

Life Together



September 2026

A Loving Family, Growing in Faith, Sharing the Hope...of Christ!



Belief and Actions

What's the best thing about your church? No, think for a minute before going on. What is the best thing about your church?

Of course, there are many answers to this question. But when I ask friends, students and fellow clergy to name the five or 10 things they love most about their church, almost no one mentions that all the congregants think or believe the same, correct things. Favorite things usually are things, or experiences, or actions or physical matter. Yes, beliefs are important because they help shape what we do. And that is exactly the case: beliefs are important (and only important) because of how they shape embodied actions. August 23's lectionary texts proclaim the important linkage between belief and embodied actions.

We started with the Gospel reading. Jesus asked his chief disciple who he thought Jesus was. Peter's textbook answer—"You are the Messiah, the son of the living God"—led to a blessing but also a future responsibility. Peter is a rock, and Jesus will build his church on a mountain that will invade and overcome the gates of death (Matthew 16:18). That sounds like a clear belief to action pipeline to me!

But Jesus went further, giving Peter the keys to the kingdom. Whatever actions Peter forbade on earth would be forbidden from heaven, and whatever actions Peter permitted on earth would be permitted from heaven. A confession is all well and good, but then what do you teach people to do, and not do, with their bodies, not just their beliefs?

Some are to serve, some are to prophesy, some are to teach, some are to encourage, some are to give generously, some are to lead and some are to be professional cheerful mercy-givers.

Looking back to Isaiah 51, the linkage between beliefs and behavior is adamant, unyielding. The section is addressed to "you who pursue righteousness" and attempts to shore up their beliefs in God's unfailing protection and provision (1). In a time of despair, God-through-the-prophet made a powerful rhetorical move. Think back to Abraham and Sarah. Remember how they

Cont. on pg. 2

Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

2402 W Grandview Blvd
Erie, PA 16506
814.868.8685

Website:

www.abidinghopeerie.org

Office email:

ahadministrator@hotmail.com

Pastor Karen Parsh

Cell: 814-881-3266

pastorparsh@gmail.com

Church Hours:

Monday & Tuesday
9:30 to 3:30;

Wednesday 9:30 to 12:30

Sunday Worship: 9:30

Sunday Bible Study:
Resuming in Sept



Sunday services can be
viewed, live streamed, at
9:30 on Facebook or
anytime on the website.



Staff

Office Assistant:
Denise Miller

Coordinator of Music:
Sheryl Williams

Sexton: Jeff Neely



were almost dead with no heirs together? God changed their bodies (that “cutting of rock” and “shaping of quarry” language is meant to be anatomically suggestive) so they could have a child in their old age. And just as God delivered Sarah and Abraham, bodily, from childlessness, God’s strong arms will judge and deliver the people again (5). Then the Lord will make the wilderness like Eden, and the Aravah will be like God’s own garden.

In the psalm, we also see the unification of belief and embodied action. The psalmist speaks of singing, bowing down and giving thanks with all his heart. Why? Again, God’s embodied salvation—God’s strong right hand has saved the psalmist from enemies ([Psalm 138:7](#)). God doesn’t abandon the works of God’s hands!

In the letter to the Romans, Paul insists that beliefs must be accompanied by diverse actions performed by a diverse body of believers, together making up the body of Christ on earth. After the renewing of our minds, our embodied living is to be a gift to God and the world. Some are to serve, some are to prophesy, some are to teach, some are to encourage, some are to give generously, some are to lead and some are to be professional cheerful mercy-givers ([12:5-8](#)). This last one I would really like to see in our congregations: someone insisting that we all give each other mercy after slights. But perpetual mercy without leadership and encouragement to fix abusive systems will just prolong problems. We need everyone working together. Belief is a good starting point, but it must not be an ending point!

Our favorite things about church—and the things that Jesus insists that his church are to be about—start with belief and continue into holy action for the sake of God and the world!

About the Author: [CORY DRIVER](#)

Cory Driver is the director of L.I.F.E. (Leading the Integration of Faith and Entrepreneurship) at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. His book [God, Gender and Family Trauma: How Rereading Genesis can be a Revelation](#) was released in March 2025 by Fortress Press.



