Church Constitution: Confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of this congregation.



STAFF

Julie Bailey, Pastor
 Lisa Whelton, Parish Administrator
 Jeff Whelton, Custodian
 Rita Hendrickson, Parish Nurse

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Gus Hendrickson, President
 Lori Schultz, Vice President
 Connie Dutcher, Treasurer
 Susan Kelley, Secretary
 Kris Yackel-Friend, Financial Secretary

MINISTRIES

Glen Mack, Congregational Care
 Linda Lentner, Finance/Resources
 Joyce Berg, Outreach
 Celina Gottlieb, Spiritual Health

CONTACT INFORMATION

8695 Gratiot Road, Saginaw, MI 48609
Phone: (989) 781-2170 • Pastoral Emergency: (989) 574-5663
Email: ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.ascensionlc.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/ascensionsaginaw
 (Group Name: Ascension Lutheran Church of Saginaw (ELCA) Group)
YouTube: Ascension Lutheran Church



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday's: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
 Wednesday's: 7:00 p.m.

OFFICE HOURS

Church office hours are Monday thru Thursday 9a.m.-2p.m.
Office Closed: Dec 20th, 21st, 25th

A Message From Pastor Julie



God Comes in Unexpected Ways

“For us and for our salvation Jesus came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.”—Second Article of the Nicene Creed

Was incarnate. I would probably say Jesus IS incarnate—the embodiment of God in the flesh. We know from the gospel of John that God sent Jesus to the world for the sake of the world, in love for the world.

God often comes to us in unexpected ways. God came to Moses in a burning bush. God comes in the silence. We are preparing to welcome God coming in human flesh some 2000 years ago. But not as what we might imagine as a ‘god’, not as someone powerful, mighty, warrior—though like they were hoping and expecting then, we might hope for now—certainly then the world could be taken back from all the evil around us!

God came to the world in an unexpected way—as a baby of a young mother and carpenter. He was born not with the best doctors around but in a barn, greeted first by animals and shepherds. Yet even as a baby, Jesus was a threat to the status quo. His parents had to flee, immigrate for Jesus’ safety to Egypt. Not only were the religious of the day concerned about how the message was “changing” but the politicians and secular leaders were also concerned. As Jesus grew, his teaching and example modeled a new way of being; a way of love and invitation for all. A way of peace, community, of transformation.

Jesus is still a threat—a threat to the church and the traditions and ways we have regulated church of who is welcome and who is not. A threat to some of the ways we have always done things. Jesus is a threat to a political system that thrives on power, authority, name-calling, self-centeredness, wealth, and control. Jesus tells us there is a better way, a Jesus-way, and that isn’t just for churchy things, but for every aspect of our life.

We want God to intervene, Jesus to do something—and in the same breath we say that the church needs to stay out of politics. What if the unexpected way Jesus comes to us today is incarnate today is in you? What if you are the one whom God has sent, we are the ones whom through the power of the Holy Spirit, with the example and giftedness of the Holy Spirit are called to lead, through example and action to be the change the world needs, to be the change God is calling? I think I will leave it there for you to sit with, pray with, listen with... And be prepared, God comes in unexpected ways!!



I thank my God...

“I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.” -Philippians 1:3

To Paul I say ‘ditto.’ I do thank God every day for this opportunity to serve as the called pastor with Ascension Lutheran Church. You have over and above with appreciation and I do appreciate it. The notes, cards, Facebook posts, gift cards, and the understanding that even though I live in Michigan and call this home, Nebraska still holds a special place in my heart.

We do this ministry together, and I am thankful for the time that we have tried something new without a lot of resistance and with hope. We had to make some radical decisions during part of my ministry, and there were some dark times during the pandemic when I wondered if anything I was doing was worth anything. I thank you for all of that! I thank you for coming back to worship in person as you are able. I give thanks for the continued efforts to be progressive in our ministry, remembering what lies behind, but pressing on toward our goals together.

Ten years—that is a long time for a pastor to stay at one church. I looked up the average for the ELCA and it seems to be about six to eight years. When people join our congregation, they often ask how long I plan on staying. My answer has been until I or the congregation feel it is time for me to move on for the sake of mission. That is still my answer. Unless the congregation tells me different, we have more in us together. With God’s leading and guiding, and our foundation of Jesus Christ, I hope to have several more years serving with the people of Ascension.

Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

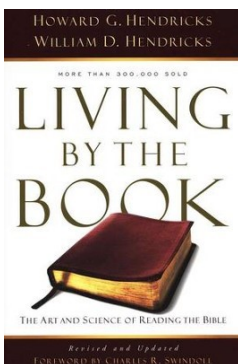
Beginning on **January 7, 2024** our Sunday morning adult class will begin a six-week study titled Self-Esteem: Made in the Image of God. All are welcome.

Beginning **February 18, 2024** our Sunday morning Bible study class will begin a study called Making Sense of the Cross. This is a good study to do during the season of Lent. All are welcome. There is a book that would be helpful to accompany. I do have some books, so if you want one, please let Pastor Julie know. We can order more if needed.

This class is held at 9:15 a.m. in the Digging Dunes Room.



Monday Women's Bible Study



Millions have been captivated by this brilliant teacher's highly energetic style, unforgettable illustrations, and laugh-out-loud humor. Now you can join Howard Hendricks as he demonstrates how to understand and apply God's Word for yourself. He walks you step-by-step through his model for Bible study-observation, interpretation, and application. Your experience in Scripture will never be the same.

Our Mary to Martha Women's Bible Study is open to women of all ages, and stages of faith, members & non-members, as we seek a closer relationship with our Lord. We know that you'll be blessed by God's Word and fellowship with other women, and we'll be blessed by your presence.

The last session of the fall study ends on December 4th.

The new session will resume January 8th.

This study meets on Monday Evenings at 6:00 p.m.—in the Digging Dunes Room

Book is \$10 (cash or check payable to Ascension). A grant has been received that will cover the DVD series and half the cost of the books. If you have any questions about the study or the group, contact Joyce Richardson at 989-274-6787 by calling or texting.



Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Our group will continue meeting on **Tuesdays** via Zoom at 11 a.m. We are now reading through the book of **Hosea**. **All are invited to join us!** Enter the code for the zoom meeting or let Pastor Julie know and she can email or Facebook message you the invite.

NO CLASS—DECEMBER 26th

www.zoom.com
Meeting ID: 871 0929 4561
Passcode: 099583

Prayer Chain



A prayer chain is a list of people who agree to pray for others during a troubled time. Our prayer chain is led by Barb Van Marter. If you would be interested in being a part of the prayer chain or if you have a prayer request, please contact Barb directly at 989-781-7803.

2024 Giving Envelopes

2024 giving envelopes can be picked in the Gathering Area. They can also be picked up at the church during office hours; Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Please contact the office to make other arrangements, if needed.

**Offering
Envelopes**



Please Remember Those on Ascension's Care List

Leslee Arnst—5935 Shattuck Ave #3,
Saginaw, MI 48603

Bob Bolger—Edgewood Assisted Living,
4850 Gratiot Rd., Room B12, Saginaw,
MI 48638

Betty Cliff—5935 Shattuck Apt 50,
Saginaw, MI 48603

John Kaul—5935 Shattuck Apt #13,
Saginaw, MI 48603

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

Esther Mack—285 S. Miller Rd.,
Saginaw, MI 48609

Marie Myers—11145 Morningstar Dr.,
Saginaw, MI 48609

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

Jackie O'Dell—108 Fulton Street, Apt
405, St. Charles, MI 48655

Joyce Storm—181 Evelyn, Saginaw, MI
48609

Lee Turner—6371 Birchview Dr.,
Saginaw, MI 48609

Barry Wiggins—1202 Weiss St, Room
305, Saginaw, MI 48602

Barb Yancer—8936 N. Brookshire
Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609



Prayers of the Week

Our partner prayers are included in
The Messenger each month.

