

# The Messenger

## Ascension Lutheran Church

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



## Congregational Annual Meeting

On **Sunday, February 11th** at 11:30 a.m., we will meet for our annual meeting where the ministries have the opportunity to share what has been accomplished in 2023.

The Annual Report is available at the church beginning **January 28th**. The report can also be sent to you via email, please contact the office for that request.

*All Confirmed Members of Ascension Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend as we review our 2023 year in ministry and attend to any official business and attend to any official business*



## Lenten Soup Suppers: 2/14—3/20

Ascension's Youth are hosting meals before our Wednesday Lenten Services at 6:00 p.m. A free will offering will be collected and split between the Youth accounts of those who volunteer. The Youth will set up, serve, and cleanup. They need to arrive by 5:30 p.m. and should be finished about 7:15 p.m. We will need an adult to oversee each week as well. Sign up on the kiosk in the gathering area or contact the church office.



The design of the meal is to be a simple soup supper of soup, salad, and bread before worship. We ask those who would like to donate these items to sign up on the kiosk in the gathering area. The goal is to have 3 soups each week.



Volume 45, Issue 2

February 2024

### Special points of interest:

- Congregational Meeting is February 11th
- Lenten Worship-page 4
- Pick up Giving Envelopes if you haven't already
- Register for Summer Camp ASAP
- Greif Support meets on Mondays at 10:30am
- Grants & Scholarships (pg 9)

### Inside this issue:

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## A Message From Pastor Julie

With: A Preposition of meaning

A preposition is a word—and almost always a very small, very common word—that shows direction, location, or time, or that introduces an object.

Common Prepositions: to, with, for, on, by, because, since....

These prepositions are not interchangeable. For instance, when people ask me where I serve as pastor I could answer:

- I serve AT Ascension Lutheran Church, Or,
- I serve WITH Ascension Lutheran Church.

To me, each one means something a little different.

AT—This implies that there is a specific place I work or serve. However, the church is not a building and I often find myself at work in homes, hospitals, schools, coffee shops, funeral homes, etc.

WITH—This is the preposition I choose to use because I believe it is biblical and consistent with the calling of a pastor. Paul writes it this way in Romans 12:4-8: *“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the*

*members have the same function,<sup>5</sup>so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup>We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup>ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup>the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.”* I serve for this time with the people of Ascension, bringing my gifts to accompany and serve alongside the gifts of others. My call specifically is to preach; teach; carry out ministry in accordance with the ELCA constitution; study; provide communion and baptism; to love, serve and pray for God’s people; and live by my example giving faithful witness to the world. I love serving with the people of Ascension and we are a gifted group of people. I could go on and on.

What if “with” doesn’t just apply to me?

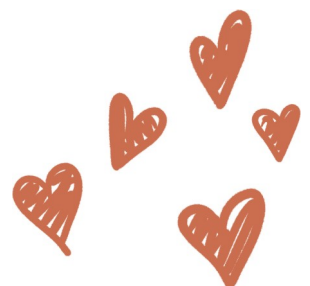
- I am a member AT Ascension Lutheran Church, or
- I am a member WITH

Ascension Lutheran Church

AT—This implies that your membership is at a specific place. But ministry and serving God happens in variety of places. It might also imply that you are a member of this place that offers specific duties as a member, like a club or another organization. Some believe you have to be a member at to get the benefits—for a church that might mean a wedding, baptism, funeral, or whatever it is that is asked for.

WITH—This is the preposition I think applies. We are all members with Ascension, with our varying gifts. There is an understanding that with others, we will walk with, accompany and participate together in the ministry.

What would our congregation look like or be like if we all understood our membership WITH Ascension?



## Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study



Our Sunday morning adult class will continue a six-week study titled **Self-Esteem: Made in the Image of God** through **February 11th.**

All are welcome!

Beginning **February 18, 2024** the Sunday morning

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

**February 5th—19th:** Social Issues Freestyle: Digging into personal concerns and social issues of your choice and studying the Bible verses to guide us through.

