

## West Berks Mission District News

March/April 2023:

**WBMD Coordinator:** Deaconess Deborah Graf

[wmdcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:wmdcoordinator@gmail.com) 610.763.1595

**Youth Table Leader:** Kristen Kelly

[youthD@aelc.org](mailto:youthD@aelc.org)

**Executive Committee:** Dean: Rev. Colleen Cox Secretary: Rev. Rob Argot Treasurer: Rev. Drew Neidig

### WBMD Restructuring: Get to know your staff

2022 was a year of district restructuring. Anticipating the retirement of Director Dawn Baxter and Administrative Assistant Jane Renner, your council worked to identify three "Tables" of ministry that connect our 33 congregations: Youth Ministry, Feeding/Food Pantries, Collaboration/Collegiality.

In November, the WBMD fall assembly voted to establish a new position of District Coordinator. Your WBMD Council created a job description and interviewed several candidates. Deaconess Deborah Graf began serving on February 1, 2023. Kristen Kelly, Director of Youth and Missions at Allegheny Lutheran Church, was appointed to lead the Youth Table, and began her work with us on March 1.

Dear WBMD congregations and leaders!

I am excited and honored to serve as the Coordinator of the West Berks Mission District. My family and I moved to Berks County in June 1999 when I was called to Trinity Lutheran Church in beautiful downtown, Reading. Besides working with faith formation, mission and service, and other duties as assigned, I was able to serve as a part time Associate of the Bishop from 2009-2011. It was during this time that I got to know so many of the people and congregations in our mission district; I look forward to reconnecting with leaders and worshipping communities.

For those I haven't met yet, here is a little bit about me: I grew up in Queens, New York (the accent presents itself at times), the youngest of 4 daughters (with one bathroom in the house!) I studied theology and German at Valparaiso University in Indiana and was consecrated as a deaconess of the LDA (Lutheran Diaconal Association) in 1990. After working in a congregation in Gotha, Germany (where I met Peter Graf who was so wonderful that I married him and imported him to the USA!), I served in a congregation in Sheboygan, Wisconsin (loved the people; the winter not so much.) Peter is a man of many talents and currently works as the Director of Finance and Operations at Immanuel, UCC. We have 2 adult children: Kathrine, who lives in Lincoln, England and works as a stone conservator and Daniel, who lives in Flying Hills and works as a computer engineer. We have 2 cats, Tallis and Zuzu, who love Peter more than me. I love to travel and learn about other cultures, sing with Vox Philia, a local choir, play the recorder, read schlocky books, play board games, and walk in God's beautiful world.

Please pray for our dean, Pastor Colleen Cox, and our Mission District Council as we discern and dream about our ministry. We don't know where God is leading us, but we do know that we are indeed stronger together; I am eager to see where we are going!

Sharing Christ's Service,  
*Deaconess Deborah*

Kristen Kelly attended Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary) and graduated in 2016 with her Master's in Public Theology. During her time in seminary, Kristen interned with the Youth Initiative at Broad Street Ministry where her passion for youth ministry grew.

Kristen began working as the Director of Youth and Missions at Allegheny Evangelical Lutheran Church May of 2019. Kristen teaches Confirmation, runs Interwoven, works with several other leaders to plan and run our joint youth group, and leads mission trips, including AELC's At Home Mission Trips and Mini-Mission Trips. Kristen loves working and serving alongside the youth at AELC and in our Mission District, discussing and learning together how our faith influences and affects our everyday lives.

When Kristen isn't working, she enjoys reading or baking a yummy treat. Kristen is a die-hard Swiftie, and her youth know it! Kristen is excited to work with our Mission District and can't wait to continue to work with the youth in this Mission District to provide community, discussion, and exciting faith-based events!

Kristen will be hosting two open forums over Google Meets during the month of April: Tuesday April 11th at 10 a.m. and Tuesday, April 18th at 7 p.m. Any and all leaders and members (including the youth!) of our Mission District are invited to share and discuss what the Mission District can offer to our youth: What are events, discussions, and spaces that would be beneficial, and what we would like to see? During this time, we will also be sharing what the purpose of our youth table will be, and looking for those who would like seats at the table to help youth ministry grow and flourish in WBMD!

