

# The Messenger



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**MARCH  
2023**



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## God Has Heard God's People Cry

How comforting is it that God hears the cries of people? God not only cares, but responds. How do you feel knowing that God hears your sighs, your sobs, your anger, your hurt? God does more than just listening. God finds ways to help!

Jesus tells us that a significant way that God responds is through his follower's. The resurrected Saviors tells all who follow him, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (John 20:21) Then there is also the promise that Jesus goes with us. The Holy Spirit will guide, help and empower.

This Lenten season, as we explore the Gospel lessons appointed for Sunday, we will listen for the cries of God's people. We watch and listen as Jesus responds. We will also ask the question, "How does God want us to respond to the cries of God's people just down the street or around the world?"

Our new office manager, Rhonda Gonsalves, is also an artist. She is graciously sharing some of her art with us, which we are adding each week to the Sanctuary walls. The pictures help us to imagine, people just like ourselves, except they may live in another country, or their skin color is other than white. That doesn't mean they have more needs, but like all of us, they do have needs. It may mean they have fewer resources than we do, to meet some needs.

It seems to me that the cries of people are loud in the world today. From the bombed out cities and villages in Ukraine, to the earthquake disaster in Turkey and Syria, to the drought ravished areas of eastern Africa, there are the cries of God's people, many are God's little ones.



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I listened today to a BBC interview with a journalist from Mexico who is in a small town in Ukraine which is constantly under attack. The town is destroyed and yet many are refusing to leave because it has been their home for perhaps their total life. The reporter interviewed a mother who has a brain injured daughter. She wants to stay. Some even hope that they will die there rather than go someplace else that is totally unfamiliar. Many are people who draw strength from their faith.

During the Lenten season our mid-week service offerings, donations for the supper, and our Holy Week service offerings will all go to LIRS (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services). Connected to our ELCA, this agency has served refugees for over 80 years. There are now 100 million refugees in the world today. That is up 10 million in 2022 from the 2021 figure. We are a nation of immigrants, and when we are at our best, we welcome people in need, people needing a fresh start, just like most of our family ancestors were hopefully welcomed when they came here. Jesus speaks of giving a cup of cold water in his name and promising the one who does this will be rewarded. We already have so many material blessings. If we in this nation cannot share abundantly, there is much wrong.

So far, our Lenten offerings are over \$500.00 for the first two weeks of Lent! As your pastor, I'm so proud of you! However, my compliment is nothing compared to the joy that comes to all of us as we follow Jesus in our concern for others.

God hears our cry. Our personal cries and our cries on behalf of others. Perhaps a neighbor needs your encouragement. Maybe a person in your neighborhood needs a ride to the store or to a doctor's office. Maybe someone needs an invitation to church and someone to sit with them when they come.

May this Lenten season be a time of allowing God to come close to us. May God guide us as we seek to come close to our neighbors regardless of their home address or even the lack of a place to call home. We *follow* Jesus. We learn to love and care from our Savior. What an honor!

*In Christ,  
Pastor Chuck*

To the Ascension congregation,

Our Lenten journey together is off to a fine start. If you've been joining us on Wednesday evenings, you might have enjoyed a great meal (thank you Council, for planning and preparing these!) before traveling to Jerusalem at Passover. These services are both educational and fun. And Pastor is certainly taking a deep dive into our theme for the season each Sunday, which stems from Hymn 574. I encourage you to ponder on the words.



“I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry.

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.  
I, who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?”

Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.

It is especially meaningful to see more and more of Rhonda's paintings on the walls of the church each week leading up to Easter, helping us to remember all peoples across the world. And Council brought action to this idea as it sent \$4,500 of our tithe to help those suffering in Turkey and Syria from the earthquakes.

Women of the church, please know that WELCA is alive and well and active! Each month's birthday celebration is hosted by them. They had a luncheon on March 9, and they look forward to the Pinelands Conference at St. Matthew's on March 18. Perhaps you feel moved to join them! Jane and Gail can give you details.

Don't feel left out, men of the church. There are canvassing efforts planned to bring new people to Ascension. Perhaps you feel called to help out there?

Here we are, Lord. Lead us where you need us!

*Deanne Kells*

Ascension Lutheran Church,  
 Food 4 Kids staff and  
 volunteers wish to say a huge  
Thank You for your kind  
 donation. You are personally  
 feeding 40 children for an  
 entire month! Amen!!

God Bless you all.

Food 4 Kids

THANK  
 YOU



Feb. 20, 2023

Thank you so much for  
 your response to St. Peter's  
 needs in the aftermath of  
 the destruction caused by  
 Hurricane Ian.

Your generous donation  
 and prayers are greatly  
 appreciated.

