

# Faith's Blessings

Faith Lutheran Church

6567 Glades Pike

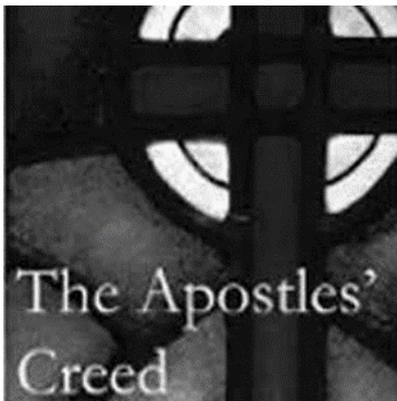
Somerset PA 15501

(814) 443-3179

(814) 483-3097 Pastor Kathy

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**September 2020**



After church one Sunday, someone asked, “Why do we confess in the creed that Jesus ‘descended into hell’? What does that mean?”

**I believe that, in confessing that Jesus descended into hell, we proclaim the depth of Jesus’s love for humanity, extending the light of hope in the darkest realms of humanity.**

Christian understanding of the Second Article of the Creed pertains to Jesus, affirming that he is fully human and fully divine. It is an affirmation that is personal and communal, borne out of catechism and baptism. It teaches the faith – the essential truths – to present and future generations. It is an affirmation that defines us as Christians and unifies us as a community of believers. Because of Jesus’s faith in God, Jesus gives all of himself, becomes one of us – suffering humiliation, physical pain and mental anguish - so that we can be in right relationship with God.

Suffering humiliation, enduring physical pain and the torment of mental anguish are, for me, what we humans experience as hell on earth. This is the hell into which Jesus descended when he became human; when he was crucified, a humiliating death of ancient times; when he was tortured and ridiculed; and the abandonment and isolation experienced when no one stood up for him, not even those closest to him. Jesus’s feeling of abandonment can be discerned when he cries out to God amidst his last dying breaths: “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46)".

Daniel Migliore, in *Faith Seeking Understanding*, sets forth differing interpretations of the creeds of the church wherein it is stated that Jesus ‘descended into hell’. On one hand, he explains that some understand it to mean that Jesus did descend into hell as a form of mission for sharing the good news to those who died before him; this interpretation is scripturally based in 1 Peter 3:18-20. On the other hand, Migliore includes the understanding of John Calvin and Karl Barth, an interpretation which he, himself, holds that “hell” is not a physical, geographic location but an “experience” that includes “loneliness and abandonment...a terror far greater than his physical agonies alone” (Migliore 195). Migliore doesn’t stop there, however, and describes hell to include the terrors of today “where violence and cruelty reign, where life in communion with God and others is under terrible and constant assault, and where the presence of God is deeply hidden” (195).

I align my understanding with both interpretations while also agreeing with Migliore's expansion but would go even further to describe hell as a state of being isolated from hearing the good news because of oppression, cultural upbringing, or geographic location. There are residents in different parts of our world who are persecuted, even killed, should they show an interest or engage in any form of Christian belief other than the beliefs dictated by a ruling party. There are also people who live in remote areas of the world where it is difficult to traverse and communication is cut off from the modern world; cultures in which beliefs and traditions are handed down from one generation to the next. And what of about those whose political or religious leadership profess a message that does not reflect the truth of the gospel? There are also people who are estranged from believing in the good news due to discrimination and abuse perpetuated within every realm of human society. I believe that, in all of these formulations of hell, Jesus meets us where we are, loves us and gives us hope. He is the shepherd who goes after lost sheep. Jesus's love was not bound by societal and geographic barriers, his life was given for all humans in every place and in every time.

In reviewing the Book of Concord, more specifically the Article IX of the Formula of Concord, I gleaned that we cannot wholly understand, through our human lens of reasoning, all of the logistics of Jesus's descent into hell; this is something that "must be grasped alone by faith" (Arand & Kolb 514). For me, this means that perhaps there is no right or wrong understanding when that interpretation is grounded in faith.

As we join together as a community in our confessions of the creed, we do so saying "I believe"; this summarizes our faith and confidence in Jesus as our Savior, who died because of us and for us, conquering sin and conquering hell in all its forms and in every place. I would add that because we, as Christians, enjoined with Jesus in our baptism, are also enjoined in his ministry, even to the darkest and remotest parts of our world, sharing the good news, living out our faith in community and seeking out, caring for and helping those who find themselves living in the hell of isolation, abandonment, physical pain and mental anguish.

In grace and peace,

Pastor Kathy

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Pastor Kathy will be on vacation Sept. 11 through Sept. 21 (excluding Sundays). If you have a pastoral emergency during those dates, please contact Rev. Felicia Swartz at (570)428-3522.

Pastor Kathy is changing her weekly day off, effective September 1, to Monday instead of Friday. She will not be in the office on Monday's.