## **2023 WBMD Dates (more information forthcoming)**

**May 3:** WBMD Spring Assembly 7 p.m. @Advent, West Lawn

**May 6:** GRIP Run for Dreamers @Schlegel Park

**June 1-3:** NEPA Synod Assembly @ Kalahari Resort

**July 13 – 15:** Breaking Bread: WBMD Mini Mission Trip

### **For Rostered Ministers**

**April 4:** Chrism Mass @ NEPA Lutheran Center

**April 25:** Spring Check-In 12:00 p.m. @ Wyomissing Restaurant and Bakery

# Financial Info

## Treasurer's General Fund Report

GENERAL FUND UPDATE			
	<b>Total Attendance*</b>	<b>General Fund Income</b>	<b>Weekly Budgetary Need</b>
Feb. 19, 2023	120	\$7887	\$5702
Feb. 26, 2023	121	\$4463	\$5702
Mar. 5	98	\$7029	\$5702
Mar. 12	127	\$3975	\$5702
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>\$23,354</b>	<b>\$22,808</b>

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

In February, 2023, our expenses exceeded income by \$300.

The General Fund checkbook balance at the end of February was about \$29,500.

In mid-March the mortgage balance stands at \$22,560 and the Debt Reduction Fund has a balance of \$19,298 to pay down on the principal. That leaves us \$3262 short of being able to pay off the mortgage.

Including the generous matching amount, we have Souper Bowl funds of \$2309 to be split between Helping Harvest and ELCA World Hunger.

We also were able to give \$700 to the Hmong family whose mother passed away leaving her husband and small children.

Financially, March will be a very challenging month because of high expenses. There will be three paydays, a sizable propane bill, and insurance premiums which come due in March.



### Altar Flowers

Ministry Opportunity

bulletin board in the lobby.

### **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



Bulletins

Cost: Bulletins—\$20.00

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

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

### **Sign-Up Sheet for Easter Flowers in Lobby!!**

Flowers available: Lilies, Hyacinths, Daffodils and Tulips

Cost: \$11/each

Deadline: **April 02**



We are delivering Easter Lilies to our Home-Bound Worshippers. Please sign up in the lobby if you can support this ministry by delivering a lily.

**ALSO:** There is a paper in the lobby to sign-up to sponsor an Easter lily for our Home Worshippers – the cost is \$11/each.



**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 container  
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,  
Paul Pray, Malcolm Reider



### **Looking Ahead...**

Our next newsletter is the **May** issue. If you have content for the newsletter, please submit your articles by **April 15** to the church office via email at [office@aelc.org](mailto:office@aelc.org) or in Dee Constable's mailbox.

**Newsletter**



**PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETS  
THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MONDAY OF EACH  
MONTH AT 7PM**

**NEXT MEETING: APRIL 3**

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](mailto:prayerlist@aelc.org) or the church office at [office@aelc.org](mailto: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](mailto:gayedougherty@gmail.com) or 610-507-4562 or contact Dee Constable at [office@aelc.org](mailto:office@aelc.org), 610-777-2520.

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



### **DROP BOX AT AELC**

We now have a drop box in the vestibule for those who wish to drop off their giving envelopes after hours. Many thanks to the Property Committee for installing it!!



March 8, 2023

Allegheny Lutheran Church  
Mohnton, PA

Dear AELC Youth and Families:

We appreciate your help with Souper Bowl of Caring 2023. Your very generous donation of 800 food items to the Mifflin Community Food Ministry is wonderful! You made an outstanding effort which will benefit many families. Thank you for your part in this ministry. We are getting ready for the Easter pantry morning which takes place March 18th so that the families can be prepared with meal ingredients and goody bags when Easter arrives.

The Mifflin Community Food Ministry is not affiliated with Helping Harvest (formerly Greater Berks Food Bank), therefore, we are especially grateful for any gift. We use all gifts of time, money, food, paper products, and other types of donations to serve God and the families in need in our area through this ministry. The Food Ministry is open the third Saturday of every month at Zion EC Church, 57 N. Church St., Mohnton, from 9-11 a.m.

Sincerely yours, Janet C. Reese, Secretary

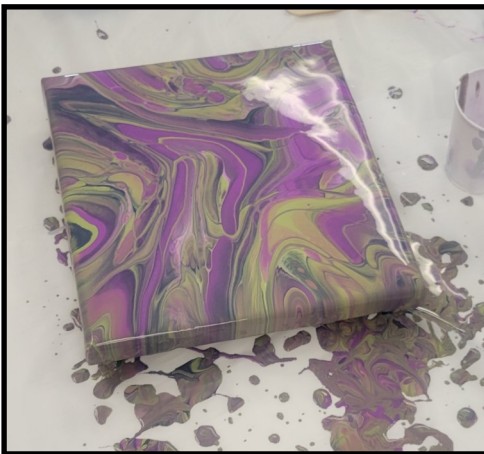
# A Thank You From MCFM



Give thanks to the Lord! For our traditional and praise services, 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.

