



News & Updates from ALC

March 2024

Listening Circles

“The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to God’s Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them. It is God’s love for us that God not only gives us His Word but also lends us His ear.”

*-Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community**

When our Worship & Arts Committee met in January to plan for the Lenten season, we found ourselves yearning for more spaces to listen to one another so that we, as a faith community, might better understand the unique perspectives, gifts, and the ideas each of us brings. This desire led to the Listening Circles, a time designed specifically for us to share how Ascension renews us in the life-saving words of the Gospel while also dreaming of ways in which we want to deepen our commitment to worship, discipleship, and outreach. As the above Bonhoeffer quote alludes, listening is at the very heart of what we do as Christians. It is not only the beginning of community, but it is the threadline that tethers us to God and to one another throughout *all stages* of our journey together.

It is my hope that by creating this space to intentionally listen, we might continue to deepen our ties not simply with each other, but with the God who has brought us all together. It is a true treasure to know more about our Creator through the people in which we worship and serve alongside! You do not need to be a voting member nor of a certain age to attend these circles. (Parents, your children are welcome and are encouraged to attend! They have an important perspective for us!) The Listening Circles are meant for *every* person who worships at Ascension.

Please consider lingering after worship for an extra hour on the following Sundays as we spend time sharing about our life together:

- March 3: Worship
- March 17: In-reach (fellowship and faith formation)
- March 24: Outreach

In Ministry Together,
Pr. Kayla



New Year, New Council

Our new Council met on Saturday, February 10 at The House Next Door (Princeton Junction, NJ) for a special retreat to kickstart our year together. We spent time in scripture, prayer,

understanding one another's gifts, and discussing the role of Council leadership at Ascension. If you are interested to learn about what happens at our monthly Council Meetings, please check out the bulletin board in the narthex. The most recent approved minutes are there for you to view.

Council Members: Mark Schultz, Tony Eith (Secretary), Leslie Gallant, Tom D'Esmond (Treasurer), The Rev. Kayla Hopgood, Sheryl White (Vice President), Eric Stark, John Carducci (President), and Monica Orth (not pictured)

LENTEN SOUP SUPPER AND BIBLE STUDY

Please join us for Soup Suppers and A Lenten Devotional for 5 weeks during Lent:
Wednesday's at 6:00 pm
for simple supper and Devotional at 7:00 pm
March 6, 13 and 20

We will again be using the devotions from The Sanctified Art, this year's title is: WANDERING HEART Figuring out faith with Peter



This Lent, we will be focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer.

We hope you come and share this journey with us!
As we wander through Lent, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace.
May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

Artfully yours,

The Sanctified Art Creative Team Along with Anne, Sheryl and Lynn from ALC
Please sign up on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex or see one of us if you have any questions.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT - March 18th!

Our next Family Night will be March 18th beginning at 5:45pm. This is an interactive way to worship, serve our neighbors, and be together. We will be making cards to send to a PA National Guard unit that is deployed to Africa. We are also collecting protein bars and rice krispie treats to send them. Designed for all ages and all people. Come worship with us!
See pictures from our brunch below!!





PULPIT SWAP

We had our first “pulpit swap” on Transfiguration Sunday. Pastor Erich Kussman from Saint Bartholomew’s Lutheran Church in Trenton, NJ preached at Ascension while Pastor Kayla preached in Trenton. It was a tremendous opportunity for us to hear more about the work of a neighboring congregation and their mission to Trenton.

Grass Mowing Opportunities

We need a few volunteers to assist in maintaining the property from early May thru October. This takes about 3-5 hours per week as we cut about 4 acres. We use a 61 in. Zero Turn radius mower like the one shown below. We need to keep the group small so as to maintain the equipment properly and safely. If you're interested I'd like to have you sign up for one week per month. Trimming and blowing is also necessary. I'll have ginny setup a place to share the schedule.

If you have any questions or would like to help, let me know. Thanks

John Carducci (CarducciJohn@gmail.com)



MISSION MINISTRY

CARING FOR FRIENDS

Last year we prepared a total of 3075 breakfast bags this year for hungry people in the Philadelphia region! Caring for Friends now provides food and friendship to kids and homeless persons as well as their homebound clients. We are now assembling snack bags (no oatmeal, granola or protein bar instead) which are easier for their homeless clients to consume.

We will be assembling bags **March 10** after worship. Your donations with the help of a Thrivent Action Team Grant and assistance assembling the bags are

always appreciated! As Jesus says in John 21:17 “Feed my sheep”, we are doing that here at Ascension.

Snack Bag items needed:

- 1 gallon plastic storage bags (zip loc)
- 6.75 oz 100% juice boxes (orange juice preferred)
- Granola, protein or oatmeal bars
- 6 packs of peanut butter or cheese crackers
- 1 oz boxes of raisins or other dried fruit

There are also dinner trays and soup containers in the Narthex at church that you can fill and freeze at home. Please be sure to fill out the labels completely and include our church’s identifying number (**287**) on the labels. The dinner trays need to be covered with foil as they are reheated in a toaster oven by the clients. They may be placed in the large freezer in the kitchen at Ascension. Thanks for your continued support of this critical mission. Contact Sheryl White (215-962-6942, whitey61@aol.com) if you need supplies or have questions. <https://caringforfriends.org/about-us/>

DELAWARE VALLEY FOOD PANTRY

Please help us stock the pantry shelves with following items:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| small cans of soup, broth | reusable shopping bags |
| black beans | (regular size - not extra large) |
| pasta varieties and sauce | toothpaste |
| baked beans | toilet paper |
| rice | deodorant |
| shampoo | bars of soap |

Thank for your generous support of our hungry neighbors! Over 10,000 families are served over the course of a year.

<https://www.facebook.com/DelawareValleyFoodPantry/>

Women's Devotional on zoom



We will continue our zoom Devotional Bible Study on on zoom Saturday mornings at 9:30am.

The book for our Bible Study is:
Soulfull: A Weekly Devotional to Nourish the Body, Mind, and Spirit by Farrell Mason

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83498726279?pwd=a2EvR1Bla0hOYjNmUVNGV3MxY204Zz09>

Meeting ID: 834 9872 6279

Passcode: 706045



Workshop and Retreat

Friday, MARCH 1 and Friday, MARCH 22
{ 2 different offerings, attend 1 or both }

During the season of Lent we may find ourselves in an “in-between time” – between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, we are invited to move between darkness and light, grief and hope, repentance and redemption, deep sadness and deep joy. We will spend some time together in reflection, prayer and creative writing as we look into the “in-between times” that ground our spiritual practices as we anticipate Resurrection. *This reflection time will be followed by a creative practice of visual art.*

Everyone is welcome – there is no requirement for artistic experience or skill. All materials will be provided.

The House Next Door
177 Princeton-Hightstown Road *
Princeton Junction NJ 08550

Cost : sliding scale suggested \$30 –\$35

Led by Pat Pickard, Spiritual Director + Graphic Designer

Coffee : 8.30, we will begin at 9am

Workshop : 9am to 12pm

Retreat : 1pm to dusk

the house and grounds will remain open for prayer, silence and personal retreat time

For more information and to register, send an email to hnd@popnj.org

Registration ends on Tuesday February 27 (for March 1)
and Tuesday March 19, 2024 (for March 22)

** Parking is available at “the church next door”,
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church*

