

the Messenger



September 2023

Time after Pentecost



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Find all the signups at the [SignUp Hub](#) in the Commons or [online](#) at godslovenewtown.org/signups.

Pastor's Column - The Blessed Community

As summer draws to a close, the season begins to change and students return to their studies, I am reflecting on my ordination celebration this time last year. Sunday, September 17 will mark one year since I was ordained and installed as God's Love Associate Pastor. I still marvel at that day's celebration and my profound experience of the blessed community here at God's Love. I continue to be grateful for our partnership in ministry.

This year, our ministry focus has been biblical hospitality. I have watched how the blessed community present at my ordination has continued to grow extending biblical hospitality to one another and out into the community through our worship, service, education, and fellowship ministries.

On **Sunday, September 10**, we return to our *regular worship schedule*, with services at **8:45am and 11:00am**. That Sunday, we will also gather to participate in the ELCA's *God's Work, Our Hands* initiative at 10:00am. Young and old will have the opportunity to work side by side preparing meals for *Caring for Friends* and harvesting the *Good Neighbor Garden* to support local food pantries as we bear witness to God's love in our world.

Also, this month, our Christian Education ministries resume with the start of *Sunday School, Confirmation & Youth, and Adult Faith & Life* programs.



See the article elsewhere in this Messenger for details. Fellowship dinners and small group ministries will continue to meet throughout the fall as well. I strongly encourage you to participate in these opportunities and grow in the Word with one another.

As Pastor Kirk Havel preached at my ordination last September, **you** are the blessed community. It is the blessed community that calls and sends us. It is the blessed community that sustains us and others in times of need. It is the blessed community that upholds us all so that we can do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

Your sister in Christ, *Pastor Brandi*

The Café at God's Love Reopens September 17



The cafe will open each Sunday morning for fellowship time between worship services. Visiting and/or serving in the cafe is a wonderful opportunity to share hospitality with members and visitors. Watch for a signup sheet to serve as a barista or to bring baked goodies.

Questions? Contact **Kathy MacDonald**.

The Nursery is Open!

The church nursery is now open and staffed on Sunday mornings. **September 3** hours are **9:00am – 11:00am**. **Beginning September 10**, the nursery hours will expand to **8:30am – 12:30pm** to include both worship services and the Sunday School hour.



Parents of children ages 1 month to 5 years are welcome to drop off their children in the nursery while they attend worship and/or Christian education opportunities. Older children are welcome if space permits. Nursery guidelines and sign-in/sign-out procedures are posted by the nursery door. [CLICK HERE](#) to volunteer as a nursery assistant, or visit the Worship Volunteer Signup at the [SignUp Hub](#).

Worship Music Ensembles Resume

Our worship music ensembles have resumed rehearsals for the fall season and are looking for new members to help proclaim God's Word through music. New singers and musicians are *always* welcome to join at any time.

- **Rejoice! Praise Band** rehearses Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings in the sanctuary.
- **Handbell Choir** rehearses Wednesdays at 6:30pm in Room A2.
- **Adult Vocal Choir** rehearses Wednesdays at 7:30pm in the sanctuary.

Interested? Contact **Bill Lafty** (Rejoice!) or **Cheri Tigh** (Choirs).



Christian Education Programs Resume for All Ages

Sunday School (ages 4 – grade 6)

Rally Day

Sunday, September 10 • 10:00am

Rally Day is the traditional start of our Sunday School program. Children ages 4 – grade 6, with their families, are invited to gather in the Prayer Garden for a brief Sunday School opening program and teacher meet-and-greet. The group will then participate in the “God’s Work Our Hands” garden harvest activity. **Regular classes begin September 17.**

Confirmation and Youth Ministries

(grades 7 – 12)

Kickoff Orientation

Sunday, September 17 • 10:00am

Programming for the 2023 –2024 school year will include confirmation instruction for grades 7 – 9 as well as faith-based opportunities for all youth in grades 7 – 12. On September 17, parents will gather in Pastor Dan’s office and students will gather in the loft with our new youth coordinator, **Julie Eastburn**, to discuss upcoming projects and activities.

Adult Faith and Life

Sundays at 10:00am beginning September 17 • Fellowship Hall

Our first series is entitled *Texts of Terror 2.0*. There are some scary passages in the Bible that pose distinct challenges for our interpretation of scripture. We’ll look at a different passage each week; exploring its biblical context as well as its use and misuse as a lens into modern-day issues. **Pastor Dan** will lead the discussions.



Usher, Reader, Communion Assistant, Nursery Assistant, Altar Guild, Acolyte

There are many opportunities for members of the congregation (adults and youth) to assist during our worship services. Any of these roles are wonderful opportunities to engage in service, meet new people, and deepen your own worship experience.

[SIGN UP FOR SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER](#), or visit the [SignUp Hub](#) to choose weeks and roles convenient for you.

