



**Allegheny Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

1327 Alleghenyville Rd.
Mohnton, PA 19540
610-777-2520
www.aelc.org

Church Staff

Pastor

The Rev. Zach Labagh
pastorzach@aelc.org
610-777-2520

Director of Youth & Mission

Kristen Kelly
youthd@aelc.org

**Dir. of Children & Family
Ministries**

Annemarie Pietrobono
Annmarie@aelc.org

Music Director

Annie Rose Tindall-Gibson
Annie_musicd@aelc.org

Praise Team Leader

Bill Moczydlowski
wsmoczy@hotmail.com

Office Administrator

Dee Constable
office@aelc.org

Sexton

Jean Jones

AELC News

News from and around
Allegheny Evangelical
Lutheran Church



FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

"Come, to know the love of God: Go, to make it known."



Grace and peace to you
from God, our Creator,
and Jesus, who comes to

reconcile us with God. We continue through the season of Epiphany, the 'A-Ha' time of the church year, where we transition from the infant Jesus to the beginning of his earthly ministry. We all ache for an 'A-Ha' experience with God: a moment when we know we're in God's presence. Yet many who encountered Jesus in his ministry did so during daily life, walking down the road, living in struggle. Jesus met them where they were and connected with them. Jesus' baptism claims and names him, and then sends him out into the wilderness, preparing for the ministry ahead. Jesus has numerous wilderness experiences throughout his ministry, but this initial walk is one that leads him into his earthly ministry, the cross, and beyond.

We annually walk that journey in the season of Lent that begins with Ash Wednesday (Feb 22 this year). This year our focus for our Mid-week Lenten meal and worship are the words "Thy Will be Done" of the Lord's Prayer. What does this phrase mean to us today? Do we let these words pass without thinking what we mean when we ask God for God's will to be done? When we say we want God's will to be done, it means we humble ourselves to not desire our will to be done. Perhaps we can use the season of Lent to give up something, like that daily coffee run? Maybe we donate a portion of what we would pay for that

cup? Or perhaps we invest some of our limited time in daily devotions, scripture reading, prayer, or silent meditation? Perhaps we focus on what it means to be generous?

However we may live into Lent, or struggle through this season, I invite you to share in it with someone. Find someone to encourage you and support you with whatever you decided to do, and lean into that relationship. As we experience this season again we can journey together. We continue to be the church of God at work in the world, being present and engaging in the work of service that God calls us to. Maybe we won't experience an 'A-Ha' moment this Epiphany or fulfill our Lenten commitment completely, but we can gather together, support one another, pray for each other, and live into the Love of God that we invite and go out to share in the world.



Peace in Christ,

Pastor Zach

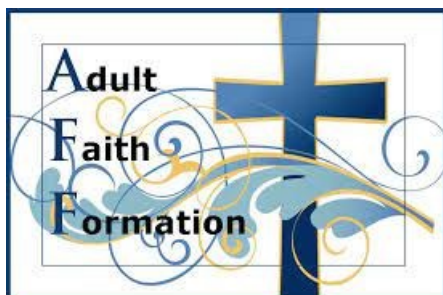


Mid-week Lent Soup and Bread meal with worship.

Join us Wednesdays during Lent for a meal, worship and discussion. Starting **March 1** we will gather at 6pm in the Adult Faith Formation Room, for fellowship, food and worship. Our theme this year is "Thy Will Be Done", the words we speak weekly as we pray together the

Lord's prayer. Join us as we dive deeper into the meaning of God's will for our lives here and now as we walk this Lenten Journey together.

We are looking for volunteers to sign up to make soup and bread. If you are willing, please sign up in the lobby or contact Pastor Zach.



February Adult Faith Formation Classes

- Feb 5** Paul Brockman - Hunger in America
- Feb 12** Mark D.—Thrivent- College Planning
- Feb 19** open
- Feb 26** Rabbi Brian Michelson

Youth & Mission



Our February youth group will be an overnight 30 Hour Famine! Join us at Trinity, Reading from Saturday **February 25**—Sunday **February 26**.

amazon smile **UPDATE**

We are writing to let you know that we plan to wind down AmazonSmile by February 20, 2023. We will continue to pursue and invest in other areas where we've seen we can make meaningful change—from building affordable housing to providing access to computer science education for students in underserved communities to using our logistics infrastructure and technology to assist broad communities impacted by natural disasters.