**February 26th-March 25th:** Every gift from God reveals his love, but no gift reveals his love more than the gifts of the cross. In this video Bible study, Max Lucado explores the many gifts that Christ provided to us at his crucifixion. The **He Chose the Nails** Study includes video

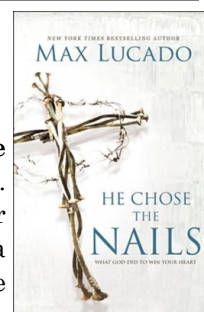
discussion questions, Bible exploration, personal study and reflection materials.

Our author, Max Lucado, has served many churches in his 45 years of ministry. He currently serves as Senior Minister of Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas. He is a bestselling author with more than 145 million products in print.

Our Mary to Martha Women's Bible Study is a five-week study that will meet in the Digging Dunes room. Participant books

are **\$9.00 due the first day of class.**

This is a shorter class but, it is a good one! Come and join us!



**Classes are on Mondays at 6:00 p.m.**

Please let Joyce Richardson know if you are participating in the class so we may order enough books. Sign up by calling or texting Joyce at 989-274-6787.

**All women are welcome!**

## Tuesday Morning Bible Study



You are invited to join us at 11 a.m. on Tuesday mornings via Zoom. In January we began reading through **1 John, 2 John and 3 John.** *FYI—1 John is one of Pastor Julie's favorite books of scripture.*

[www.zoom.com](http://www.zoom.com)

**Meeting ID: 871 0929 4561**

**Passcode: 099583**



Join us, and as always friends are welcome. Enter the code for the zoom meeting or let Pastor Julie know and she can email or Facebook message you the invite.



## Ash Wednesday & Valentine's Day both on February 14th

At first these celebrated on the same day seems strange, and I guess it still does. I am still trying to figure out this seeming conundrum, a paradox.

On a day full of sweetness (in candy and in words) the remembrance of our mortality can be a bitter surprise. There are many, including me who have practiced fasting on Ash Wednesday—but I can't imagine no chocolate on Valentines day.

But maybe this contradiction

will be a reminder of the beauty of the Lenten season. Lent is a time when we are invited in to a time of reflection and repentance—not for a self-improvement goal such as a New Year's resolution. Rather we enter into reflection and repentance for the love and transformation of God's world—our lives and the lives of others. This is one of the reasons some choose to give up something for Lent; and others choose to add a good practice into their lives at this

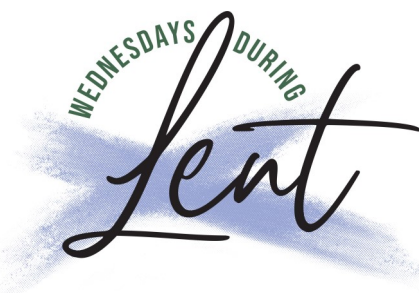
time.

What might you do in love for God, neighbor and world that will show our commitment to being a follower of Jesus, and change the world at the same time? Last year, the ELCA Young Adult group encouraged people to give up single used plastics, as a way to show our care for the creation God has entrusted to us. For more information check out [#NoPlasticsforLent2023](#) for a few videos from ELCA Young Adults throughout the World.

## Wednesday Lenten Series begins February 21st

This season for Lent we are going to focus on five of the I AM statements of Jesus from the gospel of John. These readings and reflections are a great way to ponder on God becoming flesh.

Lent is the season that leads us to the Holy Days of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection. Jesus goes to the cross, and when Jesus goes to the cross, so does God! We will reflect on what it means that at the same time Jesus is humanity and God. During this season, we hold these two in tension as simultaneous truths.



2/21/24

I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35-40)

2/28/24

I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12-20)

3/06/24

I AM the Door (John 10:1-10)

3/13/24

I AM the Good Shepherd (John 10:11-18)

3/20/24

I AM the Resurrection and Life (John 11:17-27)





## 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

Pat Joyce—8044 Winchester Ct.  
Saginaw, MI 48609

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

*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

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

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

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.*

### February 4th

Emanuel Lutheran Church, Ludington,

MI and Rev. Domingo Shriver,  
Ecumenical.

