



The Mountain Top Messenger

ZION LUTHERAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH, ASHLAND, WI January 2023

Happy New Year, welcome to the year of the Lord 2023. Interesting that our calendar year on this whole planet is based on the birth of Jesus. For we of an old age learned history was separated into two categories BC, Before Christ and AD, in the year of the Lord. Now for some years the secular world has been trying to use the terms BCE, Before Common Era and CE, Common Era. After doing a little research it appears according to some, that this change began about a hundred years ago by some Jewish Theologians and Historians, and as Christianity has been falling out of favor and the rise of secularism has continued it has been adopted, particularly in the academic world. With all that being said, BC and AD have been in use since about 525 AD with the development and institution of the Julian and Gregorian calendars. So even though the names have been changed the one event that separates the ages is still the same, the birth of Jesus. I have decided to perhaps embrace the BCE and CE but with perhaps a little different understanding of the letters. I do firmly believe that BCE could stand for Before Christ's Era and CE Christ's Era, after all Christ himself tells us the Kingdom of God is here, CE = Christ's era.

BC and AD
VS
BCE and CE

I pray the Lord's blessing on all of you for this new year, and speaking of praying just a reminder that there is going to be a list in the narthex for people to sign up to be on the new Zion Prayer Team. I am looking for anyone who would be will to, at a moments notice, prayer for people and their needs. We will be notifying the prayer team members by their preferred method of contact, whether that be phone, text, email, messenger, or any other means. I will also host one or more sessions here at church on prayer. I will hand out some printed prayers for various occasions and needs and I will also have a discussion about prayer in general and talk about simple prayers that we can do anytime anywhere. I believe we have all seen prayer work both in our own lives and the lives of others and I look at this as an opportunity to expand our prayer offerings to those in need around us.

I have a number of people ask me about the Wednesday Evening online Prayer and Bible study. It is my intention to start it back up. I hope to start again in the next several weeks. It will however probably not be on Wednesday. I am not yet sure what day of the week it will be, but fortunately with the wonders of the internet you will be able to watch it at your leisure whenever it might be. I will keep you posted.

Also, as I begin to look at the new year with the challenges of writing 11 more newsletter covers for 2023 I thought perhaps I could come up with a topic that would span 12 months. What could I write about that might have 12 items? Well we could to the 12 tribes of Israel, or perhaps discuss the 12 gates of the new Jerusalem. But no, I think I will each month discuss at least briefly one of the twelve apostles. And seeing that we have throughout advent, and will again during Epiphany be looking at the Gospel of Matthew I would look at the apostles in the order that Matthew assigns them. This is Matthews list:

Matthew 10: ² *These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.*

Now because I have already used up most of my space already I am actually going to start with Simon (who is called Peter) next month, it will still work out ok, because there can easily be a month or two when I can look at two apostles as there a few of which we know very little. For example can anyone out there give me some insight on the contribution of Thaddaeus? Any way, next month in our newsletter cover we will take a look at Peter.

God's blessings to you and I look forward to worshipping with you all in the near future.

The Lord Bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Pastor Rick





ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
1111—11TH AVE WEST
ASHLAND, WI 54806

Sunday Worship Service 9:00am in-church service and live streamed

Wednesday Evening Service 6:30pm

Sunday School - 1st - 7th grade Sunday 8:45am

Bible Studies— Sundays 10:15am Mondays 10:00am

Women's Bible Study 630pm 1st & 3rd Thursdays

Pastor Rick Williams - 715-209-0479

Office Hours: M-T-TR 9-5 W 12-8 F off

Please call ahead if you need to speak with Pastor.

Office Secretary Lynn Ladd 715-682-6075 Office Hours Typically M-W 8:30-2:30
Days and times may change.

Church President: John Pruss 715-292-4825 **Head Elder:** Darryl Warren 715-492-0488

Little Friends of Jesus Child Care Center: 715-682-5185

LFOJ Administrator: Autumn Heidrick 715-682-6075



HEALTH AND HEALING

For good test results, treatment, positive thinking, healing, and comfort during cancer treatments, for those suffering from addiction, mental illness and for healing, strength, comfort, and peace for family we pray for:

Brad Prill	Riley Bretting	Cindy Lazorik
Alice Balmer	Doug Preuter	Mike Trimble
Penny Larson	Jamie Klema	Mike Ariens
Vi Basina	Randy Spangle	Frances Balmer
Dave Pearson	Randy Mashlan	Nancy Zehe
James Fletcher		
Sheryl Hildebrandt		
Harold Larson		
Diane Beiersdorff		
Linda Stenroos		
Ann Williams		
Dave Anderson		
Lowell Nutt		



For Homebound, Assisted Living, Nursing Home

Those who aren't able to attend common worship that they would find comfort knowing that the Lord is with them.

