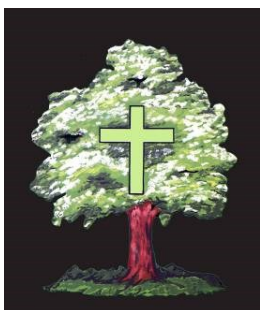


OCTOBER 2023



# *The Leaflet*

## **Does God Pay Rent?**

Dear Members of Tree of Life,  
You may wonder why we are asked to give our time, talents and treasure to God. Does God need to pay rent or purchase groceries? Is there a car payment or medical insurance premium?

Of course not. God has no needs, but loves us and wants all of creation to have its needs fulfilled. God uses our hands and our resources to care for all of creation.

On **November 12, 2023, Consecration Sunday**, we have an opportunity to thank our generous God for all that we have received by returning a small portion of His bounty to Him in an act of worship. We will place our pledges for 2024 on the altar as part of the fulfillment of our mission statement. The pledges received will be used to construct our 2024 budget.

The next Congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 14, 2024.  
Pray for God's continued blessings and express your thanks on Consecration Sunday.

May God bless the members of Tree of Life and our mission.

Gene Zaiser  
Stewardship Chairperson

STEWARDSHIP 2023

# Council

**O** A new heating and cooling unit is being installed, with an additional unit planned for installation next year. When completed, our system will be a unified, up-to-date and more energy efficient system than we have ever had, and a tremendous relief to our facilities chair and helpers who labor to keep us up and running.

**r** The new system is, of course, expensive, but we have been building up a fund to meet such outlays, and so we are in good financial shape to cover this need.

**n** NOW, we have to replenish the kitty, as we also fund the ongoing expenses of meeting our own challenges and fulfilling our Mission Statement to share the Gospel with "Middletown, Odessa, Townsend, and the world."

**e** AND that brings us to our fall Stewardship campaign, which is about to begin. It will be brief, as Tree of Life has seldom needed more than a reminder of financial issues. We have always known that although it is God's work, it is our hands that must do it.

**r** Please continue to uphold Council in your prayers.

Peace and Blessings,  
Nicky Zaiser, Council President

## Blessing of the Animals

Calling all of God's fuzzy and furry, creepy and even crawly critters—and those who love them!

"Blessing of the Animals" will be at 1 PM Sunday, October 8, outside the church. Everyone is invited to come and bring your pets, who might just receive a little treat!



## From the Pastor

### Always More to Learn

Last month was “back to school season” for many kids, but learning is not just for kids and not just for school! Here at Tree of Life, this fall brings several new opportunities for folks of all ages to grow in your knowledge of God and your faithfulness in life.

Our Sunday morning adult Bible study is back, and we’re looking at the Book of Job. This is a challenging but fascinating book in the Bible, as it delves into the hard question of why good and faithful people still suffer. It also explores our instinctive need to blame someone for suffering, and raises the question of whether hardship is sometimes inexplicable. After reading and discussing Job, we might also read *The Trial of God* by Holocaust survivor and famed author Elie Wiesel, which asks some of these same questions in a different light. Given that we’ve all likely faced times of hardship – in our own lives, in the lives of loved ones and friends, and in our whole world during pandemic and other turmoil in the past few years – I hope that we can have some hard and insightful conversation. We’ll be meeting at 9 a.m. most Sundays in the sanctuary, and I hope you will join!

I’m also excited to again get to lead confirmation class this year! I love teaching confirmation, and am especially excited to be working with three bright young women – Olivia Brill, Aleksandra Fratta and Liana Yetsko – as we delve

deeper into our faith for the next couple years. Through the lens of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism of 1529, we’ll be exploring many of the big questions of faith, ethics, God and life. I’m hoping our older teens will also join in our conversations, even though they’ve already been confirmed.

And in fact, I encourage everyone to explore the Catechism again. Luther once wrote that he “must still read and study the Catechism daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism – and I also do so gladly. ... In such reading, conversation and meditation, the Holy Spirit is present and bestows ever new and greater light and devotion.” Through the Ten Commandments, we engage with many contemporary ethical questions. Through the Apostles’ Creed, we explore the grace of Christ. Through the Lord’s Prayer, we deepen our own spiritual life. And through the teachings on Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, we wrestle with the mysteries of God’s physical presence. You can find a copy of the Small Catechism on page 1160 in our red hymnals.