In Christ,  
 Arlene Burn  
 Council Secretary

Dear Ascension Lutheran Church,  
Thank you very much for your  
recent donation of \$832. This money  
will go a long way in our mission to provide  
6700 local children weekend meals!  
Your generosity touches my  
heart and I truly thank all of you!  
Warmest regards,  
Cecilia St Arnold



OUR TITHING GIFTS ARE VERY  
MUCH APPRECIATED IN OUR  
COMMUNITY AND STATE.







## PASTOR RALLIES THE TEAM TO VICTORY!



## OUR 2023 CHURCH COUNCIL



## ST. PATRICK'S DAY TRIVIA

Who invented the Saint Patrick's Day Parade?

*Here's looking at you, America.* We have a lot to thank Americans for (although we don't always like to admit it) but they are the ones responsible for all this celebrating on March 17, not the Irish.

2 Where was the first Saint Patrick's Day Parade held?



The world's first recorded Saint Patrick's Day Parade took place in *Boston* on March 18, 1737, followed by the New York Parade, which first took place in 1762. Ireland took a while to join in, having their first parade in Dublin in 1931.

What is Saint Patrick's nickname?



Despite what some Americans may tell you, the nickname for Patrick is always Paddy and not Patty. The name Paddy had negative connotations at times in America but you'd never ever hear an Irish person shorten down to Patty instead of Paddy and Saint Paddy's Day or even Paddy's Day is widely used by the Irish back in the Emerald Isle.

Why do we wear green on Saint Patrick's Day?



It's traditional to don some green on March 17 .

The original color associated with St. Patrick was **blue** but because the Saint preached about the Holy Trinity through the symbol of the shamrock, and the Irish 'little folk' were also associated with green, it became the most common shade in connection with him.

Where was Saint Patrick born?



Nope, not in Ireland! Saint Patrick was born in Wales.



## UPCOMING SERVICES



Our Palm Sunday Service will be held on April 2, 2023 at 10:30 am.



The Maundy Thursday will be held on April 6, 2023 at 7 pm.



Our Good Friday Service will be held on April 7, 2023 at 7pm.



<b>Celebrations for March</b>
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3/9 Deanne Kells  
 3/27 Cindy Erzkus  
 3/28 Eileen Fleming



<b>Anniversaries</b>
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3/21 Greg and Cindy  
 Phillips

## Daily Scripture Readings for March

1	Psalm 2; 1 Kings 21:20-29; Mark 9:9-13
2	Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2 or 99; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9
3	Psalm 78:17-20, 52-55; Exodus 33:7-23; Acts 7:30-34
4	Psalm 78:17-20, 52-55; 1 Kings 19:9-18; Romans 11:1-6
5	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
6	Psalm 51; Jonah 3:1-10; Romans 1:1-7
7	Psalm 51; Jonah 4:1-11; Romans 1:8-17
8	Psalm 51; Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 18:1-7
9	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32 Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11
10	Psalm 32; 1 Kings 19:1-8; Hebrews 2:10-18
11	Psalm 32; Genesis 4:1-16; Hebrews 4:14—5:10
12	Psalm 32; Exodus 34:1-9-27-28; Matthew 18:10-14
13	Psalm 121; Isaiah 51:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:3-7
14	Psalm 121; Micah 7:18-20 Romans 3:21-31
15	Psalm 121; Isaiah 51:4-8; Luke 7:1-10
16	Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17
17	Psalm 128; Numbers 21:4-9; Hebrews 3:1-6
18	Psalm 128; Isaiah 65:17-25; Romans 4:6-13
19	Psalm 128; Ezekiel 36:22-32; John 7:53—8:11
20	Psalm 95; Exodus 16:1-8; Colossians 1:15-23
21	Psalm 95; Exodus 16:9-21; Ephesians 2:11-22
22	Psalm 95; Exodus 16:27-35; John 4:1-6
23	Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42
24	Psalm 81; Genesis 24:1-27; 2 John 1-13
25	Psalm 81; Genesis 29:1-14; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4
26	Psalm 81; Jeremiah 2:4-13; John 7:14-31, 37-39
27	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:10-21; Ephesians 4:25-32
28	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:22-31; Ephesians 5:1-9
29	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:32-34; John 1:1-9
30	1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
31	Psalm 146; Isaiah 59:9-19; Acts 9:1-20

# MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	5:30pm—AA		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>  9:00 am— Quilting	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion	5:30pm—AA	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>  Supper 5 pm Mid-week Service 6 pm	<b>9</b>  WELCA lunch 11:30 am	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion  <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i>	5:30pm—AA	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>  Supper 5 pm Mid-week Service 6 pm	<b>16</b>  9:00 am— Quilting	<b>17</b>  St. Pat- rick's Day	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion  <b>Church Council following service</b>	5:30pm—AA	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  Supper 5 pm Mid-week Service 6 pm	<b>23</b>  9:00 am— Quilting	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion	5:30pm—AA	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>  Supper 5 pm Mid-week Service 6 pm	<b>30</b>  9:00 am— Quilting	<b>31</b>	