

Connections

Newsletter of Ascension Lutheran Church • El Paso, Texas • October 2019

"CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY TO CHRIST!"

Pastor's Desk

Table of Contents

Page 1-3 Pastor's Desk Children's Ministry Operation Christmas Child Stewardship Minute

Page 4 - 5
Youth Ministry

Page 6-7 Letter of Support to El Paso

Page 8-9

LWML Drawing & Rally Preschool News Treasurer's Report Bible Study Opportunities PrayerTime

Page 10-11 FYI Upcoming Events Calendar I'm not one of them. I'll be the first to admit to you that I'm no good at golf. Terrible, in fact. Appalling. Awful. Abysmal. And it doesn't matter how often I visit the driving range to practice. Instead of an improved swing, I only end up leaving with nothing more than a sore back and a bruised ego.

In all honesty, I like watching

We have some talented golf-

ers in our congregation. But

golf more than playing it. Some years ago, during a homebound visit with an elderly sister in Christ, the topic of golf came up for some odd reason. Her response was memorable. She told me that she found golf dreadfully boring. However, she would turn it on TV because she loved the well-groomed landscape, the green grass and the bright sunshine, all of which she had in short supply in her high-rise retirement apartment. According to this fellow believer, the scenery was the only worthwhile thing about golf.

Last April, like millions of others, I tuned in to the famous Masters Tournament, which takes place in Augusta, Georgia. The leaderboard was full of well-known names and it looked to be an exciting event. But you know what I loved even more than the picturesque course or the intense competition or great athleticism? I loved the crowd. Yes, the people.

For whatever reason, I never noticed it in the past. Here is, in my opinion, the very best thing about golf: the people watching on the course clap for every single person. No matter what. Tiger Woods could slice a ball into the Francesco Molinari trees. could inadvertently drop a shot (or two) right into the water. Bryson DeChambeau could make a remarkable hole-in-one. And what happened after each of those shots? The crowd clapped for them. As far as I could tell, I never watched a single shot where the crowd didn't applaud. No matter how great or how terrible.

Perhaps it's a certain culture of civility or respect within the sport of golf. Or maybe the crowd has caught on to a certain way of living, whose example all of us could follow. The reality is, we don't really need to know where the ball landed or how successful the person was at what they set out to do. We just know that they've tried their best. They've succeeded in taking a risk. And that's worth applauding.

I think the apostle Paul would've been a fan of golf. He lived his life in a similar way. Under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, he wrote numerous letters to churches and believers near and far. Encouraging them. Supporting them. Cheering them on. And these weren't people



who were all soundly successful. Some of them were failing miserably. But Paul shared the good news of redemption and the hope of eternal life in Christ and brought great support and encouragement to them.

What if we imagined ourselves walking through each day as though we were on a golf course? And we'd cheer on whoever was in front of us. Not because of what they accomplished, but simply because of who they are. A person whom God created and dearly loves. A person for whom Jesus bled and died and rose from the dead in order to save them. Imagine what this world would be like if we were all each other's best cheerleaders. All this contagious encouraging and applauding. Why, it almost makes me want to learn to play golf! +

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CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Upcoming Events and News You Need to Know!



By Kim Bestian Director of Children's Ministry

-Soap for Hope-

A big thank you from the children in children's ministry at Ascension for bringing soap for our Soap for Hope giving project! The soap will be distributed to those in need in our community and our church family. We thank God for soap to keep our bodies clean and to remove dirt and germs. We thank God for Jesus who washes us clean from our sins with His blood—which soap cannot do. Praise Him for Jesus, and praise Him for soap! And again, we thank you for helping.

-Treats for Tots-

Our supply of oat cereal snacks for the children's worship *Treats for Tots* is once again very low. You are invited to purchase a box of **plain Cheerios** (please <u>only</u> this brand and no flavors) and bring it to the church office. Thank you very much for helping those with a little hungry tummy, during worship time, get filled!

InterpretativeLiturgicalDance

Worship dance will begin practice Sunday, October 6, 11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Please speak with Kim Bestian as soon as possible if your daughter is

interested! We will be dancing for the Family Christmas Worship service, December 15.