PRAYING
FOR YOU

*As Jesus calls us to be one even as
he and the Father are one, please
remember these congregations,
leaders, and families in your
prayers.*

December 3rd

Lutheran Church of the Savior,
Kalamazoo, MI and Rev. Alexander
Steward

Ascension Families: Bob & Debbie
Beyerlein; Scott, Tanya, Ashley Blehm;
Charleen Boland

December 10th

Trinity Lutheran Church,
Kalamazoo, MI and Rev. Ken
Johnson and Rev. Jacob Lehman

Ascension Families: Bob & Rita Bolger;
Richard Borm; Holly, Olivia, Ella
Bostwick

December 17th

Bethany Lutheran Church, Kaleva,
MI and Rev. Zachary Nelson

Ascension Families: Sharon Boyd; Cody,
Melissa, Dalton, Daxton, Devon Briggs;
Bryan, Sarah, Hugh, Bryn, Rhys
Carroll

December 24th

Mamrelund Lutheran Church,
Kent City, MI and Rev. Michael
Conklin

Ascension Families: Marie Catterfeld;
Marilynn Christensen; Michael &
Elizabeth Clark

December 31st

Ascension Lutheran Church,
Kentwood, MI and Father Michael
Wernick

Ascension Families: Bari, Adam
Clauss; Betty Cliff; Mike & Elaine
Clifford



Altar Flowers

Thank you to everyone who has sponsored flowers in 2023. The arrangement may be picked up after the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday morning. The chart for 2024 will be out soon!



December 3rd In memory of Stena, Scott and Tanya Blehm

December 10th In memory of John Cavendish, by Bonnie Cavendish

December 17th In honor of Joscelyn's birthday, The Whelton Family

December 24th In honor of Jesus' Birth, by Susan Kelley

December 31st To The Glory of God, by Tom and Sue Bailey



December Birthdays

2nd	Josh Crump	13th	Scott Blehm
	Sarah Wagner		Wayne Mayou
	Ginny Whelton		Dan Roth
3rd	Melissa Albosta		Brynn Wakeman
4th	Bari Clauss		Michelle Wardlow
	Emmett Dalton	14th	Lynn Schomaker
	Jacob Dawson	15th	Barry Wiggins
	Adam Robishaw	16th	Braxten Mack
	Stephanie Wizner		Genevieve Potter
5th	Charleen Boland		Penelope Potter
	Chris Crump	18th	Sue Denman
	Carol Lange		Bryce Druelle
	Brooklyn McKenzie		Jacob Moore
6th	Brayten Mack	19th	Hannah Webb
7th	Bruce Collier		Joscelyn Whelton
	Steve Elvin	20th	Megan Wakeman
	Donna Hayes	22nd	Judi Minster
	Jon Leffler	23rd	Melissa Briggs
8th	Don Arndt		Amora Dreyfus
10th	Elaine Clifford		Nicholas Hoffmann
12th	Sarah Carroll	24th	Pastor Julie Bailey

25th	Alexandria Randall
26th	Jacob Hostetler
27th	Rita Bolger
	Melanie Dancer
	Colton Kittle
	Lisa Randall
28th	Robert Beyerlein
	Joan Ford
	Lori Page
30th	Madilyn Dalton
	Patty Hamilton
31st	Jack Richardson
	Louise Roby
	Melissa Turner



December Anniversaries

9th	Bob & Cathy Watz
12th	Tom & Mary Erskine
13th	William & Emily Edsall
	Dave & Pat Marceills
28th	Paul & Susie Nielsen
	Jack & Joyce Richardson



Christmas Worship Schedule



Christmas Eve worship on 12/24 at 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. (no morning worship)
 Christmas Eve worship on 12/27 at 7:00 p.m.

Lessons and Carols Service 12/31 at 9:15 a.m. (one service only)



Year-End Deadlines

December 26th will be the last deposit of 2023, please make sure your giving is in the office by 9:00 a.m. this day if you would like it to be recorded for 2023.

December 26th is also the last day to submit expense receipts that need reimbursement. After this date, receipts for 2023 will not be reimbursed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Connie Dutcher.

Don't Miss the

DEADLINE!

Bishop Satterlee's Newsletter



Bishop Craig Satterlee's newsletter can be found at <https://www.mittensynod.org/resources/publications/>

The Gifts of Advent: Worship on Wednesday Evenings

Beginning Wednesday, November 29th we will begin a four-week series of worship preparing for Christmas. We will use Holden Evening Prayer as we center into this time of preparation.