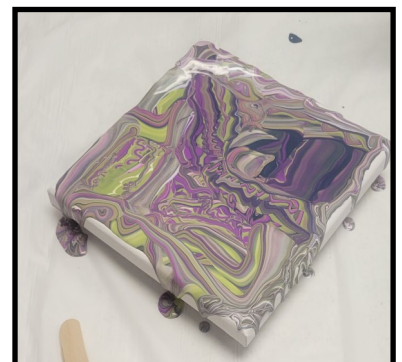
Four ushers are needed each week to pass the plate and to bring the offering plates to the altar. There is a sign-up sheet on the lobby bulletin board for those willing to help. Thank you for serving our church.



Pour Painting



**Interwoven met on March 19 and experienced doing "Pour Painting". The class was led by Connie Kelly and all enjoyed creating new artwork!**







**April 1**—Church Clean Up w/Scouts  
**April 2**—Palm Sunday  
**April 6**—Maundy Thursday  
**April 7**—Good Friday  
**April 9**—Easter Sunday  
**April 15**—Journey to the Cross, Easter Egg Hunt, Play Practice  
**April 22**—Cub Pack 241 Blue & Gold Banquet  
**April 29**—Zoo America  
**May 14** - Bring your mom to a special Interwoven at 9:30am. Families invited. FF children can bring their moms to this special event. Continental breakfast provided.  
**May 18**—Ascension of Our Lord  
**May 21**—Last Day of Faith Formation/Church Picnic following worship  
**May 28**—Summer Hours Begin/Graduation Sunday/Flag Retirement Ceremony (Scouts)  
**May 29**—Memorial Day Holiday—office closed



### ALTAR GUILD

#### APRIL

8:30 am—

10:30 am—Gayle Tomasko

#### MAY

8:30 am—Shirley Eskey

10:30 am—Marsha Yadlosky/  
Judith Conrad



### God Bless Our Graduates!



Celebrating your achievement (high school, college, or advanced degree) on Graduate Sunday, **May 28** at the 9:30 am service.

Please contact Kristen Kelly to let her know where you are graduating from and what college you will be attending, also what your major or degree is.

### 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

8:30 am – Traditional Worship Service

9:30 am—Snack Break

10:00 am – Praise Worship Service



**April Anniversaries**

- 8 Fran & John Holton
- 12 David & Dawn Henry (1997)
- 16 Shirley & Dennis Eskey (1971)

**April Birthdays**

- 3 Rebecca Yoder
- 8 Alex Vitulli
- 9 Jo Verrill
- Grayson Hager
- 10 Tara Prince
- Ellie Loose
- 11 William Baxter
- 15 Jillian Michel
- 17 Kathleen High
- Zach Scheetz
- 18 Apollo Loose
- 20 Dean Hirneisen
- Kaitlyn Zimmerman
- 21 Emelia Hauptert
- 22 Andrew Keith
- 23 Kevin Kelly
- Joseph Smith
- Gunner Zimmerman
- 24 Steven Armstrong
- 27 Jonathan Beyer
- 28 Alexander Price
- Skylar Hatt
- 29 Mary Ann Homrich
- David Henry
- Eva Etienne

**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 am at AELC. All are welcome to participate in this time of study and fellowship.



## AELC Church Council



### **OUTDOOR WORSHIP**

**June 18**  
**July 16**  
**August 20**



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

This is to notify you that **Allegheny Lutheran Church** has been issued a **\$87.67** donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation as a result of AmazonSmile program activity between October 1 and December 31, 2022.

As we shared [previously](#), we discontinued the program on February 20, 2023. We are very proud of the difference that AmazonSmile has made over the past ten years, and we thank you for your support and partnership. **Thank you!** Your AmazonSmile Team

**Sunday, May 21, 2023**

**Church Picnic/Ice Bucket Challenge**

**After 10:30 am Combined Worship**

**Sign-up Sheet in Lobby**



**APRIL**
**April 2**  
**Palm Sunday**

- 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 Combined Worship—HC

**April 9**  
**Easter Sunday**

- 8:30 am Early Easter Worship-HC
- 9:30 am Snack Break
- 10:00 am Late Easter Worship—HC

**April 16**  
**Second Sunday of Easter**

- 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

**April 23**  
**Third Sunday of Easter**

- 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

**April 30**  
**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

- 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>



**JUNE 11**

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING  
10:30 AM WORSHIP**