# APOSTLES LUTHERAIT CHURCH

7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061 | 804-693-9098 | www.apostles-elca.org



### SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.





#### **WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!**

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

#### RECONCILING in CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing** diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities. Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

#### **FOR PASTORAL CARE**

The Reverend Jay Serafin is serving as our part-time interim pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at <u>j80j84@msn.com</u> (preferred) or pastor.apostles@gmail.com. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

#### **PRAYGROUND**

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. We ask two things:

1) sit in the front pews near your children; 2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon. They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

#### **NAME TAGS**

**Please wear your nametag!** Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

#### **GATHERING**

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are a given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

#### PRELUDE AND SILENT PRAYER

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to **silence all cell phones.** 

#### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

#### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity,  $\pm$  one God, who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace.

#### Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection

Holy God,

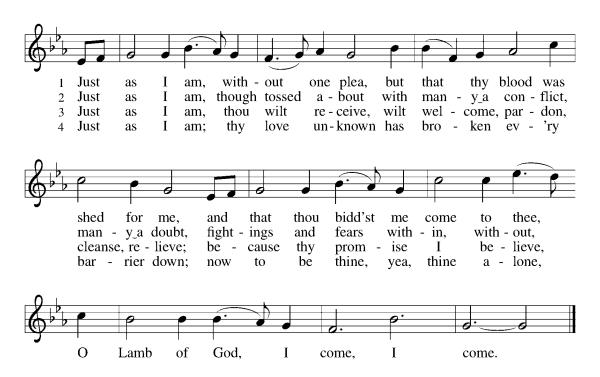
we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we spoil rather than steward your creation; we cause hurt though you call us to heal; we choose fear over compassion. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way of life. Amen.

Hear the good news: God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all may receive life. This promise is for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, + forgives you in Christ's name, and revives you in the Spirit's power.

Amen.

#### GATHERING HYMN ELW #592

#### "Just As I Am, without One Plea"



Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871

Music: WOODWORTH, William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868

#### **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

#### **K**YRIE



#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

#### WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Sit

#### FIRST READING

**GENESIS 12:1-4A** 

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

<sup>1</sup>The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

<sup>4a</sup>So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

Response after the First Lesson Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM PSALM 121

<sup>1</sup>I lift up my eyes <sup>|</sup> to the hills; from where is my <sup>|</sup> help to come?

<sup>2</sup>My help comes | from the Lord, the maker of heav- | en and earth.

<sup>3</sup>The Lord will not let your <sup>|</sup> foot be moved nor will the one who watches over you <sup>|</sup> fall asleep.

<sup>4</sup>Behold, the keep- | er of Israel will neither slum- | ber nor sleep; R

<sup>5</sup>the Lord watches <sup>|</sup> over you; the Lord is your shade at <sup>|</sup> your right hand;

6the sun will not strike | you by day, nor the | moon by night. <sup>7</sup>The Lord will preserve you <sup>1</sup> from all evil and will <sup>1</sup> keep your life.

<sup>8</sup>The Lord will watch over your going out and your | coming in, from this time forth for- | evermore. R

#### SECOND READING

**ROMANS 4:1-5, 13-17** 

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

<sup>1</sup>What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup>For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup>For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." <sup>4</sup>Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. <sup>5</sup>But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

<sup>13</sup>For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup>If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup>For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

<sup>16</sup>For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup>as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Response after the Second Lesson Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to John the third Chapter

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL JOHN 3:1-17

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⑦Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ®The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁰Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹0Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

<sup>11</sup>"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. <sup>12</sup>If I have told you about earthly things and you do not

believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup>And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup>"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

The gospel concludes:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

#### **SERMON**

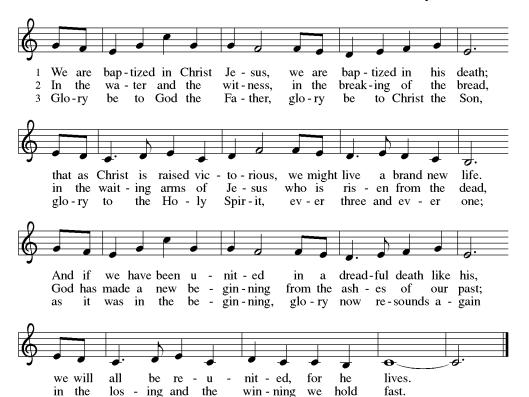
**PASTOR JAY SERAFIN** 

Silence is kept after the reflection.