*Ascension Families: Heather, Bob, Sera,  
Raylee Darabos; Bob & Peggy Darling;  
Angelica & Jordan Dawkins.*

### February 11th

Victory Trinity Lutheran Church,  
Ludington, MI and Rev. Ron Iris  
(UMC).

*Ascension Families: Dave, Shelly,  
Jacob, Max, Makenna Dawson;  
Jennifer & Tom Deaton; Marty Debozy.*

### February 18th

Trinity Lutheran Church, Manton, MI  
and Rev. Bill Huether.

*Ascension Families: Karen, Jacob  
DeLaRosa; A-J, Leslie, Declan, Roland  
Denman; Brian & Sue Denman.*

### February 25th

Hope Lutheran Church, Marlette, MI  
and Rev. John Sleziak.

*Ascension Families: Hugh,  
Jennifer Renae Dickie; Bob &  
Gina Dillenbeck; Amanda,  
Jonathan, Alice, Pierce Doerr*



## Altar Flowers



Altar arrangements are placed in the Sanctuary each week to help decorate for worship. They can be given "To the Glory of God", in memory of someone, or in honor of an event, such as birthday or anniversary. The arrangement may be picked up after the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday morning. You can choose a specific date and 2 arrangements are permitted each week. **The cost is \$30.00. Payment envelopes are available on the Acolyte Room Door,** you can mail a check, or drop off payment when you are at church or during office hours (Monday-Thursdays 9am-2pm). The 2024 flower chart is posted on the door of the Acolyte room and dates are available.



*February 4th available to sponsor*

February 11th In memory of Rust Van Marter, by Barb Van Marter

February 18th In honor of Pastor Julie's Baptism, by Julie Bailey

February 25th To the Glory of God, by Susan Kelley



**STAFF**

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

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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

**MINISTRIES**

Glen Mack, Congregational Care  
 Gus Hendrickson, 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](mailto:ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net)

**Website:** [www.ascensionlc.org](http://www.ascensionlc.org)

**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/groups/ascensionsaginaw](http://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. **The church will be closed if Swan  
 Valley Schools are closed due to inclement  
 weather.**



1st Parker Kazmierski  
 Esther Mack  
 Josh Whelton  
 2nd Sheila Dambro  
 Brad Phillion  
 4th Nelson Staples  
 Alexis Turner  
 5th Jeannie Hamilton  
 Maliyah Johnson  
 10th Todd Albrecht  
 Pat Marceills  
 David Maeder  
 11th Holly Bostwick  
 12th Chuck Latty  
 13th Patrick Dalton  
 Carol Schroeder



14th Olivia Bostwick  
 16th Jacob DeLaRosa  
 18th Anni Mackel  
 20th Aaron Gottlieb  
 Harrison Salowitz  
 21st Rhys Carroll  
 22nd Zachary Maddox  
 Scarlett Naples  
 24th Roland Denman  
 Ezra Lopez  
 25th Max Dreyfus  
 Paul Nielsen  
 26th Dori Dalton  
 27th Natalie Fleissner  
 Ken Schian  
 Layne Wakeman  
 28th Chase Hamilton



5th Bruce and Traci Collier  
 12th Revs. John and Leslie  
 Soyster  
 14th Mike and Elaine Clifford  
 Amy and Russell Kolb  
 15th Ronald and Marie  
 Leonard  
 18th John and Julie Stroebel  
 19th John and Ginny Whelton  
 23rd Don and Lorna Arndt  
 24th Dick and Ruth  
 Schomaker  
 25th Todd and Alisha  
 Albrecht  
 Jim and Marie Stuart



## 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. If other arrangements are needed, please contact the church office.

## “Other” on Giving Envelopes

Did you notice that the 2024 giving envelopes have an “other” line. You may use this if you would like to give or deposit money for something other than general or mortgage. Examples, could be flowers, weekend food bags, youth, or any ministry or team at Ascension. Please make sure to note the donation on the line provided.