Prayer Shawl Gatherings Ladies meet for prayer, good conversation, knitting or crocheting shawls, prayer squares, or lap robes for the homebound. Start a new project or complete a piece you’ve started, but not quite finished. Experience not necessary, yarn and instruction available to all. The group will meet at 12 noon Monday, September 14th and 28th. (The 2nd and 4th Monday this month due to Labor Day being Sept 7th.)



Picnic and Concert: Lutherans and Food go hand in hand, and our Abiding Hope Family proved this again at the picnic August 16. A great turnout, fabulous selection of food, great cook Rich Filson, laughter and sharing equals an enjoyable time had by all. To top off the afternoon, Flagship Steel Drums, performed in the church. A toe tapping, sing along hour plus was enjoyed by members and others. We are Blessed! Thanks to all for the great dishes, the extra help in the kitchen and to the cleanup crew. *Analee Cree*



Pastor Karen Update: Pastor Karen is doing well recuperating at home from her shoulder replacement surgery. She has a follow-up appointment with her doctors on August 28th. Watch for updates. Also watch your emails for dates for Sunday Bible Study and ZOOM Bible Study to resume.



Council Recap - August 11, 2026

Bishop Papson joined us for the first part of the meeting, as well as several members of the congregation. The main topic was keeping Abiding Hope doors open. Pastor Parsh has spoken about retiring, our "rainy day fund" has decreased to \$21,000, decline in attendance, increase in average age of members, no children, **YET** we continue to provide outreach into our community. There are organizations that use our building weekly and we are home to the Kearsarge Food Pantry, plus our building is new and accessible to all. The time to start thinking and taking action to keep our congregation alive is **NOW**. Here are three possibilities.

1. Consolidation- 2 churches come together, new name, new ID number with the government
2. Merger - One merges into the other - deciding on a new name
3. Yoking - Shared ministry - Share a pastor - Keep all things separate - Each one keeps their building

It was an hour and a half discussion. The number of people entering the seminary has declined and right now, **41 of the 70 churches in our synod are without a pastor**. The need for lay worship leaders is increasing.

- Our constitution needs to be updated, finding that medical leave is not included and only vacation stated in pastoral contract.
- Last year the Kearsarge Food Pantry received \$550.00 from the Crop Walk, far more than what we gave
- A motion was made and passed to donate \$300 to The Flagship Steel Drums for playing on August 16
- A motion to pay Pastor Karen for her 4 weeks' vacation and up to another 6 weeks of medical leave was made as well as paying another week of planned vacation in November.

We welcome comments and questions and have 2 positions open on council, as well as still seeking a Financial Secretary. Next meeting is September 8 at 6:30.

Respectfully submitted by *Analee Cree* - Council Secretary



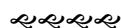
Please keep in your prayers: The family and friends of Don Fuller. Also, the David Linder and Barry & Kim Ayers families, Pat Kerr, Joan Doehrel, Sharron Sontheimer, Connie Kerr-Vogt, Kim Sandhold, Pastor Karen Parsh, Cheryl Hicks, Trudy Mueller, Christine Petrone, Ed & Jeanne Tropper, Gilda & Anthony, Cindy & Rich Filson, Dick & Diana Stoker, Harry & Susan Speakman, Kathy Sinnott, Maury & Linda Allen, Damian & Marcia Santabene, Don & Donna Holder and Little Library visitors.

Please contact the church office, 814-868-8685 ahadministrator@hotmail.com or Rick Penn at 814-737-9974, with Prayer List requests or updates.



Additional Prayers Needed: Kim and Barry Ayers - Don Morey's daughter. They had a fire and am guess lost everything. June said the Red Cross and their insurance company have been working with them.

The David Linder Family. This is Jo's boss in Idaho. Lost everything in a fire. There is a "Go Fund Me" opportunity that can be found on Jo Zeimet's Facebook page.



Prayer Warriors: Wednesday, September 16 from 1-3:00, the sanctuary will be open for prayer and meditation as we silently pray for the many needs of our families and friends, church family neighborhood, community, country, and world. Please join us in prayer anytime during these hours, even if you cannot come to the sanctuary. Our prayers can be a powerful means of serving God as He encourages us to "pray constantly". Please consider being a Prayer Warrior...