*Arlene Zimmerman
Violet Basina
Nancy Zehe
Ann Williams*



For our full-time troops and public servants, for travel, missionaries, and for peace and protection for families.

*David Wright
Jordan Thimm
Andrew Pruss*

“The Importance of Saying Yes” by John Corbett 2017

His surprising journey from steelworker to actor, the moment that changed his life, and his movie *All Saints*



Most of my career I've played the nice guy, the romantic interest with a heart of gold. I'm really comfortable in those supporting roles. So my role in the new movie *All Saints*, as an Episcopal priest who's assigned to a small church in Smyrna, Tennessee, was a definite challenge. Not that Michael Spurlock, who's a real person—the movie is inspired by a true story—isn't a good guy. But I'd never played the lead, a character who's on every page of the script, and it scared me. Yet something made me say yes to it.

Michael arrives at All Saints with orders to close the church down. The congregation has only a dozen members and can't make the mortgage payments anymore. No reason to keep the place open, right?

Not quite. Refugees from Burma show up. There are 70 of them, members of the Karen ethnic group and observant Anglicans. They want to be part of the church. But their needs go beyond the spiritual. They need jobs, food, places to live.

Michael reaches out to them, even though he's not going to be around long enough to make much difference. As soon as he sells the church's acreage, he'll be gone. But then God gives him an idea. The Karen people were farmers back in Burma. What if they farmed the land the church owned? They could grow their own food, sell the extra produce and maybe even help raise money to pay off the church's debt.

That's exactly what happened. It's not what Michael Spurlock expected; it's not what his superiors had asked for; it's not at all what he'd been assigned to do. Except it's exactly what God wanted.

That really spoke to me because there have been times in my own life I've ended up doing something I totally didn't expect, something I couldn't even have imagined. Flash back to the first half of my

life. Not long after I was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, my parents moved our little family to California. They split up when I was two, and my mom and I took the train back to Wheeling to live with her mother. It was a great place to grow up. I went to a small Catholic school with the same 13 kids from first through eighth grade, then the Catholic high school on the same block. Everybody knew everybody.

Weekdays and Sundays I served as an altar boy at St. Joseph's Cathedral, a big beautiful place with a dome, mosaics, a massive pipe organ and an immense circular stained-glass window. I got up at 5 a.m. to do my paper route, then rushed to church. Altar boys had to be on their toes, putting on vestments, stacking hymnals, arranging the wafers, filling the water and wine cruets, lining up the bells. No sleeping on your feet. By the time I was 15, I'd worked so many funerals that an open casket hardly fazed me (being slipped a fiver as a tip wasn't so bad either).

I learned self-discipline as an altar boy. It was good training for a guy who would end up making movies—not that I had the slightest inkling of my path back then.

I figured I'd just stick around Wheeling after high school and get a job. I wasn't cut out for college; I was a C or D student at best. My dad drove out from Southern California for my high school graduation. He asked me what I planned to do with my life. I shrugged. I didn't know.

"If you ever want to work in the steel industry," Dad said, "I can help you find a job." He was a welder. "Just let me know."

"Sure," I said, never thinking I'd take him up on it. I'd grown up all the way across the country, so I didn't really know him well.

A couple of months later, making only \$2.65 an hour as a delivery boy, I found the offer more tempting. Maybe I *should* try California. Maybe a job like Dad's would be just the ticket. I drove out there with some buddies. I didn't even tell my dad I was coming. In fact, I didn't even know where he lived, just the name of the town. Bellflower. I took a bus to Bellflower. I went to a phone booth outside a Laundromat, looked up "John M. Corbett" in the book and found his address. There was a guy putting laundry into his hatchback. I told him

the address and asked, "Can you tell me where this is?"

"About a mile from here." He started to give me directions, but he must have seen how clueless I was. "Let me take you there," he said.