-Fall Fun Trick-or-Treat-

Saturday, October 26, 10:00-10:30 a.m. (or so) children's ministry will host this 4th annual fellowship activity for families and their friends. A pumpkin devotional will be the highlight! There will be safe indoor trick-or-treating, so children should bring their treat bags! Children and adults are invited to wear a costume. (Please no devil or witch costumes.) Family picture taking and so much more! Mark your calendars now and sign up if you would like to hand out goodies to the children from behind classroom doors. We would like to have 12 older folks help hand out the treats, allowing for parents to go around with their youngsters and fellowship with other families! Watch for sign-up sheets for participants and volunteers. Come, join the FUN!

-Christmas-

The Family Christmas Worship Service will be Sunday, December 15. The 2019 theme is:

O CHRISTMS TREE – You Point the Way to Jesus!

Part of the Sunday School hour each Sunday leading up to that service will be used to prepare the children for that worship service. Be sure your children attend every Sunday in October, November, and December, so that they will not miss out being in pictures and learning their parts. Most of all, to grow in their relationship with their Savior and their brothers and sisters in Christ!

-Kid's Corner-

The church library has wonderful Christian books and other resources just waiting for you and your children to check them out! The library is open and available on Sunday mornings and during the weekdays, Tuesday through Friday 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Come see what is waiting for you!



Operation Christmas Child Collection Starts October 6!



Ascension's Operation Christmas Child collection dates are October 6-27. Every shoebox gift delivered is a tangible expression of God's amazing love. We hope that you will participate! This is your family's opportunity to help spread the story of Jesus' love to children around the world. Shoeboxes can be picked up at the front entrance. Instructions and gift suggestions are included in each box. If you have questions, please direct them to Mariann Porter (309-1850) or Melanie Gallagher (861-7875).

Stewardship Minute—Humble Stewards

As stewards, we are the recipients and caretakers of God's goodness, love, mercy, and grace. Stewards are managers of God's creation. We acknowledge God as the owner; therefore, we are to act not as owners but as managers because our lives and resources are simply on loan from Him.

The book of Daniel gives an account of a man who failed to recognize God as Creator and provider and exalted himself. King Nebuchadnezzar, walking on the roof of "his" royal palace, surveying "his" kingdom, was overcome by pride as he announced, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence; by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty" (Daniel 4:30)? He thought he was asking a rhetorical question, but God condemned him to live like an animal as a consequence of his pride.

Pride is destructive. It destroys gratitude to God for all His kindness to us. It destroys our desire and ability to serve others. It destroys contentment for it feeds our competitive nature so that we are not satisfied with just being

wealthy or intelligent, but we want to be wealthier and more intelligent than anyone else.

Pride has no place in the life of a servant: First Peter 5:6 reads, "Humble yourselves, therefore under God's mighty hand that He may lift you up in due time." It is God alone Who can exalt us (Psalm 75:7). If Christ Himself, God's only begotten Son; humbled Himself: should we not follow His example and humble ourselves? Because Christ humbled Himself, God exalted Him (Philippians 2:9).

David, the shepherd-king, put our situation in proper perspective: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is man that You are mindful of him, the son of man that You care/or him" (Psalm 8:3-4)? The inference is that we are insignificant, yet David goes on to remind us of what we can be proud: "You made [us] ruler over the works of Your hands; You put everything under [our] feet."



Humility allows us to accept our smallness and God's goodness. In the words of Martin Luther, humility is the decision to "let God be God." We are stewards through humility. We are to honor Him with what we have, what we are, and what He will make of

YOUTH MINISTRY



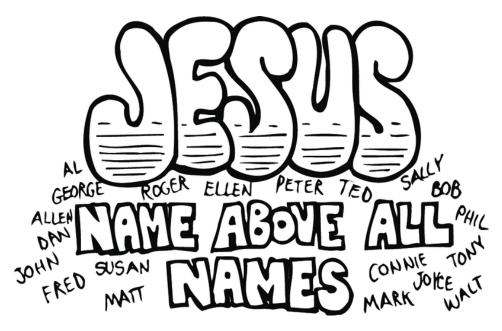
Nobody But Jesus

What does it take to make a name for yourself? Ever wonder what that even means? You already have a name, one that was given to you by your parents at your birth and reaffirmed at your baptism. So why are people so obsessed with making a name for themselves?

