



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

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Strategic Planning

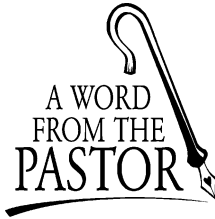
Being in leadership at Ascension can feel like being a juggler with lots of balls in the air. Some of those balls in the air are keeping good things like worship, education, service and fellowship going. Some balls in the air are making improvements like our "Spiritual Gifts in Motion" program or remodeling our sanctuary. We are planning small groups and a party to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in the fall. As many of you know, it takes work and a good attitude to keep our ministry balls in the air.

A potential pitfall in keeping balls in the air is that it keeps us focused on what is happening now or in the near term. It is important that at times we step back from the urgency of the near term to think about where we are going in the long term. Is all that we are doing now helping us fulfill God's call for us as a community ten years from now? The work of strategic planning brings us to reflect and come up with a plan to follow God's call over the long haul.

What are some of the important steps in strategic planning? First, we need to have a solid sense of who we are as a community: our values, purpose and gifts. Second, we need to begin to discern what kind of future we want to have (vision). Third, we begin to plan to get there taking into consideration factors like our current context and social trends.

To do all this, your leadership needs help. First, we need professional help from a consultant who is experienced helping congregations do this. This is a big process and we are not trained to do it. We have already interviewed consultants and will soon choose one. Second, we need your input and support. A strategic plan that is compelling comes from within.

It is about discerning what God's Spirit has already been working at among us. Finally, we depend on God's help. We trust that God will help us not only discern the Spirit's leading but inspire the excitement and energy to live into God's vision for us.



Children in Worship

Something new is coming!

How can we help young children participate in our service? How can we help equip our families to be leaders of faith in their children's lives? The Children in Worship Committee has been tackling these questions. Starting this past fall, a small committee has been meeting to find new ways to help children engage and participate in worship at Ascension. Just before Christmas we surveyed parents of children who are in elementary school, as well as parents of children in our nursery. We asked them for feedback about how they felt about church with their children: what works, what does not, if they use the nursery, and how they were feeling about their own experiences worshiping God when their kids were with them. Parents reported positive feedback about our nursery attendants, Sunday school program, and the support they have received from fellow worshippers. We found that overall, our families want more ideas to help engage their children in the worship service, and a desire for more services for the youngest in our congregation.

With the survey results in mind, we are planning some big ideas. Be on the lookout for our upcoming cry room! A cry room will be set up for our youngest members (and their parents) when they need a moment apart from the service, so that the parents can still participate in worship. We will also be discussing ways we can add more faith formation, such as songs and bible stories into our nursery program. We will continue to meet to find more ways we as a church can encourage and lead our families in their walks with God. We look forward to coming up with more ways we can strengthen and encourage spiritual growth for our families with young and elementary aged children. Thanks to fellow committee members Lana Brewer, Stacy Jensen, Heather Mills, and Pastor Daniel.

God bless, Elizabeth Diehl

Pastor Dan



What's Happening

Summer is here even though the calendar says it will not be here until June 21. That means there are many summer activities happening at Ascension.

This summer will see renovation work in the sanctuary. Do you know the sanctuary has not been upgraded for almost 30 years? Imagine your house without upgrades for 30 years. Please bear with us during the renovation work.

There are still many ways to get involved with our faith community over the summer. Here are but a few: Join a small group doing outdoor activities. There were many small group activities on display during the small group fair in April. It is an awesome way to get to know others in our community of faith.

Discover Ascension classes continue into June with a new member Sunday.

Our spiritual gifts in motion campaign will be continuing. How can you best use your gifts to help the congregation?

Day Camp this summer will again be run by Rainbow Trail staff with assistance from Ascension volunteers. Be watching for items to help support Day Camp. Plan to attend the end of Day Camp BBQ and get to know your Ascension family, CLC families, and members of our neighborhood.

Be watching the newsletter and bulletin for further summer activities.

