



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

February 2017

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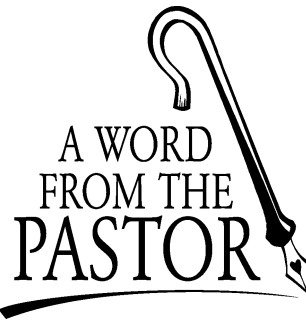
Needing Light

We are in our Epiphany season. In Epiphany, we look at those first things that are revealed in Jesus. We look for the first spiritual light that shines through him. St. John declared that in Jesus was life and that life was the light of all people. Then a little later he added that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it. The assumption is that we need spiritual light from Jesus.

Our need for spiritual light has some parallels to our need for physical light. Our world has physical light through the sun's light. The sun's light gives us the heat we need and allows plants to produce food. We need the sun's light just to survive. We need also the sun's light to thrive. Recently, I went to California and had a chance to walk through the giant coastal redwoods called sequoias. These giants grow over 300 feet tall out of their need for light. In looking at the redwoods' tree rings, scientist discovered that the width of the rings (the sign that they are doing well) depends more on light than on whether they had lots or little water. They thrive because of the light. I can relate to the redwoods need for physical light. I know that I have more positive energy when I have more natural sunlight. In this dark season, I look forward to increasing physical light.

We too long for spiritual light – the sense that God is shining around us and in us. Light reveals things. Spiritual light can reveal what we need to change and why. Spiritual light can reveal things like who we are and where we need to go. Spiritual light can reveal where God's Spirit is working and how we fit into that. In this Epiphany season, meet your need for spiritual light. Just as the physical light is increasing with the lengthening days, so God's light in Jesus is increasing.

Pastor Dan



Faith and Health Connected

February is heart health month, you will see many different events and learning opportunities show up in this month. Be familiar with your physical, emotional and spiritual heart. Know the numbers that matter like blood pressure, cholesterol, and count your blessings.

One of the things that affect your heart health is your salt intake, [also known as sodium]. When there's extra sodium in your bloodstream, it pulls water into your blood vessels, increasing the total amount (volume) of blood inside your blood vessels. With more blood flowing through your blood vessels, blood pressure increases. It's like turning up the water supply to a garden hose — the pressure in the hose increases as more water is blasted through it. Over time, high blood pressure may overstretch or injure the blood vessel walls and speed the build-up of gunky plaque that can block blood flow. The added pressure also tires out the heart by forcing it to work harder to pump blood through the body. Get to know the "salty six", you will be surprised to see what is on this list of high sodium foods. Check out the American Heart Association website <http://www.heart.org/>

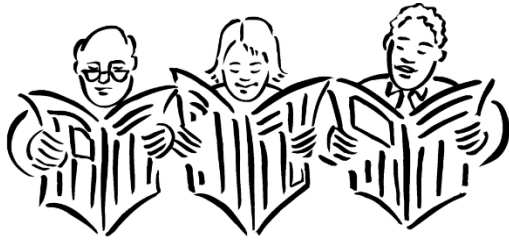
Also during this month, take time to look at your spiritual heart. Find the peace in the love of your Savior, share that peace with your loved ones and neighbors. Count your blessings and feel your heart sing with joy.

"Guard your heart for it is the wellsprings of life."
Prov.4:23

RE•FORMATION
THEN • NOW • ALWAYS

500th Anniversary
of the Reformation

On October 29, 2017, we will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, but over the course of this year, there will be a series of events, classes, and materials made available to our Ascension family to give us a better understanding of the reformation. From now through early March, our Pastors will be leading a very interesting video discussion series between services in the Ascension library on the historical events that led to the Reformation.



What's Happening

The next session of Discover Ascension will be beginning on February 5 between services. If you are interested in becoming a member of Ascension or would just like to know more about Ascension please plan on attending these sessions.

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 12, 2017 and will be held between services. Come and join in the fellowship and see what our CPC has planned for 2017.

Ash Wednesday service is March 1. We will be continuing our soup suppers and Lenten worship services the following weeks leading up to Holy Week.

“A Community of Grace, Called to Serve.”