To help charities that have been a part of the AmazonSmile program with this transition, we will be providing them with a one-time donation equivalent to three months of what they earned in 2022 through the program, and they will also be able to accrue additional donations until the program officially closes in February. Once AmazonSmile closes, charities will still be able to seek support from Amazon customers by creating their own wish lists.

INTERWOVEN



"The second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these" (Mark 12:31). We are called by God to love ourselves and our neighbors, so join us for February's Interwoven as we do both! Interwoven will take place Sunday, **February 12** from 12pm-2pm. Bring a dish to share for a pot luck lunch and then participate in some self care through a short meditation to ground ourselves. Afterwards, help us show love for our neighbors by making Valentine's to be sent to our home worshippers and our college students!

Save the Date for our March Interwoven which will take place on Sunday, **March 12** from 12pm-2pm. We will be hosting a pour painting activity. Sign up will be made available after our February Interwoven.

Senior High Faith Formation Class

Sr High Faith Formation meets on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month from 9:30 to 10:15. If you have any questions please contact Janine Labagh, Allison Eshleman or Kristen.



Fair Trade

Share some love this Valentine's Day with a delicious treat from the Fair Trade stand. Don't forget there are chocolate chips and baking cocoa also available if saying "I love you" with a homemade treat is more your style. If you are looking to dazzle your Valentine with a new recipe, check out the Equal Exchange sweet treat recipe page at <https://blog.equalexchange.coop/recipes/>



While we repeat this often, it is a message worth repeating, purchasing Equal Exchange products not only benefit you and yours but offers support worldwide. Thus, making giving a Valentine from our delicious assortment of goodies twice as nice.

Questions, requests, or suggestions? Email us at fairtrade@aelc.org

As always, thank you for your support, Connie and Janine

FOLLOW US!

Our youth have their own Instagram page. Follow us to see all the great things we do - such as Mission Trips, Interwoven, CAT class and more! Our handle is @aelc_youth! Check out all the amazing things we are doing through our faith!

**AELC Book Club**

Join us on Thursday, **February 2** at 6:30pm for our final discussion of "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus. Our next read will be "The Most Fun We Ever Had" by Claire Lombardo. Our reading schedule will be:


Feb. 16 at 6:30pm: Prologue-Chapter 12 (pgs. 1-182)

Mar. 2 at 6:30pm: Chapter 13-Chapter 21 (pgs. 185-320)

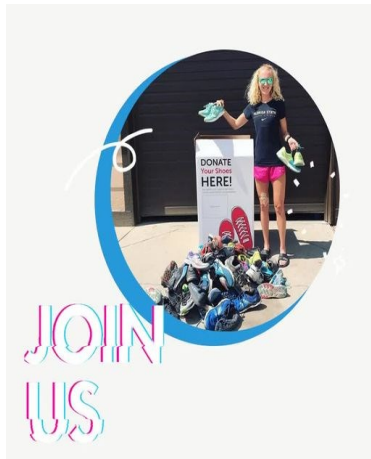
Mar. 16 at 6:30pm: Chapter 22-Epilogue (pages 323-532)

Soup-er Bowl!!

Our Soup-er Bowl is here! Find your teammates and get ready for a little healthy competition. This year, we are splitting our congregation into two teams-our A-L team and our M-Z team-who can collect and raise more? Last year, we collected 490 items of food to donate to the Mohnton Food Pantry-can your team push us to 500? When you bring your donation, make sure to place it on the side that correlates with your last name, and gain bragging rights for the year that your team raised the most! Bring in your donations by **February 5!**



Faith Formation



We want your shoes!