## 2024 Giving Statements

2024 Year End Giving statements are available for pickup in the gathering area. If not picked up by **February 19th**, they will be mailed to you. Please help us reduce our postage costs by picking your up when you are here for church or during office hours. Thank You!

## 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, February 18th**.



## Food Pantry \*\*Please Note Change of Date Serving\*\*

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

Ascension is providing workers for the Center of HOPE Food Pantry on **February 28th**. Volunteers

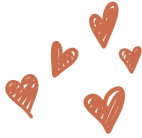
should arrive by **8:30 a.m.** at the pantry at 723 Emerson, Saginaw, MI 48607.

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





## Grief Support Group—Next Session Begins February 5th

Ascension's Grief Support Group will begin a new session on **February 5th at 10:30 a.m.** The program they follow is called GriefShare.

A GriefShare support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. Through this 13-week 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. Participant books are \$20.

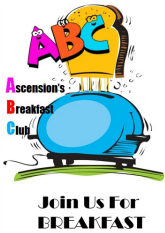
If you have book from a previous session, you may use that book again for future sessions.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Linda

Lentner at 989-274-7418 or [linda.lentner@gmail.com](mailto:linda.lentner@gmail.com).

There are no requirements to share, no pressure, and everyone is welcome!

The grief group supports many types of grief; death, sickness and divorce are just a few.



## Ascension Breakfast Club (ABC) - February 12th

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—Tuesdays 6:15 p.m.



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

## 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 at 989-781-1619.



The Sewing Group is in need of ALL COTTON sheets. They can use FLAT Queen and 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.

**February 7th & 21st**





## Ascension's Endowment—Grants & Scholarships

The Ascension Lutheran Church Endowment Fund Committee is accepting applications for 2024 to fund projects which may support any of the following activities:

- Christian Education
- Youth Programs
- Music Ministry
- Mission Opportunities
- Scholarships
- Family Outreach
- Evangelism
- Technology
- Special Capital Improvement Opportunities

Because of the limited amount of money the Endowment Fund Committee makes on its investments each year, the committee reviews each application and awards monies on how the request fits the mission and purpose of the church. The maximum amount that can be funded for any activity is \$1,000. The applications are available on our website and in the Church Office and must be submitted by March 31, 2024.



**Attention all high school students and parents.** There is a scholarship grant available for graduating seniors that are members of Ascension Lutheran Church. The scholarship packets, which include the guidelines and application form, are available in the Church Office and on our website. Application deadline is March 31, 2024.

If there are any questions, please contact the Endowment Committee chair Tracy Aldrich or the church office.

## St. John's Grants & Scholarships

Upon closing St. John ELCA in downtown Saginaw as a worship center in 11-01-2020, the process began to complete the transformation of the trust into a foundation. They strive to continue the programs that were established by the church and develop and offer support to programs and organizations that further the Gospel of Christ in

the Saginaw Area. They are doing this in two ways:

**Scholarships** for applicants age 16+, who are a confirmed member/employee of one of the ELCA churches in the Saginaw area and attending K-12, Jr College or University, or payment on their student loan.

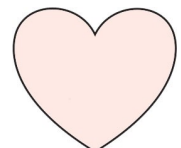
**Grants** for programs such as

Christian education, community health and welfare, social welfare, feeding and supporting the needy, supporting and assisting troubled youth, and aiding the poor in the Saginaw Area.

The applications for both are posted on the Kiosk at church and available on our website.



## Game Night Was FUN!





## SOUP COOK OFF

### Soup Cook-Off—Youth Fundraiser—February 4th

The Youth will sponsor a Soup Cook-Off on **Sunday, February 4th** at approximately **11:45 a.m.** following the second service.

The categories are **Most Unique, Most Comforting and Most "New Orleans"**. We ask you to consider participating by entering your best soup in our cook-off competition AND by attending and casting your votes. A form

for your entry will be available on the Kiosk in the Gathering Area.

There is no fee to enter—bring your soup in a crock pot, enough for several people to get a small taste at least. We ask each attendee to donate \$5.00 in order to eat and cast your votes.