#### HYMN OF THE DAY

#### **ELW #451**

#### "We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus"



end - ing. . . . . A

men.

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937 Music: OUIMETTE, John C. Ylvisaker Text and music © 1985 John C. Ylvisaker

in a

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song that has

#### **APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate. was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven. he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints. the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,

#### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words: Merciful God,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

#### SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We share a distanced sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**.

#### **MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Sit

#### **OFFERING**

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. To give online:

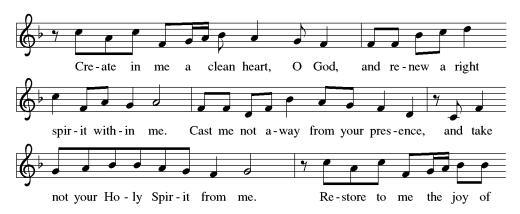
- + Visit <u>apostles-elca.org/contributions</u>
- + From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453

Please rise in body or in spirit

#### **CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING**

**ELW #186** 

"Create in Me a Clean Heart"





#### **OFFERING PRAYER**

God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

Amen.

#### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

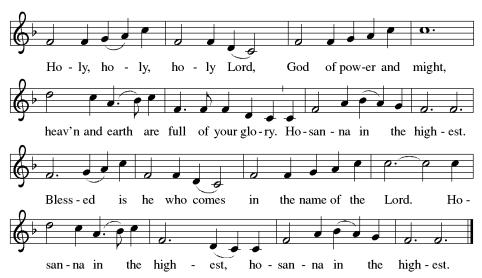
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The thanksgiving continues with the preface.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The thanksgiving continues.

... as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving concludes.

...we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

wiio tiespass agailist us,

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

#### **Invitation to Communion**

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

Sit

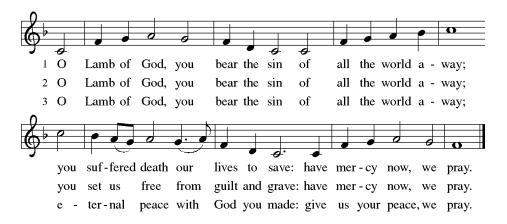
#### **COMMUNION**

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

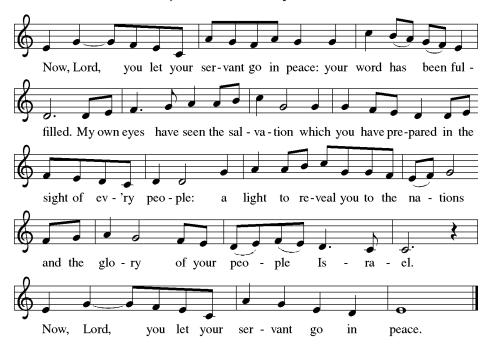
You will be invited to come forward to receive the elements. After receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Let Pastor Jay know if you need gluten free wafers.

If you do not wish to take communion, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing. Holy Communion are the gifts of God for the people of God.

#### **LAMB OF GOD**



After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands.



The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love.

Amen.

#### **SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

#### **BLESSING**

God, the giver of love, 

→ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

Amen.

#### **SENDING HYMN**

**ELW #796** 

"How Firm a Foundation"



Text: J. Rippon, A Selection of Hymns, 1787, alt. Music: FOUNDATION, Early American

#### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve in love.

Thanks be to God.