November 29th: The Gifts of Patience

December 6th: The Gifts of Speech and Silence

December 13th: The Gift of Hope

December 20th: The Gift of Family



Commitment Sunday: December 3, 2023

On December 3rd, together we will celebrate “Commitment Sunday.” Together we will affirm our faith with the affirmation of our baptism. As we affirm our faith together, new members will be welcomed into our community. This is a time to remember and commit to strive to live in the baptismal covenant with God through the power of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As this day approaches, you are encouraged to pray and discern how you are being called to serve with the people of Ascension as we boldly make Christ’s vision known. This includes things like worship practices, study, prayer, giving, inviting, and encouraging others in faith. You are encouraged to turn in the commitment cards for your financial goal/commitment for 2024. Copies will be available at the church, as well as below.

According to our congregational constitution, *C8.04.

It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.



Commitment Card

- Bring this card with you to worship on or before December 3rd
- Mail it to the church office (8695 Gratiot Rd, Saginaw, MI 48609)

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

General Fund Giving Gift Amount: _____
Frequency: ☐ One-Time ☐ Yearly ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ _____

Building/Mortgage Giving Gift Amount: _____
Frequency: ☐ One-Time ☐ Yearly ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ _____

*Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion,
for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NRSV)*

Ascension Lutheran Church

2023 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

All Aboard! This Train is Bound for Christmas!—December 17, 2023

Join us during the **10:30 a.m. worship service on December 17th** as the young members of our congregation share the amazing and unexpected story of Christmas as they take a short trip on the Bethlehem Express.

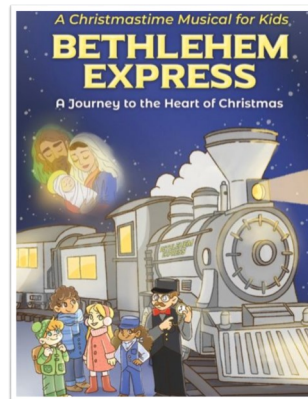
Program Participants: Final Rehearsal before the program will be **Saturday, December 16th at 10 a.m.** We will follow the rehearsal with a shared meal and treats for the youth and their families.

Following are the practice times:

December 3rd: 9:30 a.m. and during Children's Church

December 10th: 9:30 a.m. and during Children's Church

December 16th: 10a.m.-12p.m. & then lunch and celebrate together



10 Year Celebration & Stewardship Ministry Fair

What an incredible day of worship and celebration! We celebrated Pastor's 10 year Anniversary at Ascension with a beautiful delicious cake and the many snacks that everyone brought! The Ministry Fair brought a lot of better understanding and volunteer opportunities for members and the Teen Challenge folks shared their stories and ministry with the members of ALC! A truly special and heartfelt day! Thank you to all who gave their time and efforts to make today a smashing success! —Gus Hendrickson



Household/Personal Care Items For Christmas Packages



GIVING TREE

We are participating with Swan Valley High School to collect household and personal care products for Christmas packages for families in need.

Items needed are shampoo, conditioner, soap, laundry soap, dish soap, dryer sheets, fabric softener, tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning supplies, lotion, body wash, shaving cream, razors, feminine products, deodorant, etc. ****NEW THIS YEAR—Gas and fast food gift cards****

Items may be placed in the Gathering Area beginning **Sunday, November 26th**. All items should be delivered to the church no later than **Sunday, December 10th**. Thank you for your support!!

Mid-Michigan Adult and Teen Challenge

Thank you for joining us for worship on **Sunday, November 19th** where we collected a noisy offering to help support the ministry of Mid-Michigan Adult and Teen Challenge. They provide Christian faith-based, residential care to young people and adults who struggle with life-controlling problems. The programs are typically 12-18 months and consist of individual and group biblical studies, work projects, education (for adolescents), recreation and more.

Thank you for your offerings as we were able to provide them with \$669.59.



Homebound Visitors

We are looking for people who would be willing to visit our members in their home/nursing facilities once a month. This is a way to extend our community to those who are no longer able to worship physically with us. It would include providing home communion. Training is available.

We do have some who are continuing to serve in this ministry. **Thank you.** Much has changed since prior to the pandemic, and so it is time to reboot this team. If you think you would be willing to provide this meaningful ministry, we welcome you. This position does require a background check.