I got in his hatchback, and he drove to a small two-bedroom house. I knocked on the door. My dad and his wife welcomed me in, and I stayed for a year. True to his word, Dad got me a job at Kaiser Steel in Fontana. Soon I was earning more money than I'd ever dreamed, clocking 60-hour weeks. I had a nice apartment, nice clothes and plenty of money to go out with my buddies. The work, though, was grueling.

I was a ~~hydrotester~~ hydrotester. Kaiser made huge pipes headed for the Texas oil fields, and my job was to make sure the welds were tight. We pumped thousands of pounds of water through them to see if there were any cracks. We couldn't do it without getting drenched ourselves. We worked 10-hour shifts, testing a pipe a minute. Which meant getting soaked 60 times an hour.

I wanted to believe there was something else out there for me, something I was meant to do, but I had no idea what it was. Year in, year out, I stuck it out in that open-ended factory, freezing in the winter, when the wind howled down the San Bernardino Mountains, sweltering in the summer. Then one day some pipes came off the assembly line and hit me in the back. Next thing I knew, I was on disability, walking with a cane, popping painkillers.

Manual labor was out of the question. What was I going to do with myself now? "Why don't you go to community college?" Dad said. "Take some classes. Get a degree." I'd been such a lousy student. What purpose would college serve? Then again, it wasn't as if anything else was jumping out at me.

The first week at Cerritos College went okay. The second week, the assignments came. Read eight chapters by tomorrow. Write a five-page paper. I was completely lost. One afternoon I stayed in the cafeteria long after everybody else left, totally disheartened. College was a dead end for me. Twenty-four years old and I had no future.

I finished my chicken burger and was picking at some French fries when a few guys came in and sat at the other end of the long table, 18-year-olds just out of high school. They were joking around. I made some jokes back. They laughed and scooted over to me. I asked what classes they were taking.

"Acting," they said. Who knew there were acting classes at Cerritos?

"We've got an improv class next," they said.

"Wanna come?"

"Your teacher won't mind?"

"No. Come on."

I grabbed my cane and hobbled after them. They took me to a theater that was like a black box: black bleachers, black floor, black floor-to-ceiling curtains and a small performing area. It had a mysterious, almost mystical feel. The instructor walked in. Georgia Well was her name. My new friends introduced me. "This is John. Okay if he stays?" "Sure," she said. I watched one improv after another. I'd never been around anything like this! It was as if a whole new world opened up to me, a world I longed to be a part of, a world where I sensed I belonged. It was as clear as anything I'd ever gleaned from those hours on my feet at St. Joseph's, listening to the priest.

To my surprise, Georgia Well asked if I wanted to do an improv. I knew enough to know I had to say yes, yes to a new purpose for me, a new understanding of myself. I wanted to be here, take acting classes, learn to do all the things my new friends did, perform in plays (not that I'd ever seen one).

I dropped my other classes and signed up for all the acting classes at Cerritos. Within a month, I'd landed a role in the campus production of *Hair*. My dad's jaw just about dropped to the floor when he saw me on stage singing. Everything on his face said, *I didn't know you could do this*. I didn't know I could do it either!

That's what happens when you follow God's lead and do what brings you joy. I didn't need the cane or the painkillers anymore. Healing came from the work I was doing, the friends, the new passion I'd discovered. I'm the least likely guy to end up in several hit TV series, let alone star in a Hollywood movie. Me, a blue-collar kid from West Virginia. But when I look back, I can see how the altar boy duties, the paper route, Dad's finding me a job at a steel mill, even the debilitating back injury brought me to where I am now.

Still, I can't help asking myself, What if I hadn't been sitting in the cafeteria that day? What if I hadn't gone with those guys to that improv class?

I've learned, like the priest I play in *All Saints*, that when God sends a suggestion our way, the best thing we can do for ourselves is say yes.



We're doing another set of pictures to color. This time on the Beatitudes which will be the theme series during Epiphany. There are only eight pictures but there will be duplicates of them. I'm confident that each picture will be one of its own. There will be a stack of pictures in the Narthex and an attachment to our member emails. If you would like to color one and haven't seen any of the pictures give the office a call and we'll email you them.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Those who have a report should turn them into the office by January 15th.

Please send them by email to: secretary@zionlutheranashland.com



PLEASE CONSIDER joining the Quilters' Group – they meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, now through April. You don't need to know how to sew or even thread a needle, there are people to guide you through the process. We will start up January 9th at 1:00pm



If you would be interested in being part of our prayer chain, there is a signup sheet in the Narthex. More information will be forthcoming as we get a list of people. Thank you.