#### **P**OSTLUDE

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#### **WORSHIP LEADERS**

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Officiating Minister	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Accompanist	Janet Gomez	Janet Gomez
Acolyte	Jade Hawkins	Ray Scholz
Altar Care	Janet Gomez	Jennie Hawkins
Communion Bread	Irene Albert	Irene Albert
Greeter/Usher	Betsy Liljeberg	Jennie Hawkins
Lay Assisting Minister	Sue Turner	Linda Hodges
Lector	Ingrid Peterson	Teresa Grantham
Technology	Chris Hawkins	Chris Hawkins

#### SERVANTS FOR THE WEEK

	This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Gomez/Grimes	Albert/Runk
Tellers	B. Grimes/B. Liljeberg	B. Runk/R. Scholz

#### **MID-WEEK LENTEN PLANS**

For the Season of Lent on Wednesdays, we will have a soup and bread dinner at 6:00 PM followed by a Service of the Word worship service at 7:00 PM. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex to sign up to bring soup and bread – you are also welcome to bring a sandwich if you want.

#### **DEVOTIONS FOR LENT**

Devotions for Lent are available in the narthex – please help yourself.

#### **READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY**

First Reading: Exodus 17:1-7
Water from the rock in the wilderness

Psalm 95

Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation

Second Reading: Romans 5:1-11

Reconciled to God by Christ's death

Gospel: John 4:5-42

Baptismal image: the woman at the well

#### **HOUSE BLESSINGS**

As part of our Lenten journey this year, and as a way of becoming more familiar with the congregation and its members, **Pastor Jay invites you to invite him to visit you at your home and lead your family in a House Blessing.** 

We Lutherans have an occasional service called "The Blessing of a Dwelling" which involves offering prayers that the presence and light of God may dwell in your home and God's rich blessings may rest upon all who live and visit there. During the season of Lent, which begins at the end of the month, we will lift up House Blessings as a point of emphasis in our congregation's ministry, and Pastor Jay would welcome an invitation to share in this observance with you and your family.

All that is needed is our setting up an appointment together and your having a candle and a way to light it when he gets to your home. This service works in any type of dwelling and even may be modified for places of business. While this will be an emphasis during Lent, Pastor Jay is available at any time of the year, by appointment, to share with you in the blessing of your dwelling.

Give Pastor Jay a call and we can start planning this special service of asking God's blessings and grace to remain in the place which you call "home." Pastor Jay's telephone number is 570-205-7506.

#### FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

Please take a minute to sign up to provide flowers for our altar – you can make your own arrangements from your garden – if you need vases, we have them. The signup sheet is in the narthex. If you have any questions, please see Janet Gomez.

#### **FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION**

Pastor Jay will be offering "first communion" instruction for children and parents. There is a sign up sheet posted in the narthex for anyone interested in this instruction.

#### **2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES**

The company that provides our offering envelopes has experienced delays in getting orders shipped. They hope to ship the envelopes sometime in January. In the meantime, if you use offering envelopes, please just use a pew envelope and make sure your name and offering envelope number are on your check.

#### **EASTER LILIES**

Orders are being taken for Easter lilies to adorn the sanctuary on Easter – there is a signup sheet in the narthex – the cost is \$14. Please place your payment in the envelope – deadline to order is March 26<sup>th</sup>.

## REFLECTION FOR TODAY: QUESTIONS COME TO LIGHT (FROM SUNDAYS AND SEASONS)

What is it about the night that invites questions? As our head rests on the pillow and shadows stretch out on the bedroom wall, questions, like field mice, begin to emerge from the nooks and crannies of our mind. At first, the questions are utilitarian: Did someone let the dog out this evening? Are the kids' lunches packed for school? When am I going to get to the grocery store this week? And then, without warning, the questions morph: Is Grandma going to recover from this illness? Why are my prayers so short these days? Does Jesus really care about us—about me? At this point we know that night has truly descended. Truth uttered in darkness. Naked honesty feels much safer, much less exposed when light's reach seems a day way.