Grief Support Group



Ascension has a Grief Support Group. The group meets at the church on **Mondays at 10:30 a.m.**

A support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. Through this group, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. Since there are no neat, orderly stages of grief, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way.

A support group to help you move through the grief process

- No Requirements • No Pressure • Relaxed & Informal • Come and just listen or share • Everyone is Welcome!

Weekend Food Bags Needs Plastic Grocery Bags

The Weekend Food Bags program supply of plastic grocery bags is depleting. Please consider donating bags that you may have at home. The ones that are needed are the cheap thin bags, unfortunately the heavier duty (like Kroger pickup) bags do not work. **THANK YOU!**



Blood Drive

Our last blood drive of 2023 will be held on **Thursday, December 21st from 2:30 - 7:00 PM** in the fellowship hall. Please mark this on your calendar and help us make this last drive of the year our most successful. Every unit counts! Choose your appointment [online](#) or contact Lisa in the church office. **Walk-ins Welcome!**

Blood Pressure Screening

Mark your calendar for blood pressure screenings by the Parish Health Committee on the 3rd Sunday each month. The next one will be held on:

Sunday, December 17th

Sewing Group



Ascension's Sewing Group meets in the Fellowship Hall from **9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. on the dates below**. Bring your sewing machine (not required) and join us for fun and fellowship. Contact Sandy Graham with any questions, 989-781-1619.

December 6th

January 3rd & 17th



Sewing Group Needs Bed Sheets

The Sewing Group is in need of ALL COTTON sheets. They can use FLAT Queen & King sizes only. They are used for quilt backings. The sheets do not have to be new, however, we ask that they are clean of stains and do not have holes or rips. Some members of the group find them at yard sales and resale stores. All donations are appreciated.

Ascension Breakfast Club (ABC) - December 11th

All who are available for breakfast are invited to join others from Ascension for a time of fellowship and food. We meet at **9 a.m. at Levi's Restaurant** at 5800 Brockway, on the second Monday of each month. Each person is responsible for the cost of their own breakfast. You don't need to prepare anything or clean up. Just show up!



Wellness Warriors



We will continue to meet every **Tuesday at 6:15 p.m.** We are flexible with the exercise based on the abilities of those who attend each week. The goal is to move, and support each other!

Come check us out!

Questions? Contact Kris Friend (989) 245-6446 or Rita Hendrickson (989) 482-0271.



RaiseRight Orders

Orders Due EARLY: December 10th

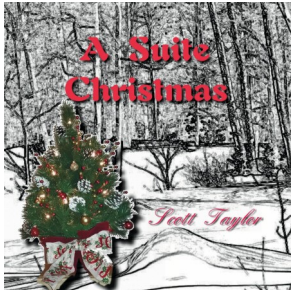
How Does It Work? Buy a gift card from the church and the church earns a percentage of the value. Order forms are on the kiosk and the church's website. Payment to Ascension Lutheran Church is due with the order.

Community News/Events



Piano Christmas Concert—December 8th at 7:00 p.m.

Join us on **Friday, December 8th at 7:00 p.m.** at Ascension Lutheran Church where pianist, Scott Taylor, shares a Christmas concert featuring works by Liszt and Tchaikovsky



Concert is free!
All are Invited!

CD's will be available for purchase.

www.scotttaylorpiano.com



Blue Christmas Service—Faith Lutheran Church—December 10th

A Service of remembrance and hope

This time of year can be a mix of emotions that make it a challenge. We invite you for a service of reflection, comfort and hope for hurting hearts.

Sunday afternoon, December 10, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4432 Mackinaw Rd, Saginaw, MI 48603
(Between Weiss & Shattuck)



2023 Annual Quilt Show & Silent Auction—Our Saviour

The 2023 Annual Quilt show and auction to benefit the Saginaw Shiawassee Habitat of Humanity was a huge success! The total for this year's auction was \$17,261. The 21-year total is \$252,099! Thank you to the 35 volunteers, 52 donors, and everyone who made purchases at this year's auction. We could not have done it without you. See you next year.



Food Pantry

There is a Truck Unload and Shelf Stocking the first Wednesday of each month. Volunteers are always welcome, the next date is **December 6th at 7:30 a.m.** at 723 Emerson, Saginaw, MI 48607.