Every pair of gently worn, used and new shoes you donate to our shoe drive fundraiser turns into funds for our cause. We're excited about our latest fundraiser because you don't have to buy ANYTHING! We're collecting gently worn, used and new shoes to raise money for our Faith Formation children. Not only do you help us, but the shoes also get a second life with those in need. It's a



double donation!! Starting **February 1 till March 31** we will be accepting donations. Drop off is available at the entrance of the church. We will also pickup your shoes at your home. Please contact Annmarie for pickup or any questions at Annmarie@aelc.org or 610-777-2520.



Thank you for your support!!



In need of a prayer?

Do you know someone who could use a prayer? In the month of February, you can add a heart to our prayer tree. Throughout the month we will be praying for those in need with a special prayer during worship.

Reaching out...

We are asking the congregation to reach out to our Faith Formation Children by sending them a Valentine Card. Stop by the Faith Formation table to pick an envelope with a child's name inside. This is a great way to connect with a blessing in the mail throughout the month of February!



Summer Camp!! Calling all kids!! Are you ready for summer?

For some fun camps?

Join us!!

Here is the list of camps we will be offering this summer.

Registration is open on our webpage AELC.org.



Creative Arts Camp "Pet's Unleashed"

June 26 – June 30

Ages 3-10 \$10.00 per child

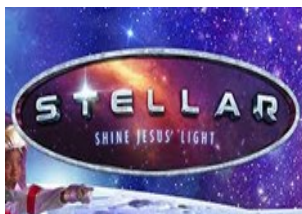
10am-12pm

Creative Arts Camp "Kindness Camp"

July 17 – 21

Ages 3-12 \$15.00 per child

9:30am – 12:30pm



Vacation Bible School "Stellar"

August 7 – 11

5:30pm – 8:00pm

***We are looking for volunteers! If you would like to join us,
please email Annmarie@AELC.org**

Memorial & Endowment

AELC Adopts Restated Memorial & Endowment (M&E) Fund Resolution

On January 8th, at the congregational meeting, a single restated Memorial & Endowment Fund Resolution was adopted, replacing the two resolutions adopted back in 1989.

Earlier last year, Pastor Zach approached several individuals to ask them to review the existing resolutions and determine if any updates were needed. The task force was comprised of Barbara Dietrich, Mike Grim, Mark Smith and Colette Price. After almost a year-long effort, the task force concluded it's work and presented the proposed resolution to the M&E Committee, to Council, and to the congregation.

What has Changed?

The way the funds are allowed to be used has NOT changed. What has changed is the committee structure, the distribution policy/workflow for requests, and the fact that Council now has final approval. Investments are now required to be managed by a professional investment manager, with specific certifications, and the resolution defines the investment objective and a moderately conservative risk tolerance. – to balance the potential risk of loss with the increased income potential. The most significant change is the AELC Endowment Fund Spending Policy which is now used to determine how much money is available for spending. A total return approach is used which looks at the entire balance of the fund annually as of September 30th. The M&E Committee recommends to Council a rate which is not to exceed the average total return of the fund for the previous 3-year period and assures the rate falls within the range of 2% - 7%. During significant market declines, the M&E Committee may recommend, and Council may approve, no spending from the fund for that year in an effort to maintain the sustainability of the fund.

Reach out to any M&E Committee member if you have any questions. Current Members include:

Bill Baxter
Colette Price, Committee Chair
Robin Ream, Treasurer
Mark Smith

Financial Info

Treasurer's General Fund Report

GENERAL FUND UPDATE			
	Total Attendance*	General Fund Income	Weekly Budgetary Need
Nov 20,2022	134	\$7334	\$5418
Nov 27, 2022	107	\$3697	\$5418
Dec 4, 2022	120	\$8504	\$5418
Dec 11, 2022	118	\$5125	\$5418
Dec 18, 2022	25.	\$8713	\$5418
Dec 25 2022	205	\$12,756	\$5418
Dec 31, Jan 1	70	\$6288	\$5418
Jan 8, 2023	101	\$6331	\$5702
Jan 15, 2023	140	\$3577	\$5702
Total	1135	\$62,325	\$49,330

***attendance includes onsite and online figures.**

In November, 2022, our expenses exceeded income by \$283. In December, 2022, our income exceeded expenses by \$13,700. From a financial view, it was a great December, but 2022 still ended in a \$15,000 deficit position.