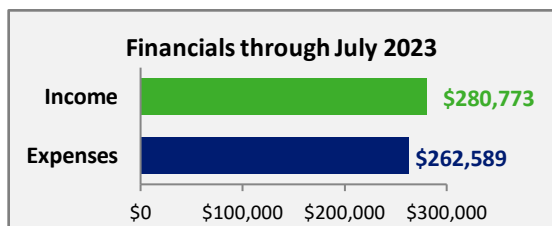
New volunteers are encouraged! Instructions will be provided.



“God’s Work, Our Hands” Sunday

Sunday, September 10—a nationwide day of service throughout the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). 2023 is the 10th Anniversary of this initiative and this year it happens to coincide with our congregation’s *Rally Day Sunday School opening*. **The entire God’s Love congregation** is invited to participate in one of two service projects at 10:00am:

1. **Good Neighbor Garden Harvest:** All are welcome to help harvest potatoes and onions to be donated to local food pantries. Sunday school children and their teachers and families will join this project after a brief Rally Day opening program.
2. **Meal Packing Event:** All ages are invited to Fellowship Hall to assemble meals for Caring For Friends, an organization that supports the homebound and those experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.



Questions? Contact Treasurer, **Bob Smoose**, or Financial Secretary, **John Tidd**.

The resource table in the Commons is there to provide meaningful and timely ministry tools that help connect faith with our daily lives. “On-loan” resources for September are summaries or explanations of the Christian faith that get at the topic from varied perspectives. Included in the list are different versions of Martin Luther’s *Small Catechism*. How about picking up one of these resources at the start of the Christian education program year?



HOPE Supporting Those in Need

Any day is a bad day to be hungry and with cooler weather coming, people who are homeless find it more difficult to find food. God’s Love continues to provide lunches three days a week to the *Reach Out Foundation’s* homeless drop-in center in Pennel. Donations for bagged lunches are collected every **Tuesday** in the **Lobby of Love** by **10:30am**.

If Tuesdays are not a good day for you, non-perishable items can be dropped off any day that is convenient for you. Sandwiches can be frozen and left in the church freezer.

Want to help? [SEPTEMBER SIGNUP](#) [OCTOBER SIGNUP](#) or visit the [SignUp Hub](#).

Questions? Contact **Sandy Anthony**.



AHTN Shared Meal
Saturday, September 30
 4:00pm • Fellowship Hall

AHTN Shared Meals help support folks who are homeless and food insecure. Meals are hosted every day at various houses of worship throughout the area, with transportation for guests provided by AHTN.

God's Love serves meals every month with a 5th Saturday. We will serve our traditional taco casserole meal beginning at 4:00pm on Saturday, September 30 and we can use your help.

[SIGN UP HERE](#) to help with any of the following:

- **Set-up** (3:00pm – 4:00pm)
- **Kitchen help** (3:30pm – 5:15pm): Plate the food (no guest interaction).
- **Serve food** (3:30pm – 5:15pm): Bring food from kitchen; serve to guests.
- **Serve beverages** (3:30pm – 5:15pm): Serve beverages to guests from the drink carts.
- **Visit** (3:45pm – 5:15pm): Move between tables visiting with guests; providing hospitality.
- **Clean up** (4:45pm – finished): After guests leave put everything away; clean kitchen and fellowship hall (no guest interaction).
- **Food donations:** Donate food item(s) needed for the meal.

Questions? Contact **Robin Pecuch** or **Sandy Anthony**.

September Highlighted Collection

THE COOKSTOVE
project

The September Service Ministry Project will focus on *The Cookstove Project* which was founded to support those in developing countries currently cooking over open fires. Approximately *three billion people* throughout the world cook over open fires leading to millions of deaths, many of which are women and children, due to indoor air pollution.

This project trains and supervises families in Uganda and Nepal in building and maintaining cookstoves using local resources. Clean cookstoves provide health benefits, cleanliness, aesthetics and affordability. Less time is spent collecting wood, which burns inefficiently, so women have more time for other tasks.

To participate, take an envelope from the **Lobby of Love** and make a contribution of **just \$10** (donations of any size are welcome, too). Each stove costs approximately \$10 to build and maintain.

Your donation will help bring safe, low-cost, effective stoves to families in need by supporting the on-the-ground efforts of regional staff. **96% of your gift** will be spent solely on building cookstoves in Uganda and Nepal.



Place your donation in the offering plate or drop off at the church office.

For more information about the issues and the solutions, please visit cookstoveproject.org.

Questions? Contact **Robin Pecuch** or **Sandy Anthony**.



September 2023 marks the **25th year of learning and love for God's Love Christian Preschool**.

We are starting the year off with a fundraiser. Stop in the **Newtown Ice House** at 156 State Street in Newtown any time between 12:00Noon – 9:00pm on **Friday, September 15**.