For years, the residents of Salem, Oregon, have been hunting for the hidden \$100 bills that appear all over the place. Every bill is signed "Benny," but that isn't the [mysterious](#) philanthropist's real name.

Residents of Salem have discovered the Benny bills almost everywhere—hidden in baby carriages, slipped through car windows, or tucked into the sleeping bags of [homeless](#) people. Benny has given out an estimated \$50,000. For many of these recipients, that \$100 appeared at moments when they desperately needed the money.

This act of generosity inspired the entire town to pay it forward, with some people adopting the practice on their own. For the individuals who are lucky enough to receive a Benny when they aren't actually in need, many citizens have given the money to charity or slipped it into someone else's pocket. While the original donor is a mystery, the practice quickly became a town tradition that will live on for a long time.

The Twelve Apostles During Christ's Mortal Life (see Luke 6:4-16)

J	N	W	H	D	S	T	W	L	S	A	I	P	G	J	E	T
M	U	P	J	Q	G	L	X	F	Y	U	E	K	X	F	H	H
Y	H	D	M	U	U	C	L	S	E	T	X	Z	L	H	Z	O
Y	M	R	A	J	D	I	P	Z	E	N	S	I	M	O	N	M
R	B	O	G	S	X	A	D	R	Z	X	J	B	I	Z	I	A
X	M	W	G	O	F	P	S	W	B	B	A	E	N	Q	R	S
X	J	E	U	N	H	O	J	I	G	H	M	T	B	S	M	X
O	N	M	C	N	F	F	A	L	S	G	E	Q	W	X	B	R
M	A	O	I	Q	Z	B	B	D	N	C	S	V	M	G	K	E
Q	J	L	U	T	Q	A	J	W	Y	S	A	F	W	P	Y	M
E	M	O	P	Z	R	N	I	Z	O	P	L	R	S	B	I	A
C	O	H	U	C	A	N	D	R	E	W	P	K	I	H	W	T
X	D	T	C	F	T	Q	M	R	D	Q	H	A	V	O	D	H
Z	J	R	O	U	D	G	P	T	U	R	A	Q	R	U	T	E
O	A	A	O	M	C	X	O	D	B	S	E	M	A	J	H	W
V	O	B	P	H	I	L	I	P	S	U	U	J	W	V	Y	V
Z	O	X	K	W	E	Q	F	T	P	C	S	V	J	U	F	G