The General Fund checkbook balance at the end of 2022 was about \$32,400 including the balance of the PPP funds.

In 2022, AELC received over \$5800 in Gifts-In-Kind, goods and services that the church did not have to pay for because members purchased them without seeking reimbursement.

AELC also received almost \$700 in Thrivent Choice\$.

In mid-January the mortgage balance stands at \$23,650 and the Debt Reduction Fund has a balance of \$13,500 to pay down on the principal when the lender next allows us to do so which would be in the spring, one year from when we last did so.



**Altar
Flowers**
Ministry Opportunity

Sponsors are needed for bulletins and flowers!

Won't you please consider sponsoring the Sunday worship bulletin and or the altar flowers? The charts are on the bulletin board in the lobby.

Cost: Bulletins—\$20.00

Flowers—2 Altar Vases/\$54, Chancel Arrangement-\$50

Questions: contact Jo Verrill at jodaverrill@gmail.com for bulletins and Sandy Fluck at 610-334-3175 for flowers.



Bulletins

Redner's
WAREHOUSE MARKETS
SAVE-A-TAPE PROGRAM

REDNER'S SAVE-A-TAPE

Stop, before you cut off the bottom you want make sure you have the 1% total left on. If you use self-checkout be sure you use your Redner's card. I recently threw out over 100 tapes that did not have this information on them. That's money we can't get for our church. Any questions, call me.
Susan @ 6110-777-7776.



**Ronald McDonald House Can Tabs
are now being collected again.
Please drop them off in the contain-
er in the vestibule any time at your
convenience.**

Thank you.



AELC Home Worshippers

Please keep these Home Worship members in your thoughts and prayers:

Ron Austin, Larry Craley, Pat Hiester,
Paul Pray, Malcolm Reider

**Looking Ahead...**

Our next newsletter is the **March** issue. If you have content for the newsletter, please submit your articles by **February 15** to the church office via email at office@aelc.org or in Dee Constable's mailbox.

Newsletter



**PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETS
THE 1ST MONDAY OF EACH
MONTH AT 7PM**

NEXT MEETING: FEB. 6

Meetings are held in the
Wittenberg Room
(Adult Faith Formation Room)

**AELC Prayer Ministry**

Recognizing the importance of prayer for our congregation and the world, AELC has a prayer ministry that communicates needs in various ways. We primarily communicate through a weekly email and listing prayers in the Sunday bulletin. We also have a closed Facebook group to share emergency requests and praises.

To receive the weekly email, send requests, updates or praises - please email Steve Cope at prayerlist@aelc.org or the church office at office@aelc.org. You may also call the church office to leave a request. If you would like to be a part of the Facebook group, please let Steve know so you can be added.

There is a Prayer Request box and slips in the lobby. Feel free to add requests this way; it will be checked weekly. When adding someone to the list, please make sure you have their permission.

Additionally, if you do not use email or social media and would like to be a part of this ministry, please leave your name and phone number with Steve or the office and we will communicate with you in a way that works for you!

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED

Lay Readers have a choice of either pre-recording the readings or providing the readings in person, onsite. Please use the link below to sign up for the reading you wish to do and make your choice of presentation - pre-recorded or onsite. Or you can contact Gaye Dougherty at gayedougherty@gmail.com or 610-507-4562 or contact Dee Constable at office@aelc.org, 610-777-2520.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0F45ABAD2EA1F58-worship>



HELP BOTH OUR CHURCH AND OUR PLANET AT THE SAME TIME

AELC is using the Planet Green Recycling Program to collect used ink cartridges to send in to recycle and receive money back to be **used in support of the church's Mission Trip program**. A collection box is in the vestibule for dropping off your used ink cartridges for us to submit to Planet Green Recycling.