“A Community of Grace, Called to Serve.”
Peace be with you, Greg Gulliksen, President CPC
637-9313 / greg.gulliksen@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

** Arlayne McKee & Gwen Epley at the death of their father, Ron Crubaugh.

**the family of Katie Lancaster at her death.



The May 9th meeting included the following actions and discussions:

- Pastor Daniel Smith opened the meeting with a devotion and prayer.
- Board Directors shared highlights from the previous year and gave brief updates on current activities and future plans.
- Ascension delegates to the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly relayed their experiences and expressed appreciation for participating in the event.
- Church finances improved in April with a 5-Sunday month and well-attended Easter services.
- Pastor Daniel highlighted efforts to increase children's involvement in worship.
- Sharla Saunders led a discussion on how best to assist KPC Kids Place as it struggles to overcome financial challenges resulting from severe LFS budget cuts.
- Council began the task of updating Ascension's Constitution in response to changes adopted by the ELCA at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly.
- The Capital Campaign Completion Team's progress in sanctuary improvements continues. New LED lighting will be installed this summer.
- The Strategic Planning Call Committee is moving forward with interviews in its search for a consultant to help Ascension develop a long-term vision and strategic plan.
- Pastor Dan Holt closed the meeting in prayer.
- The approved minutes of recent meetings are posted on the round kiosk in the Fellowship Hall and are available in electronic format from the church office.

THANK YOU...

The ALC Youth Board, youth and families would like to thank our church family for their support with the garage sale on April 8 and the Easter pancake breakfast. The \$1500 raised from the garage sale will be used to help get 10 high school youth and three adults to Kenosha, WI., for a week in July. The \$1000 raised from the Easter breakfast helps offset the registration costs for the middle school and high school youth who attended local ELCA youth gatherings this past fall and winter. Over the next few months the group traveling to Wisconsin will have additional fundraising events which involve dining out so it's a win-win for all. More details to follow soon.

Synod Assembly Update

Donna Crump: The theme for the 2017 Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly was Re-Formation: Then ... Now ... Always. Bishop Jim Gonia shared the Synod's new strategic plan supporting our mission: "Together we proclaim and embody God's unconditional love for the sake of the world." It was uplifting to hear stories and see how our offerings and financial support to the Synod are working to build faith and share God's love here at home and around the world. We are making a difference! It was a time to celebrate being Lutheran. While there was some business to conduct, my favorite moments were the worship services with hundreds of Lutherans from different congregations praising God together.

Dennis Bagenstos: On Saturday afternoon, I attended a break-out session led by a pastor in Austin, CO (I'd never heard of it either!) who is working in an ecumenical prison ministry there. The impact they are having on lives there is measureable, but that wasn't my biggest takeaway from the session. At one point he mentioned that his emphasis isn't just about getting parishioners in the church, but developing relationships. The more I thought about that, the more I realized that was what God needed me to hear as a participant in

the Board of Evangelism. Ascension is land-locked; we are never going to have 600 worshippers every Sunday, as we physically can't handle that. But we can and do develop relationships; with other churches, community programs, community members, our neighborhood, and most importantly...each other. As Lutherans, we're not the best at traditional evangelism; but we do know how to develop relationships. And who knows, maybe those relationships will produce more worshippers on Sunday, and I won't get fired from the Evangelism Board. Well, at least not for that reason...

Jerry Dollar: Walking into the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly was like entering Ascension for the first time. It was a healthy mix of expectations, trepidation, and hope. Once again, faith and grace prevailed. Walking down the corridor at the Antlers Hotel; it took ten minutes to make a three minute stroll. There were huddles of people getting reacquainted, display tables from ELCA programs, and an endless stream of smiling faces. I made no fewer than a dozen new friends in that brief space of time. Re-Formation was the theme for the weekend; but it was more of a transformation for me. I arrived a near-stranger and departed with a new family. Faith and grace are truly a powerful set of forces when we open ourselves to them!