Peter

Andrew

James

John

Philip

Bartholomew

Mathew

Thomas

James Alphaeus

Simon

Judas

Judas Iscariot

BibleWise

Match Followers of Jesus with the Events

Followers

Events



1. John



2. Peter



3. Matthew



4. Judas



5. Thomas



6. Andrew



7. James



8. Philip



9. Mary Magdalene



10. Martha

A. He sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

B. She was the first to see the risen Jesus.

C. She believed in the resurrection before Jesus raised her brother.

D. He baptized a eunuch.

E. The first disciple to realize Jesus was risen.

F. Left tax collecting to become a disciple.

G. Jesus changed his name after he announced Jesus as the Christ.

H. He doubted that Jesus was risen.

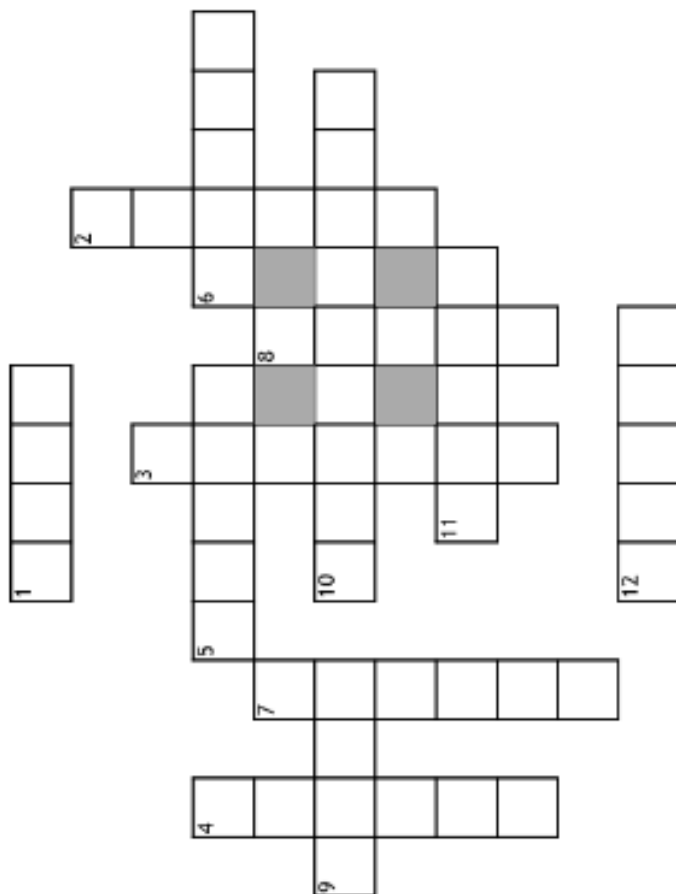
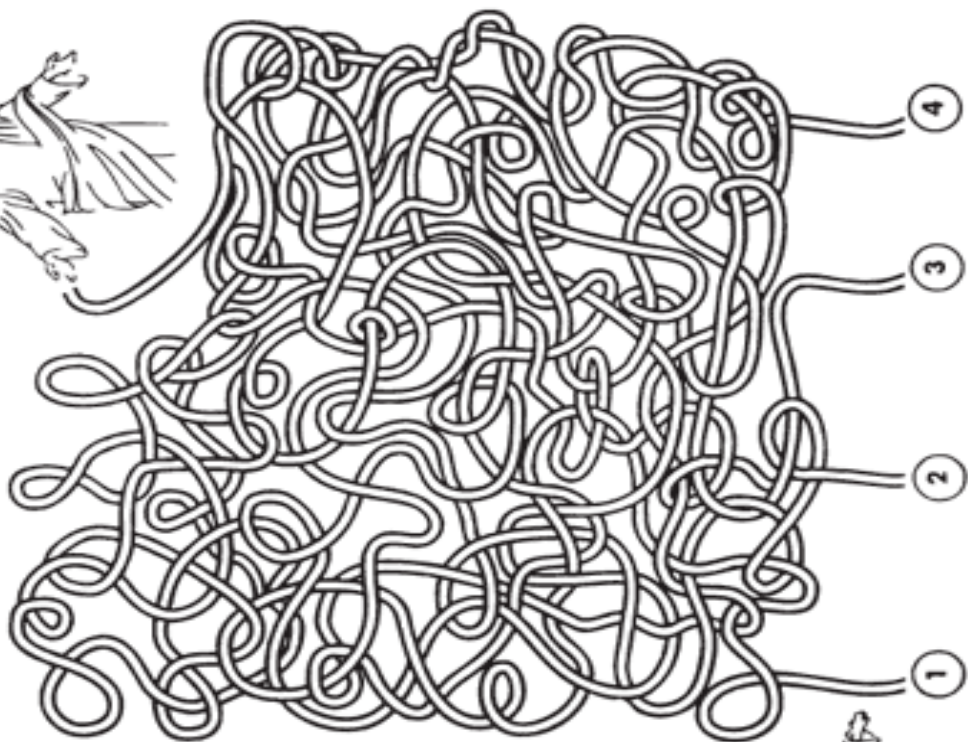
I. He and Philip presented the request of the Greeks to Jesus.

J. Jesus' brother and the head of the church at Jerusalem.



Following Jesus

The apostles are ready to follow Jesus. They want to learn from him and help him in his ministry. Can you help them find the right path? Mark the route. There's only one right way to go!



Across

1. Write one small book in New Testament, also called Thaddeus
5. betrayed Jesus, got mad about Mary's perfume on Jesus' feet
6. "the Zealot" who wanted to fight Rome
9. wrote 5 books of New Testament, "the disciple Jesus loved."
10. Jesus saw him under a tree, friend of Andrew
11. biggest disciple, fisherman, called "The Rock"
12. John's brother, "sons of thunder"

Down

2. always bringing people to Jesus, said it would cost too much to feed 5,000 people
3. tax collector, wrote first book in New Testament, sometimes called Levi
4. sometimes called "doubting", said "We don't know where you are going."

12. Peter's brother, always bringing people to Jesus
11. James the lesser because someone else has the same name, brother of Jude

The Twelve Disciples

History

“Rock of Ages”

The first four lines for the 1st version of the 1st verse were published in *The Gospel Magazine* in October, 1775.