Ascension is providing workers for the Center of HOPE Food Pantry on **December 13th**. Volunteers should arrive by **8:30 a.m.** at the pantry at 723 Emerson, Saginaw, MI 48607.

If you have questions about volunteering, Amanda Doerr, is our "in church" contact person. Please give her a call at 989-798-3241.

The Food Pantry continues to collect clean plastic & cloth grocery bags & manual can openers.

If you would like to donate to the Food Pantry to purchase food through the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, donations can be sent directly to: FBEM, 2300 Lapeer Rd, Flint, MI 48503. Checks must include in the memo line: Center of Hope Food Pantry/Saginaw P-981

Elementary Youth Giving Envelopes

We thank you greatly for teaching your children about giving and using their giving envelopes. Envelopes can be picked up in the Children's Church classroom. Each youth has their own giving number. It is VERY helpful to ensure that their giving is recorded properly to put their **name and their giving #** on the envelope each week. There is a sign posted just inside the door of the classroom with all the giving envelopes numbers listed. You may also use any envelope you have at home, as long as their name and number is on it. Any parents with an email address on file at church received an email with the giving numbers as well.



Confirmation Schedule

Confirmation Class Schedule, all classes are at 4:30 p.m.

December 3rd—Service Project

December 17th—Fourth Commandment

January 7th—Fifth Commandment

January 21st—Sixth Commandment



Butter Braid Fundraiser for the Youth Programs



During the month of November, the youth sold Butter Braids, a delicious pastry that is good anytime, and especially at the holidays. If you ordered from a Youth at church, your Butter Braids will be available for pickup beginning December 5th. Thank you for your support!!

If you are a Youth that sold Butter Braids to those outside the church, delivery to the church will be on December 4th, we will be in contact about pickup times.



Youth Fundraising—Pop Can Returns



Thank you for bringing cans and bottles in to help support Youth Ministry in our congregation.

Individual youth (elementary, middle, and high school) are encouraged to sign up to return cans each week. The next week, youth return the MONEY from that return to the church office or Pastor Julie. One-half of the money returned goes into that youth's individual account to help pay for camp, retreats, or other events that require a financial fee. The other 50% supports the youth ministry as a whole. We use this money to help offset costs of events and provide events at a lower cost.

Sign up sheet and instructions are located on the kiosk at church. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Charge Recap



Some might not think that spending a weekend packed with loud, energetic young people would be exhilarating and refreshing. CHARGE was exactly that!

From November 10-12, 2023, 250 young people and adult leaders gathered at Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City to join in a community that can never be replicated. The theme for our gathering focused around Matthew 5, the Beatitudes—blessed are the..... The Rev. Jenny Sung was our speaker and led us to think about those for whom these beatitudes are great news—and how these same passages empower us to be passionate about our life in Christ and where we hunger and thirst for righteousness. We sang, we danced, we listened, we played games, we talked in small groups and spent time as a congregation, and yes, we did hang out some in the waterpark.

We can be proud of the young people of our congregation—they had fun, met new people, welcomed people, have passions for issues of justice. They are aware of the injustices of our world in regard to race, economics, abilities, gender, sexuality—and they all have a desire to be part of making our world a better place—because God Loves Humans!!!

As pastor, I give thanks for this congregation who support our young people as they grow and develop in their faith. Thank you for your prayers, for talking to our youth about their experiences, and for the financial support that makes it possible for them to attend events that might be taxing on their families' budget otherwise. We make this investment for the now of the church, the now of the world—as well as hope for the future.

A special thank you to the youth who attended: Makena, Marissa, Harris, Gabby, Brooklyn, Greyston, Henry, and Olivia. You made the weekend not only insightful but fun. Thank you to Stephanie and Dave Becker who helped as adult leaders and managed the food situation. And to their daughter Alex, who added a little joy to the group. And to Gus and Rita Hendrickson who helped with transportation.

Shout out to Pam and Kim Grueber, who designated the memorial funds given in memory of their brother Tim. Tim was a great supporter and encourager of youth, and we thank him and his family for the continued and designated support of youth.



Camp Registration is OPEN!—Attending July 7-12, 2024

You heard right! Summer Camp Registration is open—and Pastor Julie is already registered.