Peace be with you, Greg Gulliksen, President CPC
637-9313 / greg.gulliksen@gmail.com

Congregational Meeting

The annual Congregational Meeting for Ascension will be held on Sunday, February 12, 2017 at 9:30 am. Reports by each Board and the audited 2016 financials will be presented. The CPC will be making a recommendation to the congregation on how to spend any additional funds from 2016. All are highly encouraged to attend and see what your Congregation Planning Council is planning for 2017. Be watching the worship bulletins for further information.

Agenda

Call to Order
Opening Devotions
Roll Call of Voting Members
Approval of Congregational Meeting Minutes
 • December 4, 2016
Capital Campaign Update
2016 Budget Surplus
Presentation of the Annual Report
Approval of Synod Assembly Delegates
Closing Prayer

The January 10 CPC meeting included the following actions and discussions:

- Pastor Daniel Smith led devotions from the book of Luke and asked how do we react when Jesus talks about the lowly in society.
 - Pastor Daniel said an eight week video on the reformation has begun. Video recordings of sermons will soon be available on our website.
 - Board Directors gave brief updates on current activities and future plans.
 - Rex Rudy reported giving was down for the months of November and December. He reported on the December financials and the Fiscal Year 2016. Details will be reported in the Annual Report.
 - Donna Crump gave an update on the strategic Planning efforts. The committee will be gathering information and be forming a recommendation of a firm in the near future.
 - Greg Gulliksen discussed where we are with the capital campaign and how we will move towards finishing the work associated with the capital campaign.
 - Rex noted he had been working with Teresa on how to apply budgeted monies for her health insurance. Elisa Thompson and Doris Stokes had also been part of the process.
 - Rex said the budget surplus for 2016 would be around \$1,400. Council discussed the items set aside for any surplus to be used for. Council will be making a recommendation of what the surplus funds will go towards at the annual meeting.
 - Rex proposed two members of the audit committee and said he was looking for a third. Those approved were Christine Millard and Eddie Calderon. The audit will be 21 January, 2017.
 - The CPC approved the following nominees to be presented to the congregation for approval as Ascension's Synod Assembly delegates. Donna Crump, Jerry Dollar, and Dennis Bagenstos.
 - Greg noted the Congregational Annual Meeting will be held on February 12 between services.
 - Pastor Daniel Smith led closing with prayers and the Lord's Prayer.
 - The approved minutes of recent meetings are posted on the kiosk in the Fellowship Hall and are available in electronic format from the church office.
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Capital Campaign Update

As of this report we had received \$317,127 in contributions. Thank you for all who have completed your pledges and to those who continue to contribute to your pledge. Now that we have completed the south end improvements your continued support is still very important to the overall success of our capital campaign. The remaining work includes 1) reimbursing the church cash reserves where money was borrowed to move forward with the south end work, 2) accumulate monies to fund the needed renovations in the sanctuary such as new carpet, new window blinds, wall patching & painting, new alter lighting, and then 3) to reduce our mortgage with the remaining contributions from pledges to the \$464,000 capital campaign.



Notes from the Music Room

In February, as we approach Lent, our country celebrates African-American History Month; this pairing makes me think about one thing: spirituals. When brought to America, slaves' native languages and religions were forbidden. Yet, slave owners couldn't entirely force out the music that had been a part of daily life in Africa. So the rhythms and the call-and-response form of many African songs combined with European music traditions to form the spiritual. When slaves were forced to convert to Christianity, they felt a particular connection to the stories of the Hebrews' struggles, enslavement, and journey to freedom. Music was a natural method of expression for their faith ("Were You There, When They Crucified My Lord?"), as well as their longing for freedom ("Go Down, Moses"), longing for home ("Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"), expressions of lament and hopelessness ("Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child"), but also for joyful outbursts ("This Little Light of Mine"). You can find 14 African-American spirituals in our ELW hymnal, five of them in the Lent and Holy Week section. Music gave voice to the slaves' faith, suffering, and joyful hope. I hope that music inspires and comforts you through these cold winter months and the upcoming Lenten reflection and contemplation.

Megan

~~US & THEM~~ WE:

2015 – *"Milk And Honey."*

2016 – *"Which Came First, The Chicken Or The Egg?"*

2017 – ????? HA! Wouldn't you like to know???

Stay tuned, because our 2017 World Hunger Campaign is about to ramp up again. We will be bringing back the Lenten Coloring Contest with new and improved guidelines, and of course, those fabulous prizes! (If you're not sure how fabulous, just ask Pastor Dan, Aimee Calderon and Emma Hindley, our 2016 winners!)