Kingdom Kids also returns this month, at a new day and time: 3:30 p.m. Fridays. All our youth will gather for a snack and prayer, then while I’m meeting with our teens and preteens to talk the Catechism, Pam Nichols will be doing amazing lessons and crafts with our younger kids. We’ll also be joining to put

*Cont’d bottom page 10*



# OWLS

(Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors)

Join the OWLS for lunch at the Grille at Back Creek Golf Club (101 Back Creek Drive, Middletown, DE) on Thursday, October 12th, at Noon.

Please RSVP with Dee and George Matz or Janet Parks by Sunday, October 8th.

Also let them know if you would like to carpool. If carpooling meet at the Middletown Square Shopping Center at 11:30 AM.



*The OWLS enjoyed a beautiful day and a great time on the Chester River Packet during their September outing.*

As you may know, TOL member, Judy Horensky, moved to a retirement community in Maryland, which also allows her to be closer to her daughter. If you would like to keep in touch with Judy, her new address is:

707 Maiden Choice Lane, GC9121  
Catonsville MD 21228

## Treasurer's Report

Expenses for August 2023: \$13,473.62  
Year to Date Expenses: \$110,385.47  
Income for August: \$8,100.00  
Year to Date Income: \$89,715.94

Stewardship Sunday will be coming up in October with Consecration Sunday on November 12. Time, talents and financial help are all very valuable in the life of our church.

Please prayerfully consider what you are be able to give towards the ministry of Tree of Life.

Thank you everyone for your continued support towards the ministry at Tree of Life.

Denise Lindquist  
Treasurer

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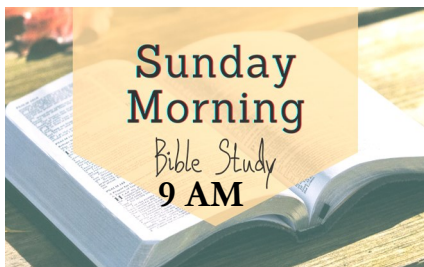
## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### OCTOBER

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Devin Baker     | Oct. 16 |
| Olivia Brill    | Oct. 24 |
| Lizzy Soucy     | Oct. 25 |
| Gerrit Salemink | Oct. 26 |
| Norman Minich   | Oct. 29 |



*Do we have your birthday? If not, please let the office know so we are able to acknowledge and celebrate your special day.*



### WHY DOES GOD LET BAD THINGS HAPPEN?

We are exploring the question of why a good God lets bad things happen, through a study of the Book of Job. After finishing Job, we will read the play *The Trial of God* by Elie Wiesel. You are welcome to use any Bible translation you prefer. All are invited to join this time of Scripture and conversation! For questions, please talk to Pr. Robbie.



## TOL Quilters

Quilt Circle meets the second Tuesday of every month from 10:00 to 12:00 at Tree of Life to create warm, and beautiful, quilts for Lutheran World Relief. You do not need to be able to sew to contribute to this wonderful world-wide outreach. Nor do you have to be able to attend monthly meetings. If you do sew, you can piece tops or sew bindings at home as your busy schedule allows. Our monthly meetings are given over to fellowship as we knot the quilt layers together. We are in nearly desperate need of volunteers, so consider yourself to be personally invited to join us! Call or text Nicky at 302-547-6544 for more encouragement to join, or simply show up at 10:00 on the second Tuesday.. we'll be delighted to have you!

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## HELP TELL THE CHRISTMAS STORY!

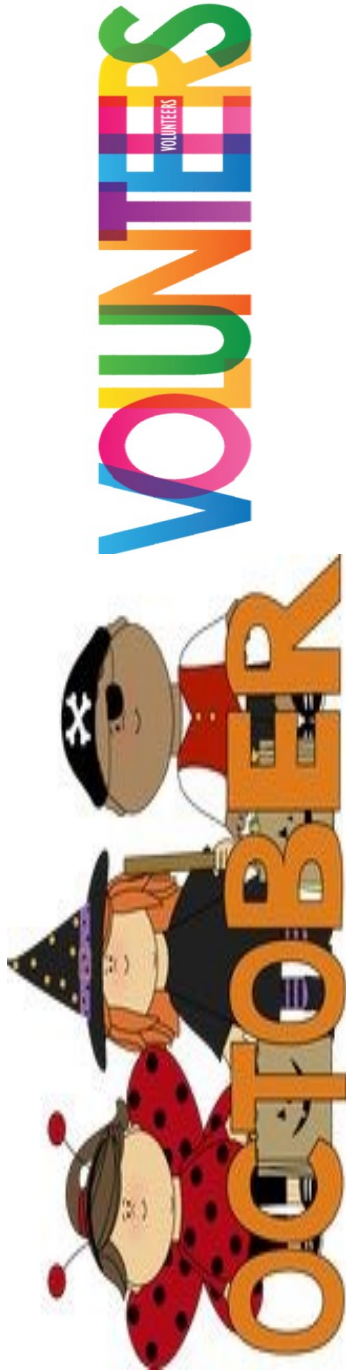
It's hard to believe, but Christmas will be here before we know it! Tree of Life will again lead a special Live Nativity on the afternoon of Saturday, Dec. 16. But we need you to be part of it! This year, we're hoping parishioners of all ages will help enact the story of Jesus' birth, as we make this an outreach event to the whole MOT community. We also hope to get folks lined up a bit earlier, so that there's less last-minute stress.