Ruth Circle

RUTH CIRCLE

All ladies of Ascension are invited to join us on the 2nd Thursday of the month. But we will take a summer break for June & July and meet back up on August 10, when we will

begin a study from the book *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* by Joanna Weaver. If you have questions or to get a copy of the book, contact Nancy Shatto at njshatto@yahoo.com or 426-9444. We will look forward to an interesting study!

Quilt Tying Event in July

Ascension will be hosting a World Relief quilt tying event on Saturday, July 22 and we are inviting Beth-El Mennonite Church to join us. The quilts will be given to World Relief for both Ascension and Beth-El. We will begin at 9 a.m. and finish at 12 noon. A potluck salad luncheon will take place from noon till all the goodies are gone. Beverages and dessert will be provided. A signup sheet will be available on the kiosk. Questions: please email Sally Walker at slwalker@q.com. We had a lot of fun with great participation at our first quilt tying Saturday. Thanks for helping make the world a warmer place.

Southwest WELCA Rescheduled

The Southeast WELCA group had to cancel the retreat scheduled for



4/29 due to the impending snow storm. The retreat is now scheduled for Saturday, June 10, beginning at 9:30 a.m., ending at 4 p.m. It is being held at Grace Lutheran Church, 1128 E Boulder St, CO Spgs. Registration is \$45 and includes a continental breakfast, salad luncheon and a copy of the book by Pastor Daniel Erlander. Pastor Julie Britsch will be our study leader. If you plan to attend, please bring 2 bars of soap, a toothbrush, heavy duty comb & nail clipper for personal health kits for Lutheran World Relief. ***Two scholarships are being offered by Lay Ministry***, if you are interested please contact John Hayes. Please contact Sally Walker at 570-0103 or slwalker@q.com for further information and registration forms.

Gleanings from the Johnson Institute on Spirituality and Aging—Mary Stoneback, Elisa Thompson, Jim Deloughry

Since October of 2016, Jim, Elisa and I have been on a journey of discovery together. We have been introduced to a variety of subject matters in our course, from personal awareness and spiritual gifts to what it means to grow in times of loss and physical decline. We looked at working through transitions like retirement, or caring for a loved one who is ill. For our March Lenten Mid-Week homily, we wrestled with what it means to be mortal and shared our thoughts with you about death. We invited you to consider the stereotypes and myths society (or ourselves) hold true about older adults and elders. And during an Adult Sunday School hour in April, we led an intergenerational conversation about time, what we do with it, or don't and why. That's great you might say, but what have we learned?

Jim: As I think back on the many things I've learned, three things stand out:

1. You can't regain your youth, but you can remain youthful even if it is in your spirit.
2. You don't have to be old to have wisdom.
3. Being old is a state of mind.

These ideas are reinforced for me at Ascension on an almost daily basis. I see youthfulness and vitality everywhere in our older adults. I also experience wisdom weekly with our middle school-confirmation youth and their high school counterparts. I see God's spirit throughout the stages of life in our church and that is indeed a blessing. Having said that though, there are challenges we have identified: loneliness, broken-heartedness, boredom, loss, fear of aging and retirement. These are topics we will be exploring in the next six months of the course. We look forward to this continued discovery, sharing, and the opportunity to age together as a community of grace called to serve.

Elisa: "Aging is really the cherry on the ice cream sundae of life!" Dr. Richard Johnson actually said this in a recent phone call Mary, Jim and I had with him. What audacity! I mean seriously, who says that? It's not what media or pharmacy and beauty product ads will tell you. Dr. Johnson makes it sound like we should look forward to aging. Ok, even he admits that the physical declines are hard to take, but according to our studies through the Johnson Institute, aging is not "a thief in the night, but a master teacher." And while the secular world will not promote it, Dr. Johnson implores mature Christians to embrace aging as a time of rapid spiritual growth. No other time in life is so ripe for growing in our knowledge and intimacy of the Lord! This is really counter-revolutionary stuff! The first time I really thought it through, my head literally spun. But I have also caught new glimmers of hope as I consider my parents' aging and my own aging process. I am still considering what this might mean for Ascension, but I am excited at the possibilities.