Thanks, Ascension, for your amazing history of support of this campaign to help ease world hunger. We look forward to another great year with you in 2017!

Sharla Saunders – Director, Board of Social Outreach

Create A Legacy



*Ascension Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund*

**God's People Using God's Resources
to Fulfill God's Calling**

Gift's-Wills-Property-Insurance-Memorials-Estates

Legacies Created

Thanks and God's blessings to the following donor(s) for gifts to the Endowment fund:

Phil & Sandy Trent - anniversary

Leave a Legacy

You can "Leave a Legacy" by leaving a lasting gift through the wise distribution of your accumulated wealth. Your funds or possessions can do double duty and work for you during your lifetime. Then they can go to care for family beneficiaries for a period of years and finally help spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the many areas of ministry, mission, and education in your local church or church at large. For more information, contact a member of the Endowment Committee, one of the Pastors, or visit Ascension's web site: www.ascensioncos.org

SUP 2016

Deepening Faith & Friendships

Join us for **SUP** on Thursday February 23, 12pm – 1:30pm. Topic: In-Sight: Gleanings from the Johnson Institute Program of Spiritual Growth, presented by Elisa Thompson, Jim DeLoughry and Deacon Mary. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share, main dish provided.

We hope you can join us for February's SUP. Our prayer as we go through this certificate program, with your help, is to encourage all to live into their age faithfully and passionately. We hope our gleanings from the program along with your feedback, may provide inspiration that stretches and strengthens your faith in Christ, cultivates your God-given gifts, and deepens your sense of call to serve God and walk with others on their faith journey.

Middle School Youth Plan “Show and Tell” with Ascension’s Adults

Attention all older adults: The Middle School Sunday School is hosting an intergenerational show and tell on February 19th, 9:15 a.m for everyone ages 60+.

Bring an object from your past or a story to tell from when you were a teenager. The youth will ask questions about your past and your thoughts on the future. We hope to get to know each and every one of you.

RUTH CIRCLE

All ladies of Ascension are invited to join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 9:30am for fellowship and casual Bible Study from the WELCA *Gather* magazine. Our study comes from Galatians 2, entitled Christian Faith and Christian Freedom, *Children of God through Faith*. Hostess on February 9 is Dorothea Mazigian. If you are new to Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us! Copies of the study are available in the church office.



Ruth Circle



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Funeral Luncheon Committee Co-Directors

When an Ascension member passes away and the funeral is held at our church, we offer the grieving family a luncheon following the funeral ceremony. We have many volunteers who provide salads and desserts for these luncheons. We are in need of new Co-Directors for our Funeral Luncheon Committee to oversee these luncheons and coordinate required food items with our volunteers. We use Co-Directors so if one is unavailable to support the luncheon, we have the other Co-Director to lead our group of volunteers. We've been averaging about four funerals per year and normally they occur on weekday afternoons. If you are interested in becoming one of our Co-Directors, please contact John Hayes at blazehayes@aol.com or at (719) 572-1052.

Communion Bread Bakers

Each week, an Ascension member bakes the unleavened bread for Communion. It would be nice to have a few more volunteers to spread the load. If you are interested, please contact Val Rudy for more information: rudyvp@comcast.net (719) 577-4637.



Ascension Lutheran Church and the Board of Lay Ministry are grateful to continue partnering with PILLAR Institute for Lifelong Learning in the New Year! Our first workshop of the year is Wednesday February 1, 9:30 am - 11:30 am at Ascension. The course is Dementia and Caregiving (Course 1025) presented by Kent Matthews. Another workshop this Spring is Course #1193 on Medicare ABC&D, a two-part course on Wednesday April 5 and Thursday April 6, from 9:30 am – 11:30 am

To Register, please call PILLAR at [719.633.4991](tel:719.633.4991). This course is FREE for ALC members, with a food can donation. Friends welcome!

Children's Learning Center Children Blessed by Ascension's Generosity

The CLC would like to send out a big **THANK YOU** to everyone who made this past Christmas such a wonderful time for the CLC children and their families. The children enjoyed the slippers made by the Knotty Knitters. They wore them the rest of the day and were so happy to show them to their families at pick up time.