Maybe that is why we can relate to Nicodemus. For when did Nicodemus come to Jesus? By night! Though we can easily skip over the setting's description in this gospel encounter, it is so very important. With shadows dancing in the torchlight, Nicodemus makes his way to Jesus, beset by questions he can ask only under cover of darkness. Though the darkness is Nicodemus' security blanket, he cannot help himself. Like a moth fluttering in the night sky, Nicodemus is irresistibly drawn to the light. Not just any light: Jesus, the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome. As people filled with our own questions, we follow in the furtive footsteps of Nicodemus, falsely believing our naked honesty will remain hidden in the gloom of night. But the Spirit, through the light of Christ, calls us out from the shadows, and in fact, exposes us to the brilliance of God's love—a love that meets our questioning hearts with nothing less than life eternal.

#### PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, David Muse, Michael Schlemmer, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue and George Turner, and Jerry and Lena Woodlief

#### **OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Patricia Armentor, family of Sharon Bagley (friends of Judy Wright), Paul Bauer, Karen Bell (Pam Moore's sister), Jim Bible (friend of Nancy Wagner), Gisela Broughton (Karen Stark's mother), Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, the Clements family, Laura Clodfelter, Family of Kimberly Conine, Ben Davis (friend of Donna Ambrose), Tommy and Kathie Davis, Mary Divelbiss, Colton Elliot (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), Melissa Ethan, Laura Fleige (Janet Gomez's sister), Teresa Floersheim- Miller (Ingrid Peterson's mother), Michelle Fowler (Reida Avery's daughter), Trudy Gies (Betsy Liljeberg's niece) Steven Godwin (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), Jimmy and Fay Gray (Chris Hawkins' family), Shirley Grimes (Ben Grimes' mother), family of Shirlean Hackman, Mike Hall, Chaneice Hayden (Daniel Hayden), the Heaney family, Carl and Kaleb Hess, Adam Hewko (nephew of the Hansons), Aris Hibbs (friend of Ray Scholz), Diane Hill (friend of Nancy Wagner), Suzanne Kinkade (friend of Ellen Quirk), the Little Family, Marion Lucier, Lorraine Malkemus, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, **Jean McKee** (Lilly Frost's grandmother), **Sylvia Midgette** (grandmother of Krystle McMahan), Keith Morgan, Carol Pascale (Lynn Jaeger's mother), Patricia Patel (Spencer Hodges' daughter), Brad Person (Lilly Frost's uncle), Dick Peterson and his brother, Carol Schlemmer, James Schollian (friend of Nancy Wagner), Michael Scholz (nephew of Ray Scholz), Erin Seamonson (Lara Jaeger), Kathy Shackleford, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Judy Sowden, Linda Sutterfield, Dave Wagner (husband of Nancy), Cathy Walker (friend of Linda Hodges), Chuck Webb (Tina Britt's father), Makenzie Webb (niece of Tina Britt), Elizabeth and Steven White, Kitty Witty, Cory Woodlief, Jim and Carol Wolf, Jim Wright (Judy Wright's husband), Greg **Yvonovich** (friend of Margaret and Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

#### **OUR SPONSORED CHILDREN IN GUATEMALA**

Amayra, Hugolino and Manuela

#### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!** 

# THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES MARCH 5, 2023 - MARCH 12, 2023

**TODAY** 10:00 AM Worship Service

11:00 AM First Sunday Potluck – Mission

Trip to Guatemala

**7<sup>th</sup> Day Retreat Concludes** 

MONDAY 7:00 PM Men's AA

TUESDAY 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

7:00 PM Caring Community

7:00 PM Al-Anon

**WEDNESDAY** 4:00 PM – 8:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

6:00 PM Mid-Week Lent Soup and Bread

7:00 PM Lent Service of the Word

SATURDAY 6:30 PM Young and Sober

**SUNDAY** 10:00 AM Worship Service

Commissioning of Guatemala

Medical Mission Team

11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship

#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Tina Britt - March 11<sup>th</sup>

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