The first publication in full was the following spring in the March, 1776 edition of *The Gospel Magazine*, with a revised first verse, plus three more verses. A slightly further revised version was published that summer in July 1776 in Toplady's hymnal *Psalms & Hymns for Public and Private Worship*.

There is a popular story most hymnologists do not believe about the origin of this hymn text. That story was started 122 years after publication of the hymn text by a letter published in the *Times* [of London], June 3, 1898 from Dean Lefroy of Norwich, together with one from Sir W. H. Wills on the same matter. The burden of Lefroy's correspondence is based on a claim made by Sir W. H. Wills regarding the origin of this hymn. Wills' claim asserted that Toplady drew his inspiration from an incident in the gorge of Burrington Combe in the Mendip Hills in England. Toplady, then a curate (assistant Church of England preacher) in the nearby village of Blagdon, was travelling along the gorge when he was caught in a storm. Finding shelter in a gap in the gorge, he was struck by the title and scribbled down the initial lyrics.

According to E. J. Fasham, a more likely inspiration for the text is a 1673 sermon by Daniel Brevint (who had been the Dean of Durham Cathedral). This sermon had been partially quoted in the preface to Charles Wesley's *Hymns of the Lord's Supper* (1745), which was in common use amongst a number of ministers of the period. The similarity between the passages from Brevint's sermon and the hymn suggests this was the starting point for Toplady's text.

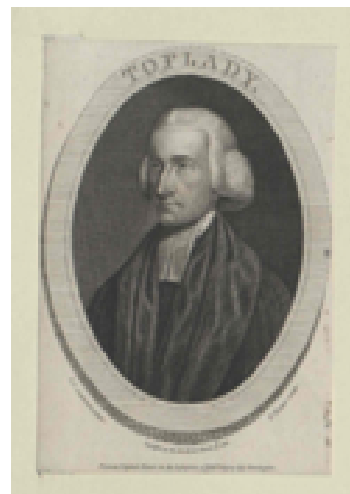
Commentary on lyrics

Augustus Toplady

The text of this hymn from Toplady's July 1776 'alt' version has been substantially edited since its publication by different denominations over the years creating a number of versions of the hymn text used by different churches around the world.

An example of an edit made to Toplady's text is: "When my eyes shall close in death" was originally written as "When my eye-strings break in death".^[8]

Notwithstanding the bitter pamphlet war between Augustus Toplady and John Wesley over the correctness of Calvinist/Reformed theology versus Arminian theology, there has been speculation by some, that although Toplady was a Calvinist, the edited version of the words, "Be of sin the double cure, Save from wrath, and make me pure," suggest he agreed with the teachings of the Methodist preacher under whom he received his religious conversion, and of his contemporary, John Wesley, who taught the "double cure", in which a sinner is saved by the atonement of Jesus, and cleansed from inbred sin by the infilling of the Holy Spirit. However, Toplady's own published 1776 hymn text, the version now referred to as 'alt', contains a variant different from Wesley's teachings and reads: "Be of sin the double cure, Save me from its guilt and power".



"Rock of Ages" is usually sung to the hymn tune TOPLADY by Thomas Hastings as revised by Lowell Mason or REDHEAD 76, also called PETRA (after Peter being referred to as the Rock by Christ), by Richard Redhead. TOPLADY is most typical in the United States and REDHEAD 76 in the United Kingdom, although both tunes circulate in the churches of both countries.

It is also sung to a number of additional tunes used in small numbers of hymnals. Perhaps the newest hymn tune for "Rock of Ages" is by James Ward included in the New City Fellowship's hymnal.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY MISSION

"SOUPER" BOWL SUNDAY



During the month of February we will be collecting Soup and other non-perishable items for the BRICK.

Drop off your items in the narthex.

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE BRICK.

Monetary donations also accepted, make your checks out to the BRICK.



We Need Your Help - Saturday, January 7, at 10:00 AM

It's time to take the Christmas decorations down and **WE NEED YOUR HELP**. Please consider volunteering your time and energy on **Saturday, January 7 at 10:00 AM** as we pack up the tree and decor that adorns our sanctuary. The more hands the merrier (and it goes quick)! Contact Shannon Esala at 715-292-0711 (phone and text) or metalynn@hotmail.com with any questions.

Altar
Guild

Altar Guild Meeting - Monday, January 9, at 6:00pm

Please contact Jule Jarvela at 715-682-0385 or njar@charter.net if you have any items you'd like added to the agenda. We would be overjoyed to see some new members attend!!