Money raised will go to support the Youth Ministry of

Ascension, specifically those traveling to New Orleans for the Youth Gathering.

There will also be a Silent Auction. If you have an item you would like to donate for the Silent Auction, please contact Donna Frollo at 989-297-8883.

Questions about the Soup Cook-Off can be directed to Dori Dalton, Donna Frollo, Lisa Whelton, or Pastor Julie.

### Craft Fair—Youth Fundraiser—March 9th



We are planning a craft fair at Ascension on **Saturday, March 9th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** The fair will be a Youth Fundraiser for the National Gathering in New Orleans. We are looking for vendors and individuals that would like to rent tables for \$25. The table rental will allow each person to decorate and set up their table as they choose. If you know someone who would be interested, contact information is below. We also plan to hold a bake sale, so those that can contribute in baked goods, we will gladly take those donations.

Contacts: Dori Dalton (954) 205-3588, dmd0274@hotmail.com  
Donna Frollo, (989) 297-8883, donnaafrollo@gmail.com  
Lisa Whelton (989) 529-4400, ljwhelton@gmail.com



### Confirmation Schedule

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

**February 4th**—Seventh Commandment

**February 18th**—Eighth Commandment

**March 3rd**—Ninth and Tenth

Commandments

**March 17th**—What is a Creed



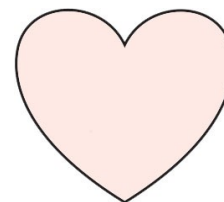
*March 24th & 31st, Spring Break & Easter*

**April 7th**—First Article: God

**April 21st**—Second Article: Jesus

**May 5th**—Third Article: Holy Spirit





## 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.



## 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](http://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 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>.**

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/6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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/3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades/ 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 /8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades/ 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 /1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grades /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.

**Summer camp**



## From the Synod Office

### Sab • bat • i • cal: A Rest or Break from Work

*“Moreover I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, so that they might know that I the Lord sanctify them” (Ezekiel 20:12)*

This message comes to you as Bishop Satterlee is enjoying the first month of a well-deserved 3-month sabbatical planned with the full encouragement and support of Synod Council in accordance with the synod’s sabbatical guidelines for all rostered ministers. A link to the 2024 Compensation Guidelines is provided on the synod website for reference (see Appendix C for the sabbatical guidelines).

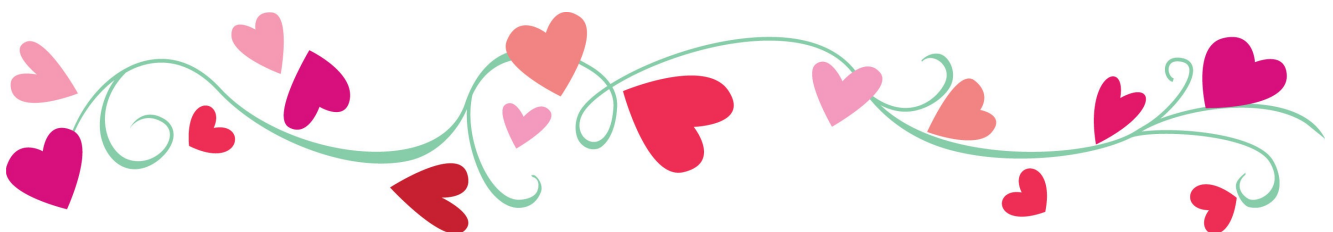
**What is a sabbatical?** A sabbatical (from the Hebrew *šabat* or *sabbath*; Latin *sabbaticus*; and Greek *sabbatikos*) is an extended period of time intentionally spent on things like study, travel, rest, renewal, personal development, reinforcement and rejuvenation of relationships with God and others – activities outside of the routine job that take place without the demands and stress of daily responsibilities.