Cast Members'  
Needed



So if you would like to be a shepherd, Magi or even a member of the Holy Family, watch for a sign-up sheet in church. And if you'd rather take a more behind-the-scenes role, we're also hoping to have snacks and singing indoors after the presentation.

[illegible]



| Date    | Usher        | Acolyte   | Worship Assistant | Altar       | Fellowship | Offering Counter |
|---------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|
| Oct. 1  | G. Matz      | Volunteer | J. Pileggi        | G. Zaiser   | N. Zaiser  | G. Zaiser        |
| Oct. 8  | B. Lindquist | O. Brill  | E. Kruah          | S. Vetrano  | B. Bullock | E. Kruah         |
| Oct. 15 | C. Lewis     | L. Yetsko | G. Zaiser         | N. Zaiser   | C. Fiske   | G. Zaiser        |
| Oct. 22 | M. Campbell  | Volunteer | J. Adams          | G. Zaiser   | C. Lewis   | M. Campbell      |
| Oct. 29 | B. Lindquist | K. Yetsko | G. Zaiser         | M. Campbell | C. Fiske   | G. Zaiser        |

*Want to volunteer ? Contact ~Gene Zaiser, Coordinator~*



### Calling All Singers!

The Choir invites all those who enjoy singing to join the Choir. No, you don't need to know how to read music or to have ever studied music. No prior experience is necessary—just a willingness to share your talents with the congregation

Rehearsals are held after the service bi-monthly and once a month on Wednesday night. Recordings of music will be provided so you can practice on your own time as well. Please contact Duane if you are interested or have any questions. [duanedillard@gmail.com](mailto:duanedillard@gmail.com)



In my previous congregation, we had a Women of the ELCA group. We would gather for Bible study and other activities. We enjoyed the magazine "Gather".

"Gather" is the magazine of the Women of the ELCA; a subscription is 6 issues a year. Issues feature Bible study, mix of faith-in-life articles, theological reflections, devotions and stories . Gather connects

Christian women of all ages with like-minded others who are committed to growing in faith and building the kingdom of God - next door and across the globe.

For a 2 month free trial of the print edition, contact Janet Adams 214-809-7949 or [janet2809@att.net](mailto:janet2809@att.net) <https://www.gathermagazine.org>

And please talk to me about what activities you would like to see for women at Tree of Life!

Janet Adams

Pr. Robbie Away

Pr. Robbie will be out of town the weekend of Oct. 14. A familiar face in TOL's history, the Rev. Wes Hamlin, will be supplying on Sun. Oct. 15. Come and hear the Word through Pr. Hamlin's voice that week!

## Memorial Tree

Did you know that the tree that hangs in the fellowship room is a memorial tree? Some of the leaves have the engraved names of those TOL members who have moved on to live with our Heavenly Father.

During the pandemic the company we used for engraving went out of business. It took some time, but we were able to find another vendor who can supply the right size and shape material to engrave the names of our departed loved ones.

Recently added were Joanne Letwinch, Greg Fiske, Mary Jane Schiedt, and Richard and Jean Mullen. A Big Thank You to Janet Parks for having the leaves engraved and to Bruce Blair for attaching the leaves to the tree and giving the tree an overall cleaning and polish to brighten the tree.



### **Kingdom Kids to kick off After School, October 6 New Confirmation Class to begin!**

The Tree of Life Youth Faith Formation classes are undergoing some big changes to accommodate our families and busy kids. Instead of Wednesday evenings, we're changing to Fridays after school, 3:30pm-5:00pm.