Mary: Recently, I purchased a strawberry starter kit. Each day for the last few weeks, I have watered the dirt and up to a few days ago thought for sure I had done something incorrectly. Nothing was growing. Then, like an unexpected miracle I saw a tiny green leaf peaking up out of the dirt. In awe, I started talking to the plant much like a mother to her newborn child. I was thrilled to *see hope!* There are now several more leaves showing and I continue to *actively wait*, watering the plant, and leaving it outside in the daylight and bringing it back inside over night. What does this have to do with the program?

Dr. Johnson invites us to consider what God's plan is for our aging. What we have found in our conversations together and with you over the last several months, is how important it is to remember simply that God is at work in and through you right now, no matter your age! As we abide in Him through prayer, in worship and in community, God abides in us. In this relationship, God nurtures the seeds of faith in our heart and prunes so that we may continue to grow to know we are:

- 1 Loved.
2. Called to serve God and one another.
3. Live agelessly in the Lord.

The journey of discovery continues with each of you!

Thriving through Thrivent Financial

Thrivent creates financial strategies that help Christians be wise with money and live generously. They offer a broad range of financial products and services; including life insurance, annuities, and mutual funds. These products include tailored guidance from financial representatives nationwide. For more than a century, Thrivent has helped its member-owners show God's love to others by being good stewards of the gifts they have been given.

Members become eligible for Thrivent Choice based upon life insurance premiums, contract values, and Thrivent volunteer leadership. As a result, Members are designated Choice Dollars that they can direct to enrolled charities. Several of our ALC congregation members participate in this program; where you can recommend where some of Thrivent Financial's charitable outreach funds go. Since 2010, more than \$330 million has been distributed to churches (including Ascension) and nonprofits nationwide.

Ready to learn more? Please contact Nancy Albertson at: (719) 531-5900. Thank you!

Your Board of Stewardship

Abundant Life Update

Hopefully everyone has finished the “spring cleaning and yard preparations “for summer. Yes summer is coming. The one additional area or task that needs to get regular attention is the medicine cabinet. And now is as good a time as ever.

Medications don’t last forever and keeping that small quantity of Penicillin left over is a bad habit [I’ll get into left overs later] The process is very simple, take EVERYTHING out of the cabinet and line it up on the table. Start by placing your current medications to one side, check the date and refill status. [If you need refills you can be proactive and get them requested before it runs out]. Next take all the over the counter products and if you purchased them over one year ago I suggest you get new ones. And if you no longer take the OTC product get rid of it. And finally whatever is left is probably headed for disposal. Old medication may not kill you but it surely won’t be effective either, and mixing an old medication may create an adverse reaction with any new medication. The list of reasons for this “spring cleaning” is long but protecting yourself and your family from medication problems is the first priority.

Now how to dispose of old medications. It is quite simple. Crush all tablets or dissolve capsules in a small amount of boiling water, put this “stuff” in wet coffee grounds or kitty litter, bag it, seal it and place in regular trash.

There is a great website for more information on handling medical waste. <http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/hm>

The Gift of a Lasting Legacy

Many of us are honored to be able to give of ourselves during our life on Earth. Some of us are privileged to give of ourselves after our earthly life. Ascension has been blessed with a gift that will continue to give of itself for years to come.

As part of his final arrangements, Al Mosher shared a living gift with all of us at ALC. In a life insurance policy, Ascension was named the beneficiary of a non-designated bequest totaling around \$84,000. In considering what was best for the church, with input from the Board of Stewardship; the Council determined that 70% of that gift would go into our General Endowment Fund, 10% to mortgage debt reduction, 10% for the planned CLC playground, and 10% for social outreach. We are grateful to Al, his family, and to God for continuing to provide for our ministry and mission as we move ahead.