**Why are sabbaticals a blessing for our rostered ministers?** Many parishioners believe the call of a rostered minister is relatively stress-free, with the primary focus centered on weekend worship and related activities. In reality, pastors and deacons across our synod work tirelessly throughout each week to meet the strategic needs of their congregation(s) – including worship leadership, education and Bible studies, service projects, community support and the like. In addition, we rely on our pastors to serve as our “shepherds” during congregational conflict, during our more personal events such as baptisms, weddings, funerals, and as they provide 24/7 pastoral care and counseling in times of need. At the synod level, the bishop also serves as “shepherd” to rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) across the synod. Since the pandemic, there has been an enhanced need to help these leaders manage conflict within their congregations along with the feelings of sadness, hurt, anger and frustration that have resulted within their ministries. Our rostered ministers are honored to serve in their calls and they are committed to the important work they lead. Each do their best to manage the inherent stress that builds up as they deal with the mentally challenging and emotionally exhausting deep, “inner soul” issues we put before them week after week, month after month, and year after year. A periodic sabbatical provides a blessed opportunity for our rostered ministers to step away and renew, refresh and recharge for the work to come.

**How frequently are sabbaticals recommended?** It is up to the Congregation Council (or equivalent leadership body) to set the schedule for sabbatical leaves for their rostered ministers to meet the needs of the organization. According to our synod’s Compensation Guidelines, a sabbatical of up to three months in duration is encouraged for full-time rostered ministers who have been in their present call five years or more, with continued eligibility for additional sabbaticals within the same call every five years after that. From a financial standpoint, salary, housing and other benefits are expected to continue throughout the sabbatical period with the congregation taking full responsibility for alternative staffing to cover needs during the absence.

With all of this in mind, I encourage you to think about the stressors being managed, both outwardly and inwardly, by your pastor(s) and/or deacon(s). Are there ways you can provide additional support within their on-going ministry to help alleviate known stressors? Is your congregation supportive of sabbaticals for rostered ministers and is a schedule in place for long-range planning? Your encouragement and support of and advocacy for this meaningful break from ministry will mean the world to your rostered minister and to your congregation in the long run!

Sandy Schlesinger, Synod Vice President





# Puzzle!

After solving the equations, write the words on the correct numbered lines below. Complete Ephesians 1:3 (NIV) to discover how God shows his great love for us.

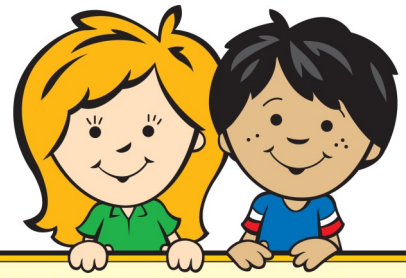
14 - 7 = \_\_\_\_ Father  
10 + 9 = \_\_\_\_ heavenly  
9 + 9 = \_\_\_\_ the  
12 + 12 = \_\_\_\_ blessing  
2 - 1 = \_\_\_\_ Praise  
7 + 7 = \_\_\_\_ has  
11 + 11 = \_\_\_\_ every  
13 + 13 = \_\_\_\_ Christ  
8 + 8 = \_\_\_\_ us  
10 + 10 = \_\_\_\_ realms  
8 + 9 = \_\_\_\_ in  
5 + 5 = \_\_\_\_ Lord  
10 + 11 = \_\_\_\_ with

10 + 15 = \_\_\_\_ in  
10 - 5 = \_\_\_\_ God  
6 - 3 = \_\_\_\_ to  
12 - 6 = \_\_\_\_ and  
6 + 6 = \_\_\_\_ Christ  
18 - 9 = \_\_\_\_ our  
22 - 11 = \_\_\_\_ Jesus  
1 + 1 = \_\_\_\_ be  
7 + 6 = \_\_\_\_ who  
2 + 2 = \_\_\_\_ the  
10 + 5 = \_\_\_\_ blessed  
4 + 4 = \_\_\_\_ of  
10 + 13 = \_\_\_\_ spiritual

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26		

Ephesians 1:3, NIV

Answer: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3, NIV



**KIDS PAGE**



Make this heartfelt craft as a decoration or gift.