If you wish to mail them in yourself from home, please follow the steps below:

- Open the following link on your computer: <http://www.planetgreenrecycle.com/>
- Click on item 2 "Free USPS Label"
- Fill in label request
 - Your first & last name
 - Your email address
 - Organization Program Code: Enter 31821
 - Address – Enter Church Address: 1327 Alleghenyville Rd, Mohnton, PA 19540
 - Identify how many cartridges. **YOU MUST SEND AT LEAST 4**
- You will receive a prepaid label in your email to mail the cartridges
- Box up the cartridges, attach the label and drop off at post office

The church receives funds directly from Planet Green Recycling, \$1.00 for every cartridge (commonly used cartridges). **If you choose to mail in your cartridges yourself, it is very important to make sure to include the church's Organization Program Code (31821) so we receive the credit for the cartridges. No toner cartridges accepted.**

Thank you for your support of the AELC Mission Trip Program!



WEATHER INFORMATION

In the event of severe weather for an upcoming worship service, please go online to www.wfmz.com and check for any delays or closings or log on to your Tithely app for updates.



Give thanks to the Lord! For our traditional and praise services in January, we will once again be using our

offering plates at each pew. Following the offering, the donations will be brought to the altar as we all give thanks to the Lord for all that he has done for us.

Four ushers are needed each week to pass the plate and to bring the offering plates to the altar. There is a sign-up sheet on the lobby bulletin board for those willing to help. Thank you for serving our church.



February 5—Souper Bowl/Scout Sunday

February 22—Ash Wednesday (drive by ashes 8-9:30am, 11:30-1pm) Service at 7pm

February 26—First Sunday in Lent

March 12—Bear Creek representative speaking at worship/Daylight Savings

March 25—Council/Staff Retreat



ALTAR GUILD

FEBRUARY

8:30 am—Theresa Laudermilch

10:30 am—Allison & John Eshleman
& Norma Jean Rogers

MARCH

8:30 am—Lucille Spangler

10:30 am—Gayle Tomasko



Mid-week Lenten Meal/Worship/Study

March 1

March 8

March 15

March 22

March 29

More info on page 2



Ash Wednesday
February 22

Drive by Ashes
8-9:30am,
11am-1pm

Service 7pm

LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

Starting **February 19**, there will be Lenten Devotionals available in the Lobby. Use these daily devotionals to set aside more time for prayer and form a deeper relationship with Christ, our hope and our light.

Holy Week and Easter Services



Come Worship With Us!

Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday

Combined 10:30 am Worship

Thursday, April 6

Maundy Thursday Service – 7:00 pm

Friday, April 7

Good Friday Service – 7:00 pm

Sunday, April 9 – Easter Sunday

6:45 am Community Worship Service

8:30 am – Traditional Worship Service

10:00 am – Praise Worship Service

The Journey of a Shirt

What happens to the items you donate in the Opportunity House bin?

The items are taken from the bin and delivered to our warehouse in Reading. The items are sorted and unsaleable items are bundled for recycling.

The majority of clothing is put on hangers. Shoes and boots are matched, and rubber banded. Books, CDs, DVD are inspected and then put into bins.

The store receives shipments of items from the warehouse every day. At OppShop the items are ticketed and put out for sale.

Your items help homeless families.

Many clients only have the clothing on their backs when they come to us. We provide an opportunity for clients to select clothing for themselves and their family while they stay at the shelter at no cost to them.

Thrifters, collectors and those who are committed to reducing their carbon footprint, come to OppShop to snag their favorite finds. Since our merchandise changes almost daily, people visit the store several times a week.

Clients who are returning to stable housing may shop (for free) essential items they need to begin this new chapter in their lives.

What happens to items that don't sell?

Items that aren't sold are returned to the warehouse. Clothing, shoes, books, CDs, DVDs, media, housewares and knick knacks are recycled. This year, we'll divert over 700,000 pounds from landfills by recycling. Each month we sell these items to recyclers which generates funds to support our programs and services at Opportunity House.

Interested in donating furniture to OppShop? We offer a pick up service by calling 484-957-3861.

Your donations help homeless people return to safe, stable housing.