Your Board of Stewardship

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:

Dennis Conroy - birthday

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.ascensionlutheranelca.org

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 Val Rudy, 577-4637, 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.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Thank you for your continued support of this vital program to provide safe temporary housing for homeless families in Colorado Springs churches. As a charter member of IHN, we have been supporting this vital program since the 1990s. Ascension hosted four families (5 adults and 9 children ranging from 16 years old to 1 year old) at our church from 7-14 May. When we host at our church, it takes about 75 volunteers during the week. Our volunteers brought supplies, brought food, served food, played with the children, stayed overnight with our guests, did laundry, and converted our Sunday School rooms into bedrooms and then converted them back to Sunday School rooms. We had three volunteers who had recently graduated from the IHN program come back and help the new IHN guests during our week. One of our volunteers helped the children make Mother's Day tote bags to give to their Mom's on Mother's Day. One of our volunteers was a visitor to our church and is just starting New Member classes. We also had CiCi's Pizza on Platte Ave provide all the food on one of the nights. If you would like to help with IHN, please contact John or Kathy Hayes at [\(719\) 572-1052](tel:7195721052) or at kittypawz@aol.com.

~~US & THEM~~ WE:

Thanks everyone for your generous support for our ELCA World Hunger Lenten offering. Together, we raised \$6,780.40, and over \$700 of that came from the children's coin banks. That's enough to buy 2 wells and then some! Thanks be to God.

From time to time, we like to update you on some of the many organizations you support through the Board of Social Outreach. Here is an update concerning KPC Kids' Place:

A few weeks ago, Pastor Daniel asked us to consider the question, "Who is my neighbor?"

Good question. When Jesus said we should love our neighbor, did he mean it figuratively? Literally? Both? What if that neighbor is, in fact, right across the street? Our neighbor, KPC Kids' Place, is facing a severe financial crisis beginning July 1, 2017 due to changes in how the State of Colorado distributes grant money. This change has resulted in their funding being cut by \$150,000. They are pursuing other grant options, but without significant help from organizations and individuals—they will have no choice but to cut staff positions and services offered.

Since 2004, KPC has been providing respite childcare for families in critical situations. This past year alone they managed to serve more than 248 families and 405 children. When parents are stressed, children are impacted; that is inevitable. But sometimes when caregivers' time, energy, and resources are strained to the breaking point—children can be harmed. Simply put, KPC helps keep children safe.

Pastor Keith Hedstrom once preached a sermon in which he stated (paraphrased), "Jesus never asked us to change the world. That's His job. What He asked us to do, however, is to love and serve it." This statement completely and forever changed my perspective on Christian service and is a large part of the reason I have chosen to serve on the Board of Social Outreach (see, Pastor Keith? I really was paying attention!).

The Board of Social Outreach has made the decision to give a significant amount of money to "love and serve" the families of KPC in a tangible way. Through a gift from Al Mosher matched by a grant from the Endowment Committee, KPC will be receiving \$10,000 after the beginning of their new fiscal year (July 1). We are thankful for God's provision through Mr. Mosher's gift and the Endowment Committee's willingness to partner with us. If you would like to make a financial contribution to KPC, please feel free to contact either me or Bill Ayen for details.

***ALSO, we want to extend a HUGE THANK YOU to John and Kathy Hayes for their 7 years of service as our congregation's IHN coordinators. John and Kathy did an excellent job and a break is well deserved. We are happy to report that they will be handing off their batons to Ron and Debbie Mohler. Ron and Debbie are relatively new to Ascension and we are thankful for their willingness to step up and serve in this way.

Sharla Saunders –
Director, Ascension Board of Social Outreach

Stewardship Update: Spiritual Gifts in Motion, Time and Talent Program

Thank you to all of our congregation in supporting our Spiritual Gifts in Motion event Sunday, May 14th. We enjoyed serving treats, learning more about your unique talents, and connecting you with ALC Board members to discuss specific programs that you can contribute to. We were blessed to have a high turnout and share in so many meaningful conversations.