On the 21st of December, Santa came to visit and provided each of the enrolled children with a stocking. All 70 stockings were made by Sally Walker from felt and ribbon that had belonged to her mother. Sally cut out and sewed each one. The stockings were then decorated by the Church youth and other members of the Church. The congregation continued to show their caring for the work being done in the CLC by generously providing a gift card and small presents which were stuffed into each of the stockings. In addition Bob and Elaine Kelly provided a beautiful ornament for the children to hang on their trees.

A huge thank you to Eric and Kate for helping Santa get safely to the center and allowing the children to have an opportunity to see him during his busy season!

Thank you all for the support you show the CLC each day and as always remember you are always welcome!

Board of Stewardship Update – Your Stew Crew Hard at Work

Stewardship is about being grateful, responsible stewards of the gifts we receive from God. Ascension Lutheran Church sees stewardship as more than simply contributing money to the church; it's also about contributing time and talents, and volunteering for ministry and mission. It's about reaching out to build relationships from a perspective of abundance instead of scarcity.

There are three pillars that reinforce the concept of stewardship:

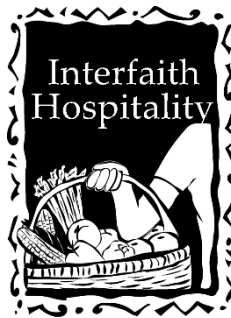
- 1) As Christian stewards we try to manage time wisely and in a balanced way. And we give our time gladly to family and friends, to strangers, to the community, the church, and to ourselves.
- 2) As stewards, we acknowledge the gifts we have without apology. We develop them further, practicing new skills and putting our talents to work in ministry.

- 3) One vital aspect of our stewardship is our giving to Christ's work in the world. Whatever the amount, we have discovered the joy in giving to God the "first fruits"

Having brought the 2017 Estimate of Giving Program to a successful conclusion; we wish to thank each and every one of you who chose to participate in "God's Grace in Action." As we look forward to early 2017, your Stew Crew will be working on ways for all of us to share our times and talents. It all begins with identifying the many ways in which each of us can share of ourselves within the Ascension Lutheran Church community. Then it becomes a matter of indicating your willingness to serve as God has called you. Your Board of Stewardship will take it from there.

You can look forward to more news about how you can invest your time and talent in the coming months!

Interfaith Hospitality Network



Thank you for your continued support of this vital program to provide safe housing for homeless families in Colorado Springs churches. As a charter member of IHN, we have been supporting this vital program since the 1990s. On January 17-18, we helped our IHN mission partner church (Beth-El Mennonite) take care of four families totaling 15 people. These families were able to stay together in a safe environment while they worked to get back on their feet. Our next opportunity to engage with IHN will be on 7-14 May when we host at Ascension. If you have any questions about this program, feel free to contact John or Kathy Hayes at (719) 572-1052 or at kittypawz@aol.com.



SENIOR LUNCHEON heads to "Cracker Barrel" (8355 Razorback), Friday, Feb. 17, at 11:00 AM. Join friends for lunch! Call Susan (573-4776) with questions, resses, a map, or to carpool. There's also a sign-up sheet on the kiosk in the fellowship hall. ANYONE 55+ is especially encouraged to come along! In March, we head to Red Robin. April takes us to Panino's. Plan ahead!! We will see you there!

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS



Mark your calendars and join us for Lenten Soup Suppers at 6:00 Wednesdays starting March 8 through April 12. This time of fellowship will be followed by Lenten Worship Services at 7:00 p.m. **Church**

boards and other groups are invited to sign up to host a Wednesday supper by contacting Sue Trinko: ts.trinko@gmail.com or 719-473-6470. The Board of Worship will host the first supper on March 8.



BECOME INVOLVED...

****Coffee Fellowship Hour – Smell the Aroma!** Please help keep the coffee hours going by signing up to host a Sunday morning Fellowship Hour! All directions for coffee making are in the coffee station, or just ask for assistance. One or two people is all it takes, and you are so appreciated! See the sign-up sheet on the Kiosk in Fellowship Hall.

****Prayer Ministry** – as we pray for people it helps us to have updates to keep us connected to the person and situation. If you have a prayer concern or would like to become a member of our Prayer Chain, contact the office, 634-1694 or office@ascensionlutheranelca.org.