In a world where names carry legacies, whether good or bad, it is important to understand what a name means. Especially for those of us who are followers of Christ. I'm sure you've looked up the meaning behind your name, or even asked your parents why they picked the name they gave you, but there's more to my saying "understand what a name means".

We call ourselves Christian. What does this mean? To be a Christian is to be a follower of Christ. What does the name of Jesus Christ mean, The name Jesus literally translates to God with us ... and at the time He walked this earth, fully human and fully God, He was indeed with us. After His ascension, He continued to be with us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Even today, when it seems like the world has forgotten God and what He did through Jesus Christ-brought us salvation on the cross and victory in the resurrection—He continues to be in those who believe and follow Him.

As we go about our days, from class to class, attending practice of sports, music and theater, we are given opportunities to show Jesus Christ through our words and actions. Do you take those opportunities? When you encounter someone being bullied or see someone strug-



gling, in need of a friend, do you make the name of Jesus Christ shine through you?

These are not easy questions to answer—to be honest, they're not easy decisions to make. Our natural inclination is to look out for ourselves, in whatever manner that may be. To be honest, letting our old sinful self out in those kinds of situations is the easiest route to take, but we are not that old sinful person anymore.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

~2 Corinthians 5:17

It's a struggle for us to drown our sinful self and let Jesus shine through, so those who see us see Him. That's why we seek to know Him personally—after all, if you wanted to resemble someone you admired, wouldn't you pay attention to what they wear, how they speak

and walk, and how they act?

"Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God." ~3 John 1:11

Therefore, as you grow in your faith, your name will disappear into the name of Jesus—you will shine His love for those who need Him so brightly, they will see nobody but Jesus ... and you know what?

If the world forgets your name, but remembers Jesus, then you've left behind a legacy of being a bloodbought faithful member of God's family ... in the end, that's all that truly matters.



October 2019 Youth Happenings

Reformation Day Service October 27, 2019

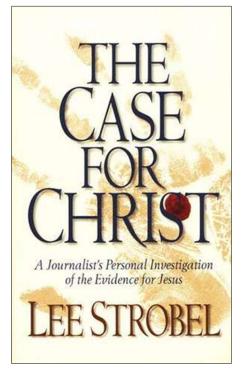


Items can be dropped off at church office during the week or given to Luz on Sundays from October 6 to 23.

If the congregation would like to donate the following items for a youth project for this service, we need:

- Large cardboard panels
- Duct tape (2 rolls)
- Black paint (quart)
- Brown paint (quart)
- Sandpaper (20 sheets)
- Paint brushes of different widths
- Box cutters (4) will return





Is Jesus of Nazareth really the Son of God?

Together, we will use the Student Guide for Lee Strobel's *The Case for Christ*, to go on a riveting quest to discover the truth about history's most compelling figure.

This new Youth Bible Study meets in the Youth Room downstairs.

Don't miss the opportunity to explore the hard questions many Christians aren't willing to ask and can't answer!



Sundays

9:15 -10:15 AM

Continue

The Case for Christ

October 6

October 13

October 20

October 27

All junior and senior youth will be meeting downstairs in the YOUTH ROOM

for Sunday Morning Bible Study

Contact Information

Luz M. Soto, DYM

Phone: (915) 219-1686 E-mail: luzsoto07@gmail.com We received the following letter from Christ the King church in Waxahachie, TX expressing their heartfelt sympathy after the terrible shootings in El Paso. They wanted us to know they were covering us in prayer and they also sent a box of cards and crafts to lift our spirits. It was such a gift of love and we sent this letter (right) in response.



Dear Rev. Brian Bestain and Ascension Lutheran Church,

As we heard the news of the shootings in El Paso our hearts broke for our brothers and sisters in your city. We went to the Lord and covered you all in prayer. We prayed for God's supernatural peace and comfort to sustain you in this difficult time. While we know that prayer is powerful, we wanted to do something more tangible for y'all.

Our theme for our Rally Day this year was "Let Your Light Shine" based on Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." We wanted to shine God's light of love to y'all during this dark and difficult time. We took some time that day to write cards and make some encouraging crafts for you all. We pray that you can use them to minster to those who are hurting in your church, school and community. We pray that through these simple cards and crafts that we can bring a smile to someone's face and remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their fellow Texans.

If there is anything else our church can do you for you, please let us know. We will continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

God's peace be with you all!