Little Free Library: I am overwhelmed beyond words by the extreme generosity of our congregation—your donations for educational packets have met the need for at least 50 more to be created and offered to the families in our neighborhood. Our library visitors have greatly increased, and it is a joy to see children selecting educational packages of writing tablets/workbooks/readers along with crayons/colored pencils and decorated pencils with sharpeners to enhance their continued academic success. If you contributed, God knows who you are and you will be repaid ten-fold for your support of our neighborhood children and families. God bless you! Blessings and Gratitude, Connie



Little Jesus Project: An easy way to be an Ambassador for Christ is to leave a Little Jesus in a public place to be found by someone passing by! It may be the first introduction to Jesus someone may have! They are located in a basket under the monitor in the Narthex—help yourself and leave at ATM machines, gas pumps, restaurants, park benches, libraries! We all need a little Jesus!



Dear Pastor Karen and our Friends at Abiding Hope,

Greetings from Kiel, Germany, where we arrived home safely on 8/13!

What a JOY it was to be with you this summer! The kids and I were so encouraged by the beautiful time of worship and fellowship we shared together. We were grateful for the gift of being in the same place and time, if only for a few hours!



Thank you for the generous gift you gave in support of our family's ministry in Germany. You all continue to go above and beyond in your faithfulness to the gospel. We are deeply encouraged by your financial partnership as well as your continued and faithful covering of prayers. We are your ambassadors here in Kiel, seeking to build, encourage and strengthen the church in partnership with you!

Our family has recovered from jetlag, and the girls are already in their second week of school! It is good to be back "home," though we cherish the many good memories we made with family and friends during our summer in the States.

As we settle now into life in Germany and prepare for fall ministry, know we are thinking of you. We carry you in our hearts and will remember you in our prayers. May the peace of Christ be with you always, as you seek to follow him to Erie, Kiel, and to the ends of the earth.

Love in Christ,

Stephanie, Phillip and family

City Mission Donations/Bethany Outreach/Trinity Center/Chosen

I made 3 trips in August to the City Mission thanks to your donations. Personal care items and men's clothing were received with many thanks from the mission. The hope is we keep this going. Again, if you have money for personal items through your insurance left, think City Mission. Clothing, mostly men size large, is in high demand. Yet during one drop off, 2 women came in to make shower appointments and did not have clean clothes to wear after.



This month I took 2 deliveries of donations to Bethany. Always received with appreciation. The leftover pop from Bingo was also taken to them, as a treat for the volunteers. They are located on 11th and Peach Street.

A drop off of clothing was also made to Holy Trinity. When Pastor Harbaugh was contacted, sincere thanks and appreciation were expressed. The need continues for food and clothing at Holy Trinity. They are located at 643 West 17th Street - Little Italy.

Gently used shoes were taken to Chosen. They were thrilled. Remember this is a worldwide Christian organization that also takes medical equipment. You can also obtain medical equipment/needs at their location 3638 West 26th.

Keep all these donations coming, they are needed and appreciated - Thank you - *Analee Cree*



Boscov Friends and Family

Once again, we have the saving coupons for this event on October 21. Buy one for yourself and your friends. Only \$5 and you're going to save that on your first purchase. Good even on sale items! Remember, the \$5 coupon cost comes back to AHLC. See Analee or Denise to shop your heart out and SAVE \$\$\$\$\$.



Crop Walk: The 51st Crop Walk will take place September 27. This walk fights local and worldwide hunger. The Kearsarge Food Pantry gets funds, not based on what Abiding Hope raises, but the total collected. Interested in walking or donating, see Analee.



Altar Flowers: Arrangements have increased (1st time in over 15 yrs) to **\$25.00 each**. Sign-up sheet/request forms with additional information on the table in the narthex.



Receiving Communion: If it is a challenge for you to come forward to receive communion, please alert the usher and you will be served communion at your seat.





Prayer Shawl Gatherings

SPECIAL SEPT MEETING DATES:
SEPT 14 + 28 @ 12 NOON
AT ABIDING HOPE

ALL ARE WELCOME!



Back-to-school will soon be here. Plans are set to once-again offer our families much loved and anticipated workbook packets with work book, writing tablet, crayons, pencils and sharpener.