To register, go to www.elcalivingwater.com and select summer programs. Make sure you select the correct week and that you are with Ascension Lutheran Church in Saginaw. All the information will be available. Please note that camp sometimes fills quickly and you will be waitlisted when camp begins to reach capacity.

Ascension will attend “Week 4”—July 7th-12th.

Once again the camp is “All Pricing,” meaning you determine what you are able to pay: Full price/Half price/Nothing. All are invited and money should never be an obstacle.

Confirmation Youth/6th-8th grades/Challengers—Challenge is at the core of this experience as campers grow in understanding their own gifts & abilities through classic camp activities and our low and high ropes challenge courses. This includes those current 5th graders who are planning on attending confirmation next fall, as well as the current confirmands. (Please see Pastor Julie if this will be the first time at Confirmation camp—the church has committed to support your registration at ½ the price. Cost for camp is \$470/\$235/\$0.

Elementary Youth/3rd-5th grade/Discoverers—A classic camp experience designed for your child to discover the love and grace of Christian community as they also begin to discover who they are as children of God. Includes a trip to Lewis' Adventure Zoo. Cost is \$480/\$240/\$0.

High School/8th-12th grade/Servant Heart—Make a difference in the name of Christ by serving others, while enjoying camp classics! During their week at camp, campers will have the opportunity to pick between service trip options, heading off camp to work on these projects. Campers will not attend Michigan's Adventure in 2024. \$470/\$235/\$0.



Young Elementary/1st-3rd grade/Explorers— An abbreviated camp experience for younger campers wanting to give camp a test drive. This program begins Sunday and ends Wednesday. Cost is \$330/\$165/\$0.

For “Kids” of All Ages! - Merry Christmas!



A CHRIST-CENTERED Christmas ADVENT READING PLAN

Explore the true meaning of Christmas as you travel through God's Word. Discover God's promises he fulfilled through the birth of His only Son, the **KING OF KINGS.**



1 Isaiah 7:14

2 Isaiah 9:6-7

3 Malachi 3:1

4 Micah 5:2-4

5 Luke 1:5-7

6 Luke 1:10-15

7 Luke 1:18-22

8 Luke 1:24-25

9 Luke 1:26-29

10 Luke 1:30-33

11 Luke 2:1-5

12 Luke 2:6-7

13 Luke 2:8-14

14 Luke 2:15-20

15 Matthew 1:18-21

16 Matthew 1:22-25

17 Matthew 2:1-3

18 Matthew 2:4-6

19 Matthew 2:7-9

20 Matthew 2:10-12

21 Romans 15:13

22 Galatians 4:4-5

23 Philippians 2:8-11

24 James 1:16-18

25 John 3:16

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Serving in December

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. † indicates a volunteer is needed

Readers	8am	10:30am
3	Dan Roth	Lori Schultz
10	Marty Debozy	Barb Van Marter
17	Tom Page	No Readings
24	4:30pm-Linda Luplow	7:30pm-Susan Kelley
31 9:15am	Susan K, John W, Kris F, Lori S, Mike C, Stephanie B,	



Sound Board Operators

3	Kris Friend	Makena Whelton
10	†	Makena Whelton
17	Kris Friend	Greyston Hendrickson
24	4:30pm-Makena Whelton	7:30pm-†
31 9:15am	Makena Whelton	

Head Ushers

3	Kelley	Friend/Beyerlein
10	Schomaker	Dalton/Whelton
17	Roth	Earnesty/Wizner
24	4:30pm & 7:30pm—Sign up on Kiosk	
31 9:15am	Kelley/Friend/Beyerlein	

Altar Guild

3	Susan Kelley
10	Kris Friend
17	†
24	†
31 9:15am	†



December Librarian: All

Prayers	8am	10:30am
3	Charleen Boland	Lisa Whelton
10	Susan Kelley	Lisa Espinoza
17	Ruth Schomaker	Dawn Dalton
24	4:30pm-Dawn Earnesty	7:30pm-Susan Kelley
31 9:15am	Dave Becker, Jr	



Video Screen Operators

3	Kris Friend	Gus Hendrickson
10	Susan Kelley	Ginny Whelton
17	Kris Friend	Makena Whelton
24	4:30pm-Gus H.	7:30pm-†
31 9:15am	Lisa Whelton	

Acolyte 10:30 a.m.