****Funeral Committee** – Contact Bonnie Vawter (579-6707) if you would like to be added to the list of volunteers to help with food or serving at funerals. We are always looking for volunteers!

****Quilts for New Beginnings** – meets every Wednesday from 9-1 in the Fellowship Hall. They spread out quilts in all phases of creation, and if you'd like to help put together quilts for a good cause, come and join us. No experience necessary, just a good heart willing to learn and participate.

****Mercy's Gate – formerly Northern Churches Care** – Pantry items and toiletries are collected in the cupboard

in the Fellowship Hall. Ongoing needs: crackers, mac & cheese, oatmeal, spaghetti, corn, green beans, spaghetti sauce, tomato products, tuna, gravy toothpaste, tooth brushes, face soap.

****Knotty Kneedlers** – We continue to make small blankets and now sweaters for the Indian reservations, as well as prayer shawls. If you would like to become involved in this ministry, or just want to join us for fellowship and work on your own project, we meet every Wednesday at 1pm, in Fellowship Hall. Contact Bonnie Vawter, 579-6707, with any questions.

****Terrace Gardens Bingo - Prizes and Volunteers are needed.** Our church has been supporting bingo at the Terrace Garden Healthcare Center for almost 35 years. We call three games of bingo from 10:00-11:00AM on the third Wednesday of each month for the interested residents. We normally have about 10-15 players. We call out the numbers until every player wins in each game. After they win, we help them (if needed) to the prize table where they can pick out a prize of their choice. The prizes are all donated by members of the Ascension family. We could use some of the following prizes: gently used men and women's clothing, board games, some small containers of ladies' perfumes, adult coloring books/crayons, and lady's jewelry. Please mark items as "Bingo Prizes" and place them in the Terrace Garden Bingo box located on the counter behind the Welcome Center. *We are also in need of some additional volunteers* to help the residents with their bingo cards and to help them determine which prize they would like to have. The residents really look forward to our bingo each month and it is rewarding to help them each month. Please contact John Hayes at 572-1052 or at blazehayes@aol.com if you'd like to help or learn more about this Outreach program.

****Campbell's Soup Labels:** Please just cut the UPC bar code and the picture of the "point value boy" from the following products: Campbells - soups, chunky soups, Healthy Request, Supper Bakes; Pepperidge Farm, Spaghetti-Os, Swanson, V-8 beverage caps and Prego Spaghetti Sauce. Thanks for continuing to collect these to help the people with disabilities.

****Pop can tabs** help the Ronald McDonald House. They may be placed in the container in the cupboard in the Welcome Center.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will meet at 5:30 PM on February 18th at Ascension. If your card playing skills are a little rusty or you would like to learn how to play this great game, we have help sheets and bridge instructors available to help. Feel free to contact John or Kathy Hayes at (719) 572-1052 or at kittypawz@aol.com if you have any questions about this group.



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Ascension Lutheran Church, ELCA
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Colorado Springs, CO 80909

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CHURCH STAFF

Normal Office Hours: 9-12 Mon-Fri (719) 634-1694

Pastor Dan Holt – off on Friday

Pastor Daniel Smith

Music Director – Megan Miller

Diaconal Minister of Faith Formation – Mary Stoneback

Office Administrator – Arlayne McKee

Consultant for Health Care – Dr. Dennis Caldwell

Child Learning Center Director – Teresa Adams

E-mail addresses: office@ascensioncos.org

d.holt@ascensioncos.org (Pastor Holt)

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clc@ascensioncos.org (CLC)

ts.trinko@gmail.com (newsletter articles)

Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

March newsletter deadline: Feb. 19

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Jim Amack, Beth Ayen
(Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Chuck
Blaney, Dale & Dorothy Brown, Sharon Budd (Sister
of Darcy Ayen), Brad Buhler, Jerri Butchky, Jacquelyn
Ellison (Granddaughter of Marilyn & Troy
Goodenough), Tom & Sandra George, Steve Hahn
(Grandson of Joan Magee), Marian Kerr, Carol Kohne
(Sister of Karen Rubinow), Katie Lancaster, Hazel
Quindt, Jeff Sebben, Braydon Self, Jerry Smith, Cathy
Stanley, Joshua & Virginia Stanley (Parents of Marilyn
Gulliksen), Heidi Woerdeman, and all of our men and
women serving overseas.