Beautiful! This teenager was filling up his Mustang when the older gentleman pulled up with his can for the mower and was patiently waiting. The teenager noticed, pulled the nozzle out and said "Sir will you please let me see your can?" He filled it up as the older gentleman objected. When the kid finished, he put the nozzle back into his car to finish filling up his own. He refused to take money from the gentleman and wished him a wonderful day. They are all over this country and they come in many shapes and colors. Teach your children to be like this. It all starts at home with the parents. Be a parent, not a buddy.

Ta Leia Thomas, who goes by "Ace", works at a Minnesota liquor store. Recently, her manager saw her walking around the store in her socks, and the security camera footage reveals why. The video footage shows her act of kindness to a homeless man who had boxes strapped to his feet. Ace saw that he was in need and did not hesitate to lend a helping hand. Without missing a beat, Ace took off her favorite shoes, a pair of purple retro Jordans, and gave them to the man.

"Hey, man. What size do you wear?", Ace asked the man when she saw that he was using boxes as shoes. He responded saying 10, 10 1/2. "I just looked around and grabbed my shoes and unlaced them, and just gave them to him right at the door. He said nobody would ever give me shoes like that," she [shared](#). "And I said, well, I'm not everybody."

Ace said that her act of kindness "was an easy decision."

"I didn't care about the shoes, I cared about him. So, you know, he didn't know me. I didn't know him; I just thought it was best to give him something that he may need," Ace [shared](#). "I was always taught to help others. You never know what their problem is, or what they are going through."

Ace's manager, Tom Agnes, has always admired Ace for her work ethic and the joyful connection that she has with customers. So, Tom decided to buy her some brand new shoes before her shift ended when he found out about her act of kindness.

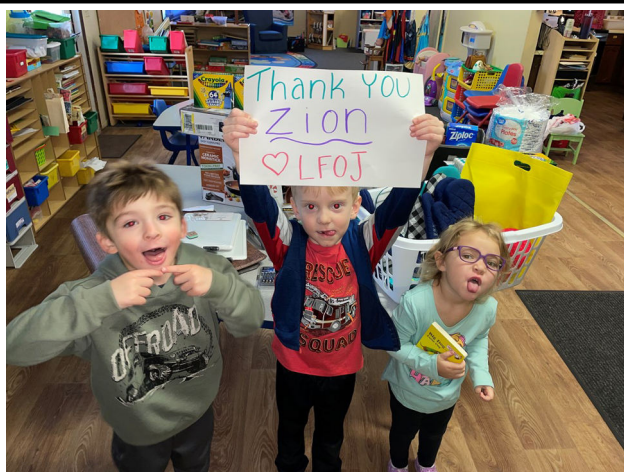
Ace is also the sole caretaker of her mother, and she gives her mother the bed while she sleeps on the floor. And Tom had raised some money to give to Ace to buy herself a second bed. What a caring and generous person Ace is! Her actions remind us all, especially around this time of year, that it is not about what we can get from others but what we can give to them.



LFOJ

Says

THANK YOU!!





2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Elders: January 1st Andy 4th John 8th Doug 11th Darryl 15th Scott 18th John 22nd Andy 25th Darrell 20th Doug February 1st Scott 5th John						
1 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Bible Study 2:00 LGP	2	3	4 6:30 Worship Service	5 6:30pm Women's Bible Study	6	7 10:00am Removal of Christmas decorations
8 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Worship Service 9:45 Confirmation 10:15 Bible Study	9 10:00am Bible Study 6:00pm Altar Guild	10 1:00pm Sewing Circle	11 6:30 Worship Service	12	13	14
15 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Worship Service 9:45 Confirmation 10:15 Bible Study 2:00 LGP	16 10:00am Bible Study 5:30pm Council Mtg.	17	18 6:30 Worship Service	19 9:00am Winkel Butternut 6:30pm Women's Bible Study	20	21
22 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Worship Service 9:45 Confirmation 10:15 Bible Study	23	24 1:00pm Sewing Circle	25 6:30 Worship Service	26	27	28
29 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Worship Service 9:45 Confirmation 10:15 Bible Study	30 10:00am Bible Study	31	1 6:30 Worship Service	2 6:30pm Women's Bible Study	3	4

January Altar Guild

Brenda Schwiesow 715-682-4292 Janet Houle 715-682-2387