### What you need:

- Yarn
- Scissors
- Parchment paper
- Baking sheet
- Heart-shaped cookie cutters
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ½ cup water
- Adult help



### What you do:

1. Cut yarn into 12-inch pieces.
2. Place cookie cutters atop a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
3. Combine cornstarch and water in a saucepan. Heat mixture over medium heat, stirring until thick and smooth. Remove from heat and cool to form a "glue."
4. Dip each piece of yarn into the mixture to coat completely. Squeeze off any excess.
5. Place yarn in the cookie cutters, allowing pieces to cross and loop within the heart. Add more until the cookie cutter is filled and the yarn looks like a heart.
6. Remove cookie cutters and bake the sheet for two hours at 150°F, or until hearts are dry and hard.

Happy Valentine's Day

**Pull Out Your Bibles for this Quiz and Go To: 1 John 4:7-8**

## Bible Quiz

Use one word (perhaps in different forms) for all the blanks to complete this Scripture passage:

"Dear friends, let us \_\_\_\_ one another, for \_\_\_\_ comes from God. Everyone who \_\_\_\_ has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not \_\_\_\_ does not know God, because God is \_\_\_\_."

- believe
- help
- love
- forgive





## Serving in February

*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	Prayers	8am	10:30am
4	Tom Erskinee	Linda Lentner	4	Susan Kelley	Lisa Espinoza
11	Joan Ford	Linda Luplow	11	Charleen Boland	Lisa Whelton
18	Kris Friend	Lori Schultz	18	Lynn Schomaker	Chris Crump
25	Susan Kelley	Heidi Trepkowski	25	Ruth Schomaker	Heidi Trepkowski



### Sound Board Operators

4	Kris Friend	†
11	†	Makena Whelton
18	Kris Friend	†
25	†	Makena Whelton

### Video Screen Operators

4	Kris Friend	†
11	Charleen Boland	†
18	Kris Friend	†
25	Charleen Boland	†

### Head Ushers

4	Schomaker	Dalton/Whelton
11	Roth	Earnesty/Wizner
18	Wilson	Dawson/Hendrickson
25	Kelley	Friend/Beyerlein

### Acolyte 10:30 a.m.

4	Matti Wizner
11	Nathan Earnesty
18	Hannah Wizner
25	Eliza Trepkowski

### Altar Guild

4	Susan Kelley
11	Susan Kelley
18	Susan Kelley
25	Susan Kelley

### Children's Church

4	Bob Aldrich
11	Tony Dancer
18	Bryan Carroll
25	Stephanie & Dave Becker



February Librarian: Marty Debozy



### WEDNESDAYS 7pm

	Head Usher	Readers	Sound Board	Video Screen	Prayers
7	John Schroeder	Connie Dutcher	†	Glen Mack	Connie Dutcher
14	Glen Mack	Kristin Kazmierski	Mike Romosier	Connie Dutcher	Celina Gottlieb
21	John Schroeder	Glen Mack	†	Kelly Phillion	No Prayers
28	Mike Clifford	Joyce Richardson	†	Glen Mack	No Prayers

## Ascension Lutheran Church - February 2024

8695 Gratiot Road, Saginaw, MI 48609 (989) 781-2170

Email: [ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net) Website: [ascensionlc.org](http://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