Christ the King Lutheran Church Waxahachie TX

Rev. Jared Raebel

Allison Daniels, DCE.



September 11, 2019

Dear Rev. Jared Raebel, Allison Daniels, and God's family at Christ the King Lutheran Church,

With great joy we received your special box covered with hearts and hands! Inside we found your voices of compassion, grace, and God's love. Thank you for "shining the Light of Jesus" with our congregation at Ascension Lutheran in El Paso, Texas! You truly followed through on your theme for Rally Day. Our 2019 Rally Day theme was: "With Hearts and Hands and Voices—The Body of Christ!" For that reason, your delivery box covered with hearts and hands came with such surprise and amazement.

The horrific shooting event at Walmart on August 3, 2019 was indeed tragic, and fear gripped our safe city. We could share many heart-breaking stories from this incident. It has deeply impacted all of us in our community, church, and preschool. However, God, in His grace, allowed it to open many doors for the sharing of the gospel message. We praise and thank Him for all He has done for us. During the adult Sunday morning Bible class, teen Bible class, and children's Sunday School, God's people here at Ascension gathered together and opened your wonderful box. The messages and little gifts from you brought joyous smiles to many faces. Please know that the warmth of your love was felt by your fellow Texans!

Thank you for keeping us in your prayers! Thank you for being shining lights for Jesus, our Savior! Enclosed are our "voices" from thankful "hearts" and "hands" in prayer back to you! May our Almighty God bless you and your ministry in His name, always! Keep letting your light shine for Him!

Your friends in Christ Jesus,

Ascension Lutheran Church

Rev. Brian R. Bestian

Luz Soto, Director of Youth Ministry

Kim Bestian, Director of Children's Ministry

MINISTRY & BOARD REPORTS



LWML 2019 Quilt Drawing and Fall Rally



Have you checked out the beautiful handmade quilt displayed on the LWML pegboard in the fellowship hall? Ascension's Lutheran Women's (LWML) Group is selling tickets for their annual quilt drawing. This quilt is handmade and donated by our very own Kay McLeod who initiated this project by donating the first handmade quilt to Ascension's LWML (formerly known as Women with Christ) many years

ago. Kay has donated many of the quilts LWML has used to raise funds for mission work and we sincerely thank her for her generous support!

The quilt is king size (101" x 104") in a lovely 'Pineapple' pattern of cream, green and rose. It is on display on the LWML peg board in the fellowship hall. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased from any LWML member. Drawing will be after second service on Sunday, December 1, 2019. All proceeds from this drawing support the mission work of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League.

All ladies of the church are invited to attend the LWML Fall Rally:

Saturday, October 19 9:00 am – 2:30 pm

Zion Lutheran Church Registration: \$6 per person

- Bible study presented by Rev. Donavon Heithold, Trinity Lutheran Church, Alamogordo, NM
- Special Guest from the LWML Rocky Mountain District, Anita Werner, District Planner
- District Convention Reports
- Singing, Food, Fellowship

Preschool News

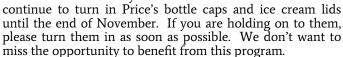
Fall is in the air in the preschool wing which is evident by and 4-year-old classthe wonderful decorations seen throughout the classrooms. rooms. Our Christian-It's the time of year for some fun activities such as the following: highly ranked among

- Oct. 11 there will be a Columbus Day Parade on the school grounds!
- Oct. 15 the Pre-K students will take a field trip to the corn maze a favorite activity of the children. is a blessing to our students.
- Oct. 18 students will be wheeling around the parking lot on their bikes as they enjoy the fall weather and the fun of riding! And the evening hours will have plenty of excitement as the school hosts the Fall Fest from 5:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. This family event is one of the few fundraisers scheduled throughout the year. Tickets may be purchased in the preschool office. Everyone is invited to attend.

In other news—there is still space available in our 3-year-old

and 4-year-old classrooms. Our Christianbased curriculum is highly ranked among the area Christian preschools, and our wonderful and caring staff is a blessing to our students.

The Price's Give em' Five program is coming to an end! We may



If you have any questions about our preschool, feel free to contact our director, Marhel Cueva, at 833-4849.



Treasurer's Report



Approved Council Minutes are sent to Ascension members with the Friday e-mail when they are received by the Church Office. Please call 833-1009 to request a copy of the minutes.