# Happy Birthday!

## September Birthdays

Rodney Will	Sept. 2	Dakota Weyant	Sept. 21
Hazel Moore	Sept. 3 <b>93 yrs.</b>	Casey Romus	Sept. 22
Carl Schrock	Sept. 4 <b>82 yrs.</b>	Jane Pugh	Sept. 23
Jack Loeffert	Sept. 6	Paul Will	Sept. 23
Doris Lehman	Sept. 8 <b>80 yrs.</b>	Charley Domer	Sept. 24
Hudson Hillegas	Sept. 12	Khloe Lohr	Sept. 26
Oakleigh George	Sept. 13	Ross Auman	Sept. 27
Lily Walker	Sept. 13	Kyle Weaver	Sept. 27
Chuck Brant	Sept. 19 <b>86 yrs.</b>		
Pat Brant	Sept. 19 <b>85 yrs.</b>		

# Happy Anniversary!

## September Anniversaries

Clarence & Joan Walker	Sept. 3	<b>49 yrs.</b>
Mark & Susan Friedline	Sept. 4	<b>26 yrs.</b>
Mike & Kaitlyn Sulkowski	Sept. 6	<b>6 yrs.</b>
Brad & Missy Lenart	Sept. 10	<b>15 yrs.</b>
Blair & Irma Walker	Sept. 11	<b>49 yrs.</b>
Tom & Katey Hill	Sept. 15	<b>7 yrs.</b>
Steve & Jamye Matolyak	Sept. 15	<b>2 yrs.</b>
Clair & Loretta Weyant	Sept. 20	<b>11 yrs.</b>
Mike & Brandy Shepley	Sept. 21	<b>7 yrs.</b>
Clay & Cheryl Cramer	Sept. 25	<b>44 yrs.</b>



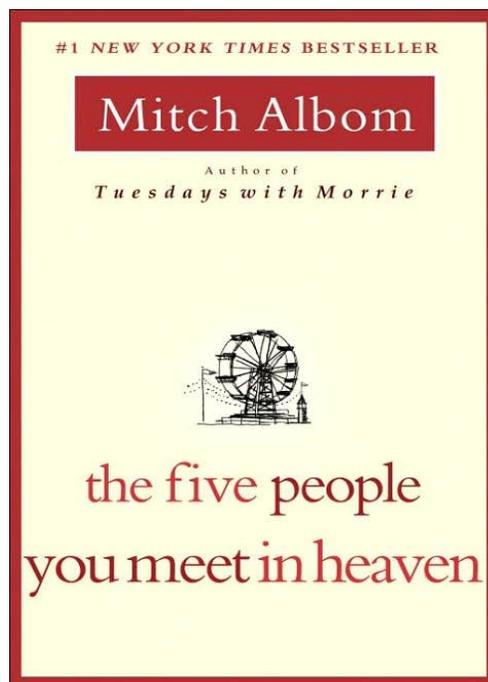
## **Sabbath Time — Women’s Book Club**

An informal gathering of gals to read, share, laugh and snack — a get away from all that keeps us busy.

We will be reading

### **“The Five People You Meet in Heaven”**

by Mitch Albom.



Books are available ...

Please see Pastor Kathy for your copy.

**We will meet on Tuesday evening, at 6:30 pm,  
beginning September 8**



During the month of August we lifted the following in prayer:

Karen Schmidt, Barb Mishler (death of fiancé), Ray Phillippi, Jim & Addison Butterfield, Kate Stutzman, Sandy Davis, Stephanie Ream, Dana Troup, Susan Will

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care visits are a means of bringing the presence of Jesus Christ into the lives of our community of Faith at times of acute illness, pending surgery, long-term care and rehabilitation of care, as well as hospice care. We rely on family members, friends, and neighbors to let the church staff know when someone is in a hospital or other facility; please call the church office 443-3179 and provide the name of the individual, name of hospital or care facility, and room number if known; and it is also helpful to give time/date of surgery.

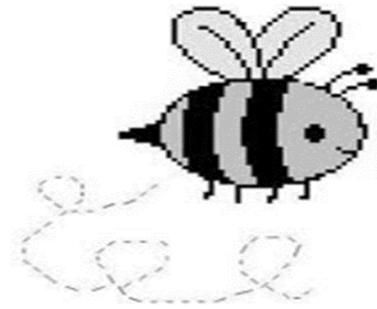
Thank you,  
Pastor Kathy

### **September Second Offering**

The second offering to be collected Sept. 13, has been designated by council for the Youth in Action Group at Faith.

This outreach provides children from the congregation and community a time of fellowship, learning, crafts, games and snacks. They usually meet the last Sunday of the month from 4-6 pm and are led by Pr. Kathy.

Your generosity in donating is very much appreciated!



### **"BEE" Sweet and Help "BEE" the "CHANGE!"**

Busy bees didn't get their reputation as hard workers for nothing! Honeybees provide honey to eat and beeswax to transform into handcrafted soaps and candles, allowing a farmer to start a small business selling their products. And as an added bonus, these little bees boost crop growth on the farm by pollinating plants everywhere they go.

During the month of September, we invite you, as stewards of God's creation, to bring in your "change" and place it in our "beehive" stationed in the narthex. These "buzzworthy" gifts will go towards helping support farmers and healthy honeybee colonies as part of the ELCA Good Gifts Initiative.

