



NEWS FROM ASCENSION - AUGUST 2023

A Message from the Pastor

New Beginnings

Backpacks have been purchased, teachers assigned, and extracurricular commitments sketched into the calendar. Whether or not you are a student, it seems as though our life together is always marked by the beginning of the new school year. For most, it's a time to look forward with hope and excitement for what the year ahead will bring. But new beginnings exist only because something is ending. Summer rest is now a thing of the past. The classroom you loved last year or the schedule your children – and grandchildren – maintained several months ago simply will not be the same anymore. It is only after a beginning has begun that we start to feel the grief of what was left behind.

How divinely timed it is that I join you in *this season* of transition. Autumn marks not only a new school year, but it also marks the beginning of a new chapter at Ascension Lutheran. I feel your joy and hope for how we might deepen and grow our calling as a community rooted in the gospel. But just as how any transition goes, I also sense the grief for what has ended. By calling a part-time pastor, we are acknowledging how our community has changed.

We are not alone in this tension. God's people have long known and struggled with this liminal space. Scripture, after all, is a story of endings and beginnings. The Old Testament, in particular, is filled with invitations for us to see how God has worked in our past (e.g., Psalm 77) and points us to the future (e.g., Isaiah 43). In the resurrected Christ, we know of a hope which surpasses all our understanding—a faith which continues to plant seeds and sprout new life in the most unlikely places. My prayer is that we might be attentive for how God is at

work in our own lives and especially in our collective life at Ascension Lutheran.
God is indeed planting new seeds. New life is arising.

Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End: We give great thanks that you are with us in every season of our lives. Bless this new school year and this new beginning at Ascension Lutheran. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit, help us to lean on one another in our sorrows and encourage one another in the new life happening among us. Awaken us with your joy, ground us in your promises, and renew us in our shared ministry together, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen.

It is a gift to be with you on this journey,
Pastor Kayla

Pastor Kayla is looking forward to getting to know you! She is available to meet on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons. If those times do not work, please reach out so another time can be arranged. Pastor Kayla is always available for pastoral emergencies.

Email: pastor.kayla.alc@gmail.com Cell: 267-291-4344

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

Service of Installation/Ordination will be September 9th at 11am. The Ordination and Installation will be led by the bishop, Patricia Davenport.

We will be hosting a reception following.

Anyone interested in helping plan the reception can contact Sheryl White at whitey61@aol.com.

Fill Backpacks for Trenton School Kids

We will be filling backpacks for Trenton School Kids again on **Sunday September 3** after worship.



Items needed are: Crayola Markers fat and skinny, crayons, pencils and composition books (any color).

Please bring your donations to church and place in donation box in the Narthex. Thank you for your always generous support!

Youth Education Update

Hi Everyone! I hope you have all had a wonderful summer. As we move into the new school year, we have decided to transition away from a traditional Sunday School program. Our children have grown older and are looking for new and exciting ways to engage with the congregation, The Word, and our greater community.

Starting Monday, September 18th at 5:45pm, we are pleased to introduce, Family Night. We will meet the 3rd Monday of every month at 5:45pm to 7:30pm to share a meal, a bible story, and a service project. All members of the congregation are welcome to join us as we celebrate the Word in Action.

For September we will be focusing on the Blessing of the Animals. Some upcoming projects will be preparing soup for Caring with Friends, Cards for senior centers and more. We welcome any member of the congregation who has an idea for a service project they would like to see done or lead, please see Pastor Kayla or Lisa Warnke.

Yours in Christ,



Lisa

God's Work Our Hands Sunday

In addition to assembling Snack Bags for Caring for Friends, we invite the gardeners among us, including our Community Gardeners, to donate produce to the Delaware Valley Food Pantry. There will be coolers on the porch into which donated produce may be placed starting Friday, September 8 until Sunday, September 10. Thank you for your generosity!

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 1, 2023

Everyone is invited to the Blessing of the Animals which will take place outdoors (weather permitting) on Sunday, October 1 at 12:00. Held in conjunction with the birthday of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, this annual event celebrates our furry friends. Leashed dogs, cats or any other domestic animals are welcome. If your companion doesn't travel well or has passed away, you may bring their photograph to receive a blessing. If it rains, the event will take place in the narthex.



Don't miss this special opportunity
celebrate our animal companions.
Guests are
welcome so please invite your
friends and neighbors who are
animal lovers!

JOIN US FOR THESE SPECIAL FALL EVENTS



Eagles Watch Party –
Sunday, October 15 vs. NY Jets
@ 4:25 p.m.
“Gates” open @ 4:00 p.m.
Canned food donations are
requested for admission
This is an alcohol-free event!
Non-alcohol beverage will be
provided or BYO. Football party
food will be served.
Invite your friends and neighbors
to cheer on the Birds!



Harvest Fest –
Sunday, October 29
The annual Harvest Fest will
take place following the worship
service at 11:30 a.m. Everyone
is invited to the hayride over to
the Pumpkin Patch to pick a
free pumpkin! Bring a
homemade pumpkin baked
good to share. Goodie bags will
be given to all the kids.
Come celebrate the Harvest
with your ALC family. Friends
and neighbors are also
welcome!