February Anniversaries

- 9 Connie & Kevin Kelly (1984)
- 12 Jacquelyn & Dean Hirneisen (2006)
- 14 Lucille & James Spangler (1998)
- 18 Betsy & Peter Diebolt (1984)
- 27 Gloria & Larry Craley (1960)

**February Birthdays**

- 2 John Thomas II
- 3 Patricia Hiester
- 4 Lisa Peterson-Smith
- 5 Fiona Heath
- 7 Kevin Naugle
- 8 Aileen Kline
- 9 Brendan Dougherty
- 12 Mary Kring
- Tracey Ormsbee
- 17 Lisa Weaver
- Michael Herling
- 19 Donna DiPasquale
- Alexis Carl
- 20 Gayle Tomasko
- 21 Beau Cylcewski
- 23 Steven Cope
- 27 Mary Louise Hill
- Mary Payne
- 28 Greg Horton
- 29 Katie Grim

SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2023 GOING BEYOND DEATH TO LIFE **JUNE 1-3**

What's happening at Kalahari?

- Plenaries full of important decisions like the next Vice President of the Synod and the next Secretary.
- Small group breakouts with important and timely topics like small rural ministry, growing young, anti-racism, innovative worship, and more...
- Vibrant worship featuring Agape (David Scherer) and spoken word poet, Joe Davis.
- Free time activities and gatherings.
- And an incredible guest preacher for our festival worship (announcement coming soon.)

We're hard at work planning this incredible event!

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SO, LET'S GET BACK TOGETHER. RECHARGE, WORSHIP, AND ENGAGE IN THE BUSINESS OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.



Join Pastor Zach for a monthly Bible Study on the 3rd Monday of the month at 8:30 at AELC. All are welcome to participate in this time of study and fellowship.



AELC Church Council

Ex-Officio	Pastor Zach Labagh
President	Joe Hickson
Vice President	Gayle Tomasko
Secretary	Allison Eshleman
Council Members	Steven Cope
	Ellie Loose
	Laraine Montgomery
	Andrew Zirkel
Youth Member	Emelia Hauptert
Youth Member	Jacob Labagh
Council Treasurer	Bill Baxter
Council Financial Secretary	Colette Price



Council/Staff Retreat March 25



Men's Group

Next meeting to
be determined



Sunday, May 21, 2023

Church Picnic/Ice Bucket Challenge

After 10:30 am Combined Worship

**More information will be coming out in the
months ahead.**

**FEBRUARY****Feb. 5****Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Soup-er Bowl/Scout Sunday**

- 8:30 am Early Worship
- 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes/CAT Class
- 9:30 am Senior High Faith Formation Class
- 9:30 am Adult Faith Formation Class
- 10:30 am Late Worship—HC

Feb. 12**Sixth Sunday after Epiphany**

- 8:30 am Early Worship-HC
- 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes/CAT Class
- 9:30 am Adult Faith Formation Class
- 10:30 am Late Worship—HC

Feb. 19**Transfiguration of Our Lord**

- 8:30 am Early Worship-HC
- 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes/CAT Class
- 9:30 am Senior High Faith Formation Class
- 9:30 am Adult Faith Formation Class
- 10:30 am Late Worship—HC

Feb. 22**Ash Wednesday**

- 8-9:30am Drive By Ashes
- 11-1pm Drive By Ashes
- 7:00 pm Worship Service

Feb. 26**First Sunday in Lent**

- 8:30 am Early Worship—HC
- 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes/CAT Class
- 9:30 am Adult Faith Formation Class
- 10:30 am Late Worship—HC

NOTICE

Please help our Safety and Property Committee by making sure **all** doors are **closed** and **locked** when you leave the building. Your continued help with this matter makes us and the church a safer place.

If there are any issues with the church property that need to be addressed contact Rod High first at 484-755-4364 or if no reply then contact Jim Spangler at 717-445-6537.

Thank you!

**All services
on
Facebook
can be
found:**



on the church
page <https://www.facebook.com/matthew44>

or on the
church website <https://www.aelc.org/podcasts/media>