Treas	urer's Repo	rt: 2019 Income & E	xpense Statement [August]	
			August	YTD	Budget
	Income:	Offerings	\$ 22,941.13	\$ 192,528.50	\$ 200,200.00
		Other Income	\$ 6,723.92	\$ 38,303.37	\$ 34,333.28
		Total	\$ 29,665.05	\$ 230,831.87	\$ 234,533.28
	Expense:		\$ 29,897.53	\$ 252,470.89	\$ (22,031.52)
	Raise The	Roof			
		Donations	\$ 6,141.00	\$ 41,581.46	
		Total 2017-2018		\$ 135,184.30	

BIBLE STUDY & PRAYER





Sunday Morning Bible Study

Family Bible Hour:

Pastor Bestian will continue the study on the Book of Acts in the Fellowship Hall. All members & friends of Ascension are encouraged to attend!

Men's Bible Study

Men's Saturday Breakfast and Bible Study: This group meets every Saturday at 8:00 a.m. at the church.

Tuesday Night: This group meets every Tuesday at the church at 6:30 p.m. Their study is called "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School."

Women's Bible Study

Woman-to-Woman: This group meets Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. at the church.

Tuesday Evening: Tuesday evening Ladies Bible Study are following a video-based study, "The Faithful: Heroes of the Old Testament" which borrows from five different best-selling studies. They are continuing through October and then will meet again in the new year. Please call or text Anita Werner at (915) 494-2335 with any questions.

Thursday Morning: The Thursday a.m. Bible study group is doing a study of James. They meet at 9:45 a.m. at the Schlak home.

Please call the office if you need additional information for a Bible study.

Another resource available to you can be found at www.lhm.org.
You will find the Lutheran Hour daily devotions at this website.

PrayerTime



PrayerTime takes place on the first Sunday of each month. Please join us as we silently pray for the many prayers received in the church. You may come to the altar or pray in the pew as well. Next PrayerTime dates are: October 6 & November 3 from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.



Is Abortion Allowed in Cases of Rape or Incest?

By Dr. Jean Garton A BRIEF STUDY OF 2 KINGS 14:6

The Child of Rape

Place two newborn babies side by side on a table. Call together medical specialists, scientific professionals, social engineers, and leading theologians. Have technicians measure the size of the babies, examine their bodies, observe their behavior, draw blood, and perform a variety of reaction tests. Then let the experts tell us which baby is the product of rape. They can't!

The child of rape, as every child, is a innocent child is work of art created by God. Isaiah 64:8 speaks of God as the potter who fashions clay into something beautiful. In Psalm 139, the comparison is even more the rape in which the woman is an innoexact that it is God Himself who weaves cent victim, in abortion she becomes our bodies together in our mother's complicit in an act that destroys an inwomb.

The Godless Act of Rape

Rape, long considered a sexual act, is now recognized as an act of violence, control, and rage. Those emotions are all exhibited in the rape of Tamar by her half-brother, Amnon, and the ravished Tamar rightly calls the rape an "outrageous thing" (2 Samuel 13:12).

The outrage of society today against such an "outrageous thing" is to demand vengeance. Ironically, it's often the innocent child who, through abortion, receives a sentence of death. Abortion Incest involves a complex family situamay serve the emotional needs of a society repelled by rape, but it doesn't serve child.

Abortion vs. Love

Abortion, as a supposed "solution" is usually offered out of pity for the violated victim. Pity, of course, is a good thing in that it is the feeling through which a person shares in the suffering and wounded condition of another. Yet love is greater than pity! Pity sees the raped woman in her desolation and shame. Love sees her desolation and shame but also sees the woman in relation to the God who redeemed her through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. Love sees the value God places on unborn life and knows that He has a plan for both mother and child.

In 2 Kings 14:6, we are reminded of the Lord's command:

"Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children. nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers." To impose capital punishment, in the form of abortion, on the to do what God

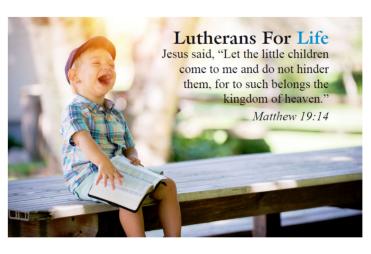
expressly forbids. It is to repeat the "godlessness" inherent in rape. Unlike nocent, defenseless child.