Gather, Rest and Renew: Women of the ELCA Retreat

Southeastern Pennsylvania Women of the ELCA is sponsoring a spiritual retreat at the campus of the United Lutheran Seminary in Mount Airy. Its aim is to give us the opportunity to become more aware of God's presence in our lives and in our world. The retreat, Gather, Rest and Renew, is open to all women over 15, not just members of WELCA. The retreat will be held on **Saturday October 14 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** A \$20 donation is requested, includes lunch. Registrations are due Oct. 6.

- [Download the registration form](#)
- [Download the latest SEPA Women of the ELCA newsletter](#)

Have your next Meeting at ALC!

If your group or a group that you know is looking for meeting space, please consider meeting at the church. Our space can accommodate any size group from 2-200. You'll have full access to wi-fi and video services, and kitchen facilities. Meetings can take place in the classroom, narthex, or in the sanctuary. Rates are very reasonable and it's a great way to support your church. For more information, please see Mark Schultz or call him at 609-685-7096.



We're looking for Greeters!

After a long hiatus, Greeters returned last month with Pastor Kayla's arrival. Thanks so much to everyone who has volunteered. The Outreach Team sees this as a very important role in our Hospitality Ministry. It's easy and fun...

- Greet everyone as they arrive. You can be inside or outside.
- Open the door for them to enter.

- For visitors, offer them a name tag, and give them a welcome brochure.
- Start at 9:45 a.m. Remain for a few minutes after the service begins to greet latecomers.

If you're interested in becoming a greeter, please see Clark Shuster.

Everyone is welcome to serve, including kids!

ASCENSION T-SHIRTS

Ascension T-shirts are available! \$10 for Youth sizes and \$15 for Adults. Proceeds from the sale of the T-shirts will help to cover the cost for "Fun in the Sun!" See Clark Shuster to get yours!



ALC Council

John Carducci - President Sheryl White - Vice President
Tom D'Esmond - Treasurer Clark Shuster – Secretary
Tony Eith Patty Heinemann Mark Schultz

Minutes of Council meetings are posted in the Narthex. If you have any questions or concerns, please see any Council member.

Caring for Friends Snack Bags



Caring for Friends provides food and friendship to homebound seniors, veterans, homeless persons and families with children in need. They provide ready-to-heat meals, caring visits and cards, and fresh/pantry staple food items that support hunger relief in the five counties of Greater Philadelphia. They need about 4,000 snack bags a day to serve hungry children and adults in between meals and for breakfast.

On May 21 we filled 670 Snack/Breakfast bags thanks to your generosity and a Thrivent Action Team grant. **We will be assembling Snack bags again on September 10, God's Work Our Hands Sunday.** A Thrivent Action team grant has been received. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Caring for Friends is no longer requesting oatmeal, instant coffee/tea/hot chocolate packs as they are transitioning to Snack Bags only.

Items needed:

- 1 gallon plastic storage bags (zip loc)
 - 6.75 oz 100% juice boxes (especially needed)
 - Cereal/granola/protein bars (Snack bags)
 - 6 packs of peanut butter or cheese crackers
 - 1 oz boxes of raisins or other dried fruit, or fruit/vegetable squeeze pouches (such as Motts or GoGoSqueeze)
- Or cash donations are also welcome.

Our goal is 750 or more snack bags prepared.

Delaware Valley Food Pantry

To our generous community, please help us fill our shelves this week with the following items:

Saltine Crackers, Ritz Crackers, spaghetti, toothpaste, tooth brushes, shampoo/conditioner, and bottled water.

You can bring donations to Ascension and leave in the baskets in the Narthex and they will be delivered to the Food Pantry.

Thank you for your constant kindness and support!

Grief Support Group

If you are grieving the loss of a loved one(s) or anything else in your life, it helps to know you are not alone. This is a safe place to share your feelings while having the support of others who understand. Participants are encouraged to bring photos and/or mementos of their loved ones to share with one another. Guests are welcome. The next meeting will be **Tuesday, September 26 from 7:00-8:30 p.m.** For more information, ask Clark or call him at 215-539-9185.

WOMEN'S DEVOTIONAL ZOOM

Are you interested in enriching both your spiritual life and your array of female friendships?



Please join us Saturday mornings at 9:30 for our Women's Devotional Zoom where we will be continuing with our focus on Gather Magazine issue July/ August 2023 with Bible Study on Salvation now.

Our material will be drawn from Gather Magazine, a publication which reflects many voices on a variety of topics in step with the Lutheran calendar. <https://www.gathermagazine.org/getgather/>

There's a new subscriber's introductory rate of \$9.95 per person, which includes both hard copy and online access. During registration, please choose Ascension Lutheran of Newtown for the purposes of this magazine subscription.

If you need any assistance with the subscription, please contact Anne Chmielewski at d.r.ski@att.net.

As always, one need not feel obligated to buy the book or magazine. Join us! We will let you know the day's topic & scripture focus ahead of time by email. Your unique perspective is always most welcome & encouraged!

Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84850522590pwd=aFRnMEdxb3ZzUFNwdnZhRnFVdlJjQT09>

Meeting ID: 848 5052 2590

Passcode: 659592