Take a Book
Share a Book

If you can donate to this project (Dollar Tree is a great location), please leave donations in the Heritage Room Library basket.

Little Free Library
© Abiding Hope parking lot ~ Corner of W Grandview & Pacific



Monthly KAFP Food Drive

Let's Share & Care
Join us helping families in need!

September Donation: Egg Noodles

Each month donate much needed food staples so that all our families will receive these items.

Thank you for donating
Abiding Hope Lutheran Church
Temple Anshe Hessed
ABIDING HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Hope

Drop-off location:
2402 W Grandview Blvd.
For more information:
www.abidinghopeerie.org



ERIE UNION CLUB OF ERIE PENN.

ladies night out

UNION CLUB OF ERIE
3828 WASHINGTON ST.
(FORMERLY SAGA CLUB)
THURSDAY ~
SEPTEMBER 17, 2026 @ 5:30

RSVP in the narthex or by calling Nancy. Let us know if you need a ride - carpool leaves Ahlc at 5:00.

Abiding Hope
Lutheran Church
www.abidinghopeerie.org



Men's Night Out

ROYAL CHOPSTIX
ASIAN CUISINE

NOTE!!!! New weeknight!
Thursday September 17th 6:30pm

All are Welcome!
Guys: Bring a Friend!

3444 West Lake Road
Erie, PA
RSVP by Tuesday the 15th



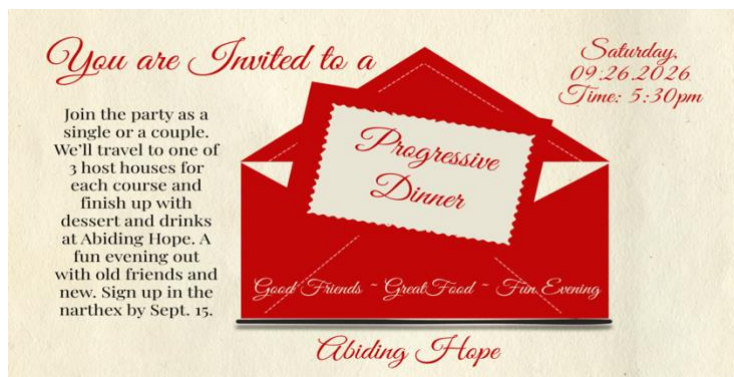
You're Invited to the Upcoming
TOWN HALL MEETING

Join us for an open discussion with church leaders on our current and future plans. We'll be sharing updates on the Erie Conference Shared Ministry Project. Let your thoughts be heard. Bring it to this meeting. Let's work together toward an exciting tomorrow at Abiding Hope Lutheran Church.

Sunday
September 13, 2026
11 am - following worship
AHLIC Sanctuary

MEETINGS PLANNED QUARTERLY
BY YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL

www.abidinghopeerie.org



You are Invited to a

Join the party as a single or a couple. We'll travel to one of 3 host houses for each course and finish up with dessert and drinks at Abiding Hope. A fun evening out with old friends and new. Sign up in the narthex by Sept. 15.

Progressive Dinner

Good Friends - Great Food - Fun Evening

Abiding Hope

Saturday, 09.26.2026
Time: 5:30pm



Free Health Care Services

All are welcome. No id required.
First come, first served.

DENTAL - VISION - MEDICAL
Sat. Sept 12 and 13 @ 6am
ECAT Wayne
650 East St., Erie, PA 16503
Learn More: ramusa.org - (865)579-1530

From Pastor Karen: Many Thanks To All of You for

your prayers, cards, calls, visits, food offerings and expressions of Christian concern and love... You have made a considerable difference in my recovery – and my life, for which I am truly grateful.



I absolutely love being your pastor but was really surprised at how exhausted I was going into my shoulder surgery... and then going to Hamot for a 9-hour ER stay to deal with some outrageous swelling issues... Whew!!! To make things more complicated, my beloved Delilah thought my new hearing aids were peanuts and happily gobbled them up, leaving me fairly deaf for almost 10 days...

But all is not woe... conversations with dear friends, the bright sun, lots of rest, and deep / and precious chats with God, my family and friends - have given me new perspective and healing from the raw wounds of ongoing grief and exhaustion.