The fact that the mother was in no way If the value of human life is to have any responsible for the act that led to the meaning, then its value cannot depend child's conception does not remove the on, or be diminished by, the circumchild's right to life. The truly compas- stances that brought about that new sionate, loving solution is one that is human life. God maps out the tapestry both non-violent and life-giving. Posi- of life for each child, whether a child is tive, sensitive, and caring counseling the product of love and marriage, or the that encourages the nurture and protec- product of rape and incest. It's not a tion of the other innocent victim of rape question of when life begins. It is a or incest—the unborn child—can be part question of when love begins, and God's of the healing process.

Incest

tion that will not be cured or stopped by abortion. Abortion promises silence and the needs of the two human beings most makes it possible for the incest to conaffected—the mother and her unborn tinue. The more effective response to pregnancies resulting from incest is to deal with the environment in which the girl is being victimized. Aborting the girl's baby and then returning her to the family situation that caused the problem in the first place is no solution.

> Years after incest has stopped, victimized women report lingering pain and scars, but many cling to the promise in *It is available at cph.org*, Psalm 147:3 that God heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds. Victims of rape and incest often struggle for a long time with self-esteem, but many claim that what has helped them with the sense of degradation is entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. "He loves me just the way I am"



said one victim. "I don't have to be perfect or have to earn His love!" said another. "I am absolutely complete in Christ" wrote a third.

When Love Begins

love for each child begins in His mind and heart before they were even con-

Note: A good resource on the issue of rape and incest is Victims and Victors (David C. Reardon, Julie Maldmaa, and Amy Sobie, eds. [Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 2000]). This is a book where those who have experienced sexual assault speak out about their pregnancies, abortions, and children.

Reprinted from: "Grounded In God's Word: Commentaries on Life." Published by Concordia Publishing House.

UPCOMING EVENTS





October 3

7:00 pm Board of Elders

October 5

9:00 am Board of Christian Education 10:00 am Board of Children's Ministry

October 6

11:30 am Board of Evangelism Board of Youth Ministry 11:30 am 11:45 am Liturgical Dance Practice

5:00 pm PrayerTime

October 9

12:30 pm **Board of Preschool**

October 13—LWML Sunday

9:00 am Board of Christian Service 11:45 am Liturgical Dance Practice

October 15

7:00 pm Church Council Meeting

October 17

3:00 pm Nov. calendar updates & newsletter

articles due in office

6:30 pm Ladies Night Out (Red Lobster)

October 18

5:30 pm Preschool Fall Festival

October 19

9:00 am LWML Fall Rally (Zion) 9:30 am Board of Stewardship

October 20

11:45 am Liturgical Dance Practice

October 26

10:00 am Fall Fun Trick-or-Treating

October 27—Reformation Sunday

11:45 am Liturgical Dance Practice

October Weekly Events

Sun: 8:00 & 10:30 am | Worship (Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays) 9:15 am | Family Bible Hour 11:45 am | Confirmation Class

Tue: 10:00 am | Woman-to-Woman Bible Study

6:30 pm | Men's Bible Study 6:45 pm | Boy Scouts

7:00 pm | Women's Bible Study

Wed: 8:45 am | Preschool Chapel

10:00 am | Weight Watchers Meeting

11:15 am | Sit & Sew 7:00 pm | Choir Rehearsal

Thu: 9:45 am | Women's Bible Study

8:00 am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast

*If you're not sure or don't have a schedule already, please call the church office at (915) 833-1009 to verify if a specific event is being held that week.



Altar Care for October

8:00 a.m.: Gisela Lichon 10:30 a.m.: B.J. Schwab/Jane

Banister



Our Staff

Pastor:

Rev. Brian R. Bestian

Director of Children's Ministry:Kim Bestian

Director of Youth Ministry: Luz Soto

> Preschool Director: Marhel Cueva

Music Director/Organist: Ruth Ann Ostergren

> Office Administrator: Lynn Burchfield

Tender Care Nursery Attendant: Haleigh Gonzales

> Custodian: Lorena Rodriguez

Our Sunday Schedule

Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship: 9:00 a.m. Family Bible Hour: 9:15 a.m.



Articles for the November newsletter are due Thursday, October 17