[PRINT THIS FLIER HERE](#) or pick up a paper copy next to the kiosk in the Commons. **You MUST bring a paper copy of the flier with you.** The preschool earns 20% of your purchase. It's a great way to enjoy a refreshing treat, support a local business, and support the preschool. All of us at the preschool thank you for your support!

We have 42 children enrolled in five classes.

- **Beth Garrison:** 2-by-2s class.
- **Nicky Hinderberger and Marylynn Eschliman:** Young 3s class; expanding from two to three days per week.
- **Caryn Gargalovic and Beth Garrison:** 3s M-W-F class.
- **Alison Holder:** lead teacher 4s AM class
 - **Deena Weitzel:** assistant teacher Mondays and Wednesdays.
 - **Holly Kostrzewski:** assistant teacher Thursdays.
- **Lauren Alexander and Nicky Hinderberger:** 4s PM class.
- **Holly Kostrzewski:** office assistant in the afternoons.



We will also offer Lunch Bunch four days a week and Enrichment classes (Science and Traveling Around the World) on Tuesday afternoons.

There are still a few openings for fall enrollment. If you or someone you know might be interested, contact **Nikki Hendricks**, Preschool Director, preschool@godslovenewtown.org or 215-497-0506.



STONE TABLETS The tablets of stone symbolize God's giving of the Law to Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai (Horeb). They're often shown with Roman numerals I through III on the left tablet and IV through X on the right. This represents the Ten Commandments—with the first three focusing on God and the final seven focusing on other people. The image of the stone tablets also may represent the entire Old Testament.

ORDINATION & INSTALLATION
OF
KAYLA J. HOPGOOD



11 AM ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Ascension Lutheran Church
900 Washington Crossing Rd
Newtown, PA

ALL ARE WELCOME
CLERGY ARE INVITED TO VEST AND PROCESS. COLOR OF THE DAY IS RED.

The congregation is invited to attend the *Ordination & Installation* of **Kayla Hopgood** as Pastor of *Ascension Lutheran Church* in Washington Crossing.

Bishop Davenport will preside at the service on **Saturday, September 9 at 11:00am.**

Kayla's husband, **Miles**, served at God's Love as a vicar and pastoral associate in 2018 and 2019.



Grapevine of Friends
Fall Luncheon

Tuesday, September 26

11:00am • Fellowship Hall

Open to all looking for fellowship and connection.

RSVP to the church office by **September 20.**

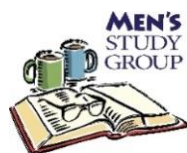
Men's Bible Study

Monday, September 11 • 7:00pm • Lounge

In August, the Men's Bible Study completed nearly a year-long study of the book of Revelation. In September, we will begin a new series titled *Geography of the Holy Land*.

The group meets the second Monday of each month. If you haven't participated in this study before, this next session would be the golden opportunity to join in.

For more information contact **Pastor Dan**. Welcome!



God's Caring Stitchers

Fridays, September 8 and 22 • 1:00pm • Room A1

The fall is our busiest time of the year. We invite you to come and see the knit and crochet items we are working on and help us achieve our goals for Christmas giving to local charities. Don't knit or crochet yet? We'll teach you!



Questions? Contact **Cindy Sundstrom**.

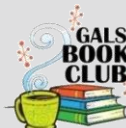


Red Cross Blood Drive

Thursday, September 7

2pm – 7pm • Fellowship Hall

Appointments available at redcrossblood.org.






Thursday, September 28

7:00pm • Lounge

The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post
by *Allison Pataki*

SEPTEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>It's Labor Day weekend, Lord — a good time to think about work and vocation. Guide me in the work, paid or unpaid, you most need me to do right now.</i>					1	2 Funeral for Robert Shultz 10a
3 Worship 9:30a	4  OFFICE CLOSED	5 Counters 9:30a Rejoice! 7:30p	6 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	7 BLOOD DRIVE 2p – 7p	8 Knit & Crochet 1p	9 Quilters 10a – 3p
10 Worship 8:45a & 11a RALLY DAY 10a God's Work, Our Hands 10a	11 Counters 9:30a  Men's Bible Study 7p	12 Rejoice! 7:30p	13 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	14 Exec Committee 7p	15	16
17 Worship 8:45a & 11a Youth Kickoff 10a Education 10a	18 Counters 9:30a	19 Rejoice! 7:30p	20 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	21 Adult Ed Mtg 1p	22 Knit & Crochet 1p	23 Fall Begins 
24 Worship 8:45a & 11a Education 10a Worship Ministry 12:15p	25 Counters 9:30a TLC Meeting 11a	26 Grapevine Lunch 11a Mutual Min 7:30p Rejoice! 7:30p	27 Bell Choir 6:30p Vocal Choir 7:30p	28 Book Club 7p	29	30 Shared Meal 4p



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