September arrives with my mostly renewed energy and marks my 40th year of ministry – 20 years as Deacon and 20 years as Pastor – both callings for which I am truly grateful, and which I intend to continue for as long as I am able. *Pastor Karen*

BECAUSE YOU ASKED... What role does the **MUTUAL MINISTRY TEAM** play in our church structure?

For the past 5 years, these individuals have been trusted advisors for my pastoral priorities and needs – especially sharing concerns regarding our posted prayer list. They have spent umpteen hours imagining and critiquing possible events which could spice up our mutual church experience, and they have routinely considered a host of great events and connections with our friends at New Hope Presbyterian, the Jewish Temple, and the community at large.

Because we meet weekly, we can keep our eyes on the evolving events, outreach and in-reach of our church. We report to Church Council which meets once a month. This committee has been especially helpful addressing the needs of some of the committees that are currently not active. *Pastor Karen*

KAFP NEEDS A VOLUNTEER for cutting boxes and other odd jobs at the Food Pantry. Approximately 3hrs. (+/-) on Thursday, twice a month. Contact Rich Filson 814.460.8229 for more information or show up at the next KAFP, Thursday, September 10, 9:00a. We guarantee you'll have a good time while serving our neighbors.

KAFP is doing well and currently in a good place financially thanks to your donations – which are always welcome and will help to keep us that way. With harvest season coming up we hope to purchase lots of fresh produce for our neighbors.

Rich Filson-Director



Sept. Birthdays

9/6 Brian Gresh
9/7 Carolyn Mariotti
9/15 Damian Santabene
9/25 Dick Stoker
9/26 Brenda Huth
9/26 Lois Kuhns
9/26 Diana Stoker
9/27 Eileen Camarata
9/29 Barb Paris

Sept. Anniversaries

9/4 Bill & Irene
Overmoyer 32 yrs.
9/20 Dick & Diana Stoker
57 yrs.
9/20 Rich & Bernadette
Plymyer
9/23 Bill & Janet Getson
9/27 Damian & Marcia
Santabene ~ 51 yrs.

Abiding Hope 2026 Church Council

President

Andy Saska

Vice-President

open

Secretary

Analee Cree

Treasurer

Rick Penn

Financial Secretary

Cindy Filson/Open

Council Members

Pastor Karen Parsh

Cindy Filson

Lois Kuhns

Jo Zeimet

Rich Filson

Diana Stoker

Barb Ruhlman

Join Us for an AHLC Progressive Dinner ~ Saturday, Sept 26th

What is it? A fun way to share food and fellowship with others. It is a "traveling dinner". First, you need to sign up on the sheet in the narthex. Make sure you check the appropriate column if you need a ride or would like to be a host house.

What is a host house? It is one stop of three courses at different peoples' houses. You will be selected to prepare either an appetizer, soup/salad or main course for your group of 6 to 8. There can be (and we hope there will be) more than one group of 6 to 8. All the guests in your group will go to the first host's house and enjoy appetizer and appropriate beverages and get to know the members of your group. Then you will travel to the second host's house and continue the meal with soup or salad and learn more about your dinner companions. On to the third host's house for the main course and more fellowship. Finally, all the groups will gather at the church for dessert and a chance to share their experience with the other groups.

Do you have to cook something? Only those that sign up to be a host will cook. If you want to attend but don't want to host, super.

Who can participate? This event is not for couples only. Single people can attend. The groups are six to eight people not four couples. Transportation will be provided for those who need it.

The deadline for signing up is September 15th. This provides enough time for the hosts in each group to plan the menu together and each host to prepare for the evening.

Each participant will be given the names addresses and phone numbers of the host homes and what course they are serving.

If you have additional questions, contact Penny, Nancy, Jo or Carolyn for more information.



WELCA Retreat Registration – Sept 25th – 27th

The 2026 Retreat committee invites all women of the ELCA to join us at Lutherlyn for the Fall Convention September 25th -27th. Our online form for registration is available below for ladies interested in attending the retreat. This year's them is "Stop Listen Hear" with the bible verse Mark 4:23. "If you have ears to hear, then hear!" NRSVUE.