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Pastor Julie at Conference February 1st-3rd				1	2 <b>Office Closed</b> 	3
4 8am-Worship/Communion 9:15am-Adult SS/Bible Study 10:30am-Worship/Communion/ Children's Church 11:45am-Soup Cook-off Fundraiser 4:30pm-Confirmation	5 10:30am-Grief Group 6:00pm-Women's Bible Study	6 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors	7 7:30am-Food Pantry TruckUnload 9am-Sewing Group 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Worship/Communion	8	9 <b>Office Closed</b> 3pm-Kitchen Rental	10
11 8am-Worship/Communion 9:15am-Adult SS/Bible Study 10:30am-Worship/Communion/ Children's Church 11:30am-Annual Meeting 	12 9am-ABC Breakfast @ Levi's 10:30am-Grief Group 6:00pm-Women's Bible Study	13 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 3pm-Kitchen Rental 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors	14 <b>Valentine's Day</b> 11am-Weekend Food Bags 12pm-Council Reports Due 6:00pm-Soup Supper 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Worship/Communion 	15	16 <b>Office Closed</b>	17
18 <b>BP Screening</b> <b>RaiseRight Due</b> 8am-Worship/Communion 9:15am-Adult SS/Bible Study 10:30am-Worship/Communion/ Children's Church 4:30pm-Confirmation	19 10:30am-Grief Group 12pm-Messenger Deadline 6:00pm-Women's Bible Study 	20 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors 6:30pm-Council Mtg	21 9am-Sewing Group 11am-Weekend Food Bags 6:00pm-Soup Supper 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Worship/Communion	22	23 <b>Office Closed</b>	24
25 8am-Worship/Communion 9:15am-Adult SS/Bible Study 10:30am-Worship/Communion/ Children's Church	26 10:30am-Grief Group 6:00pm-Women's Bible Study	27 11am-Bible Study-Zoom 6:15pm-Wellness Warriors	28 8:30am-Serve @ Food Pantry 11am-Weekend Food Bags 6:00pm-Soup Supper 6:30pm-Scouts 7pm-Worship/Communion Messenger Mailed	29		

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

## Ascension Lutheran Church

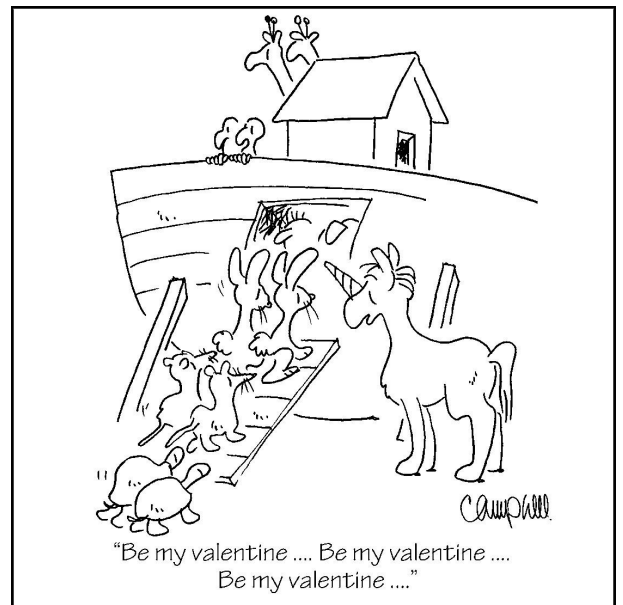
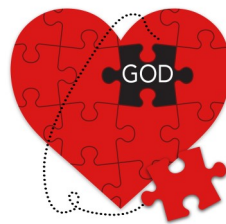
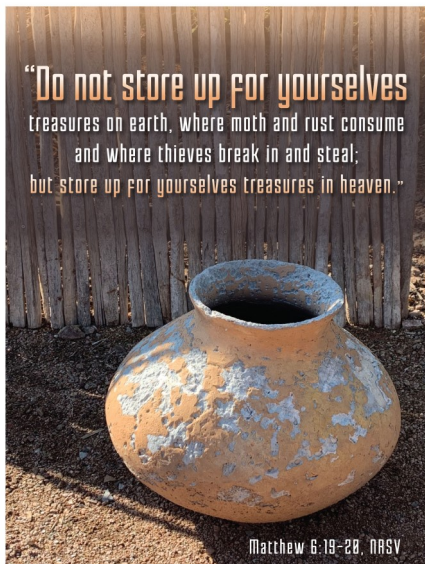
8695 Gratiot Road  
Saginaw, MI 48609

Phone: 989-781-2170  
[www.ascensionlc.org](http://www.ascensionlc.org)

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February

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**DEADLINE FOR  
NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

**The MESSENGER** is published monthly by Ascension Lutheran Church. Deadline for the March 2024 issue is: **Monday, February 19th at 12:00 (noon)**. Articles may be emailed to: [ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net)