### **Meals on Wheels**

Faith Lutheran is responsible for desserts for Meals on Wheels the week of Sept. 28 through Oct. 2.

Cakes, cookies, muffins/cupcakes are needed. There are some dietary restrictions we must follow. If you would like to help by baking or donating cash, please call the office before Sept. 14.

You are to take your baked goods to Calvary UM Church between 6:30 and 8:30 am on the day you volunteered to bake.

THANK YOU!

## Information Needed

If you have a child who will be attending college this year, please provide the office with their address at college.

We would like to keep in touch with the student by offering notes of encouragement and maybe even a “Care Package” from their family at Faith Lutheran.



## Reminders ...

Please keep in mind that in-person worship and all activities are dependent on the status of CDC and ELCA guidelines during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

If you are unable to attend in-person worship, the service is available on our Facebook page or the church website.



## CARING FOR GODS CREATION

**Join us on Saturday,  
October 3rd, at 11:00 a.m.  
for a  
Blessing of the Animals**

Please bring leashed or crated pets, pictures of any animals whom you would like to be blessed in absentia, and/or items from pets who have passed away and whom you want to be remembered.

This is customary around the world, and everyone in the community is welcome to get their animals blessed. There will be treats for all – including our furry companions!

The event will take place in Faith Lutheran Church's pavilion...rain or shine.



Youth in Action  
Doing God's Work with Our  
Hands  
In Fellowship and Fun

## “SUPERHEROES of FAITH”

**Sunday, September 27th**

**4 p.m. - 6 p.m.**

CHILDREN & YOUTH OF ALL AGES...

Dress up as your favorite superhero and join in on the fun  
as we learn about some of the superheroes of the Bible  
and the super powers God has given us to share.  
The afternoon will include “super power”-themed learning about faith  
including games, crafts and fellowship!  
Yes, supper too!

There is a sign-up sheet in the lobby at church  
or just give us a call at 443-3179 and let us know you'll be here!



## September 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>2nd offering is for Youth in Action</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Caring Workers 10 am	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> Worship 9 am SCS 10:30 am	<b>7</b> Labor Day <b>Office closed</b>	<b>8</b> Book Club 6:30 pm	<b>9</b> Caring Workers 10 am	<b>10</b> Council 7 pm	<b>11</b>  <b>Pr. Kathy vacation</b>	<b>12</b>  <b>Pr. Kathy vacation</b>
<b>13</b> Worship 9 am <b>2nd Offering</b> (Youth in Action) SCS 10:30 am	<b>14</b> WELCA 7 pm  <b>Pastor</b>	<b>15</b> <b>NO</b> Book Club  <b>Kathy</b>	<b>16</b> Caring Workers 10 am  <b>On</b>	<b>17</b>  <b>Vacation</b>	<b>18</b>  <b>until</b>	<b>19</b>  <b>Sept. 22</b>
<b>20</b> Worship 9 am SCS 10:30 am	<b>21</b>  <b>Pr. Kathy vacation</b>	<b>22</b> Book Club 6:30 pm	<b>23</b> Caring Workers 10 am	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> Worship 9 am SCS 10:30 am  Youth in Action <b>"SUPERHEROES of FAITH"</b> 4-6 pm	<b>28</b>  <b>MEALS</b>	<b>29</b> Book Club 6:30 pm  <b>ON</b>	<b>30</b> Caring Workers 10 am  <b>WHEELS</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>WEEK</b>	

**We thank those who are willing to serve**  
**for the month of September:**

**September 6**

Altar Guild	Ruth & Dani	Reader	Randy Fieg
Assisting Minister	Jane Pugh		
Council Person	Carl Schrock		

**September 13**

Altar Guild	Karen & Elaine	Reader	Ryan Maust
Assisting Minister	Dave Pugh		

**September 20**

Altar Guild	Ruth & Dani	Reader	Annalina Brant
Assisting Minister	Brenda Maust		

**September 27**

Altar Guild	Karen & Elaine	Reader	Dave Pugh
Assisting Minister	Allen Stump		

**Please remember that if you cannot be here and have  
a "job", find a replacement!**

## **WE GIVE THANKS TO**

- Ken Will for spreading the mulch around the church
- Caring Workers for assembling the September newsletter
- To Katelynn Judy, our pianist, for recording herself playing the piano at home each week to include in our on-line worship liturgy
- To Pastors Jaime, Eli, Vicki and Christine, who worked together with Pastor Kathy to organize and create a week of virtual VBS "Faith at Home"
- To Thrivent, for its continued support through grants that allow us to share the Good News to our faith community and beyond

We give Thanks to God – for all these gifts –  
shared in serving Christ and community  
in community with one another.

**We ARE Church – TOGETHER!**

# **FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

6567 Glades Pike

Somerset, PA 15501

[www.faithlutheransomerset.org](http://www.faithlutheransomerset.org)

[faith@faithlutheransomerset.org](mailto:faith@faithlutheransomerset.org)

Sunday Worship 9 am

Sunday Church School 10:30 am