Southwestern PA Synod's website: <https://www.swpasynod.org/ministries/welca>

Online Registration form: <https://forms.gle/cbRqRFaJaDp8xpVj6>



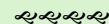
Financial Secretary Position Remains Open

The position, currently held by Cindy Filson, requires computer skills and approximately 2 to 3 hours' time per week, much of it can be done from home. Training is available. Please see any council member if interested. Thank you, Cindy, for your tremendous dedication to AHLC.



AH Income History

July 26 – August 25



2026	\$10,365
2025	\$8,433
2024	\$7,844

Care and Share discussion group, led by Damian Santabene, continues in September on Thursdays at 1. All are welcome to join this interesting and meaningful discussion group.



September 2026

2402 W Grandview Blvd. Erie, PA
814-868-8685 ~ www.abidinghopeerie.org



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Aug 30 14th Sunday after Pentecost World Hunger 5 th Sunday Donate Today!	31 Al-Anon 7:30	1 M Lessons 4-5:30	2 Tops 9-11	3 Care & Share Group 1:00pm	4  M Lessons 8:30-12:30 Overeaters 10:30	5
6 15th Sunday after Pentecost Traditional Worship 9:30 with Barb Dennison LWL	7  Office Closed Al-Anon 7:30	8 Church Council 6:30 M Lessons 4-5:30	9 Tops 9-11	10 KAFF 9-11:30 Care & Share Group 1:00pm	11	12 M Lessons 8:30-12:30 Overeaters 10:30
Happy Anniversary All ~ 10 Years in our New Church!						
13 16th Sunday after Pentecost Blended Worship 9:30 with Rev. Sara Cogsil LWL Choir Rehearsal TBD Town Hall Meeting 11:00	14 Prayer Shawls 12noon Al-Anon 7:30	15 M Lessons 4-5:30	16 Tops 9-11 Prayer Warriors 1-3	17 Care & Share Group 1:00pm LNO 5:30 @ Union Club of Erie MNO 6:30 @ Royal Chopstix	18 	19 M Lessons 8:30-12:30 Overeaters 10:30
20 17th Sunday after Pentecost Blended Worship 9:30 with Rev Ken Thompson 9am & 10:45 choir rehearsals	21 Al-Anon 7:30	22  M Lessons 4-5:30	23 Tops 9-11 Newsletter deadline	24 KAFF 9-11:30 Care & Share Group 1:00pm	25	26 Progressive Dinner 5:30 M Lessons 8:30-12:30 Overeaters 10:30
27 18th Sunday after Pentecost Blended Worship 9:30 Rick Penn LWL 9am & 10:45 choir rehearsals Crop Walk 1PM	28 Prayer Shawls 12noon Al-Anon 7:30	29 M Lessons 4-5:30	30 Tops 9-11	During the September 13th Town Hall Meeting following the service, we will be sharing an update on the Shared Ministry project. The bishop is currently piloting two options. Hope you can attend. Rick		

A Loving Family, Growing in Faith, Sharing the Hope...of Christ!

Music Notes: It is hard to believe that September is here already, and now there are several upcoming musical events to put on your calendars! This month, Traditional Worship with organ accompaniment will take place on September 6th, followed by Blended Worship for the rest of the month. Our first Choir meeting and rehearsal will take place on Sept. 13th after morning worship, and the Choir will continue regular Sunday rehearsals each Sunday after worship.

Since last month's newsletter, we have received some requests to sing familiar hymns, which have been incorporated into the schedule for September!

The Choir has also received two invitations to perform in the coming months. On October 17th, Luther Memorial Church will be hosting **Sing Democracy 250** for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and will feature the Presque Isle ProMusica as orchestral accompaniment to a chorus recruited from all over the County. Together they will perform two new works commissioned for the occasion: **Redeem the Dream** by Brandon A. Boyd and **US** by Michael Bussewitz-Quarm, as well as other patriotic pieces. Please visit the Sing Democracy website: <https://www.singdemocracy250.org> for more information!

Finally, the Choir has been invited to perform Joel Raney's Christmas Cantata, "**Love!**" with the choirs of Our Lady of Peace Church in mid-December and early January. More information about both of these performances will be coming soon, so stay tuned!

Blessings to all,

Sheryl Williams ~ Coordinator of Music ~ sheryl4013@yahoo.com ~ (814) 882-2830