3	Ethan Earnesty
10	Matti Wizner
17	None-Christmas Program
24	4:30pm-Earnesty(2), 7:30pm-Wizner (2)
31 9:15am	†

Children's Church

3	Christmas Program Practice-Makena Whelton
10	Christmas Program Practice-Makena Whelton
17	Christmas Program-No class
24	No Class—Christmas Break
31 9:15am	No Class—Christmas Break (class resumes Jan 7th)

WEDNESDAYS 7pm

	Head Usher	Readers	Sound Board	Video Screen	Prayers
6	Glen Mack	Kristin Kazmierski	†	Kelly Phillion	No Prayers
13	†	John Schroeder	†	Connie Dutcher	No Prayers
20	Mike Clifford	Mike Clifford	†	Connie Dutcher	No Prayers
27	John Schroeder	Connie Dutcher	†	Kelly Phillion	Connie Dutcher



Ascension Lutheran Church - December 2023

8695 Gratiot Road, Saginaw, MI 48609

(989) 781-2170

Email: ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net













Website: ascensionlc.org

Church Office hours:

Mondays—Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

If you plan to meet for one of our Ministries in the church, please let the church office know.

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bring your Personal Care Items by December 10th If you ordered Butter Braids at church, pick up beginning December 5th 					<i>1</i> Office Closed	<i>2</i> 9am-Holiday Decorating
<i>3</i> Commitment Sunday <i>New Members</i> 8am-Worship/Communion 9:30am-Christmas Program Practice 10:30am-Worship/Communion/Ch Ch 4:30pm-MS/HS Service Project	<i>4</i> 9am-Carpet Cleaning 10:30am-Grief Group 6:00pm-Women's Bible Study 	<i>5</i> 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors	<i>6</i> 7:30am-Food Pantry Truck Unload 9am-Sewing Group 11am-Weekend Food Bags 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Advent Worship/Communion	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i> Office Closed 7pm-Piano Concert- Scott Taylor	<i>9</i>
<i>10</i> Raise Right Due 8am-Worship/Communion 9:30am-Christmas Program Practice 10:30am-Worship/Communion/Ch Ch 11:30am-Budget/Election Meeting 5pm-Blue Christmas @ Faith Lutheran	<i>11</i> 9am-Ascension Breakfast Club @ Levi's 10:30am-Grief Group	<i>12</i> 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors	<i>13</i> 8:30am-Food Pantry 11am-Weekend Food Bags 12pm-Council Reports Due 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Advent Worship/Communion	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i> Office Closed	<i>16</i> 10am-Christmas Program Rehearsal & lunch 
<i>17</i> BP Screening 8am-Worship/Communion 9:30am-Christmas Program Practice 10:30am-Worship/Communion/ Children's Christmas Program 4:30pm-Confirmation	<i>18</i> 10:30am-Grief Group 12pm-Messenger Deadline	<i>19</i> 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors 6:30pm-Council Mtg	<i>20</i> Office Closed 11am-Weekend Food Bags 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Advent Worship/Communion	<i>21</i> Office Closed 2:30-7pm-Blood Drive (FH) 	<i>22</i> Office Closed	<i>23</i>
<i>24</i> 4:30 pm-Worship/Communion  7:30 pm-Worship/ Communion	<i>25</i> Office Closed 	<i>26</i> 9am-2023 Offering Deadline 9am-2023 Reimbursement Deadline 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors	<i>27</i> 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Worship/Communion Messenger Mailed	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i> Office Closed	<i>30</i>
<i>31</i> 9:15am-Worship/Com  Lessons and Carols						

Prayer Chain requests should be called to Barb Van Marter at 989-781-7803

Ascension Lutheran Church

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 December 



BUT THE ANGEL SAID TO THEM,
“DO NOT BE AFRAID.
I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS
THAT WILL CAUSE **GREAT JOY**
FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.”

LUKE 2:10, niv



**Respect the
Deadline!**



The MESSENGER is published monthly by Ascension Lutheran Church.
Deadline for the January 2024 issue is: **Monday, December 18th at 12:00**
(noon). Articles may be emailed to: ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net