We'll have two classes: one for young elementary students with Pam Nichols; and another for older youth with Pastor Robbie. It will be a combined Confirmation Class (two years) and Youth Group. The Confirmation students will include Olivia Brill, Aleksandra Fratta and Liana Yetsko.

We're looking for a name for this group. If you have any ideas, OR if there are youth in your family (grade 1-high school), OR if you'd like to help out with either group of kids, please let either Pam or Pastor Robbie know.

*Cont'd from page 3*

our faith into action through service go "back to school," because there's work throughout the year. As Pam always more to learn. So how will you mentions elsewhere in this newsletter, deepen your knowledge of God this year? I hope that Tree of Life can be part of that journey! wonderful ministry to any other kids you might know!

When it comes to learning more about God, it's always a good age to Blessings to you all,  
Pr. Robbie+



**LCM FALL FUNDRAISER**  
**CALLED BY NAME!**  
**SATURDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 4**

The fall term has begun beautifully for LCM. Amid picnics, ice cream runs, and worship gatherings, we've enjoyed welcoming new members while reconnecting and sharing stories with returning members. It's a wonderful, engaging, and joyful student group.

We're very excited for our upcoming **in-person fundraiser, "Called by Name!"** set for **Saturday afternoon, November 4**, beginning at 1:30 PM at Hope Lutheran Church in New Castle. We look forward to tasty hors d'œuvres and dessert, a fun auction (once again led by our bishop, the Rev. Bill Gohl!), and the grace of gathering with the wider LCM community.

You're invited to assemble a raffle basket to donate for the event. Past themes have included chocolate lovers, green cleaning products, Italian dinner, puzzles, book lovers, holiday themes, and more. We welcome your creativity! Please contact our office if you have questions: [office@lcmde.org](mailto:office@lcmde.org). Baskets are due by Wednesday, November 1. Thank you.

We also welcome your ongoing prayers for LCM:

- Please pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to draw new students to our group.
- Please pray for wisdom in identifying new members for our Directing Committee (governing board), as we expand and strengthen our leadership team.
- Please pray for a joyful, fun, and successful fundraiser next month, to the glory of God. Thank you!

We'd love for you to visit us at the chapel (247 Haines Street) on a Tuesday evening. We're grateful for your continued support through prayers, home-cooked meals, and contributions, and we look forward to connecting on November 4 at our "Called by Name!" fundraiser. Hope to see you there! May God's peace, grace, courage, and hope be with you and your loved ones.



*In Christ, Mindy Holland,  
Minister of Word and Service †  
Chaplain, Lutheran Campus Ministry at  
UD  
302-368-3078; [chaplain@lcmde.org](mailto:chaplain@lcmde.org)*

*A wonderful Welcome Picnic on our patio  
on September 5!*

## **Tree of Life Lutheran Church**

P. O. Box 64 / 505 Osbourne Street

Odessa, DE 19730-0064

(302) 378-3345 / treeoflifelc@verizon.net

[www.treeoflifechurchde.com](http://www.treeoflifechurchde.com)

[www.facebook.com/TreeofLifeLutheranChurch/](https://www.facebook.com/TreeofLifeLutheranChurch/)



**This is Christ's church. - There is a place for you here.**

*We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.*

### **STAFF**

Rev. Robbie Ketcham

Duane Dillard, Music Director

Maria Gue, Office Manager

### **COUNCIL**

Nicky Zaiser, President

, Vice President

Sylvia Schill, Secretary

Denise Lindquist, Treasurer

Analise Fratta

Merna Smith

Dirk Schulze

### **COUNCIL / COMMITTEE LIAISON**

Altar Guild

Christian Ed— Analise Fratta

Outreach—Denise Lindquist

Property— Dirk Schulze

Stewardship—

Worship & Music— Sylvia Schill

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Altar Guild—Maxine Campbell

Facilities— Dirk Schulze

Christian Education— Pam Nichols

Fellowship - Carla Fiske

Interior Review—Janet Parks

Outreach

Stewardship—Gene Zaiser

Worship & Music—Sylvia Schill

### **VOLUNTEER CHAIRS**

Burning Bush—Pam Nichols

Financial Secretary— Ed Bullock

Leaflet Editor—Donna Parks

OWLS—Janet Parks, Dee & George Matz

Quilting Circles—Nicky Zaiser

Volunteer Coordinator—Gene Zaiser

Webmaster— Paul Schuler

Worship Folder—Gail Russell