For those of you who missed the event; we have surveys that can be completed to express your talents and how you would like to bring them into the service of our congregation and our extended community. Forms are available at the reception desk and may be returned to the office. On behalf of our many Boards, programs, and groups; thank you for your generosity!

Romans 12:6-8 In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

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. Our ELCA leadership has divided this year of celebration into thirds with the first third remembering Martin Luther and foundation for the Reformation. The second third is to look at the reconciliation going on between the Lutheran Church and the Catholic Church. The final third will focus on where we go from here and how do we continue to reform. So for the next several months, we'll look at reconciliation efforts with the Catholic Church.



ELCA Church Council accept them and forward the entire document to the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the denomination's highest legislative body.

32 Statements of Agreement

The Church's Foundation in God's Saving Work

(1) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth has been assembled by the triune God, who grants to its members their sharing in the triune divine life as God's own people, as the body of the risen Christ, and as the temple of the Holy Spirit, while they are also called to give witness to these gifts so that others may come to share in them.

(2) They agree as well that the church on earth arose from the whole event of Jesus Christ, who remains its sole foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11).

(3) Further, they hold in common that the church on earth is gathered by the proclamation of the gospel of God's saving mercy in Christ, so that the gospel, proclaimed in the Holy Spirit by the apostles, remains the church's normative origin and abiding foundation.

(4) An agreement follows that the church on earth is in every age apostolic, because it is founded upon the apostles' witness to the gospel and it continuously professes the apostolic and evangelical faith while living by mandated practices handed on from the apostles. Thus, Lutherans and Catholics recognize in both their ecclesial communities the attribute of apostolicity grounded in their ongoing continuity in apostolic faith, teaching and practices.

The Word, Scripture and Means of Grace

(5) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the church on earth lives from and is ruled by the Word of God, which it encounters in Christ, in the living word of the gospel, and in the inspired and canonical Scriptures.

(6) They are one in holding that the church on earth participates in Christ's benefits through the historical and perceptible actions of proclaiming the gospel and celebrating the sacraments, as initiated by Christ and handed on by his apostles.

Communion, Visibility and Hiddenness

(7) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is a communion (koinonia). It shares in God's gifts offered for us by Christ, which, by being held in common, bring believers into unity and fellowship with each other.

(8) Consequently, they agree that the church on earth combines audible and visible elements with profound spiritual realities that remain hidden from empirical investigation and perception.

Preservation of the Church and Union with the Saints

(9) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is indefectible, because it is and will be preserved by the Holy Spirit in all its aspects essential for salvation. They share the certainty of Christian hope that the church, established by Christ and led by his Spirit, will always remain in the truth fulfilling its mission to humanity for the sake of the gospel.

(10) They furthermore agree that the church on earth is united with the community of the saints in glory.

Drawing on 50 years of national and international dialogue, Lutherans and Catholics together issued the "Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist," a unique ecumenical document that marks a pathway toward greater visible unity between Catholics and Lutherans. The October 30 release of the document comes on the eve of the anniversary of Martin Luther's posting the 95 Theses, which sparked the Protestant Reformation.

"Pope Francis in his visit to the United States emphasized again and again the need for and importance of dialogue. This Declaration on the Way represents in concrete form an opportunity for Lutherans and Catholics to join together now in a unifying manner on a way finally to full communion," said Bishop Denis J. Madden, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Catholic co-chair of the task force creating the declaration.

"Five hundred years ago wars were fought over the very issues about which Lutherans and Roman Catholics have now achieved consensus," said ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton. "Church, ministry and Eucharist have been areas of disagreement and even separation between our two churches, and we still have work to do both theologically and pastorally as we examine the questions. The declaration is so exciting because it shows us 32 important points where already we can say there are not church-dividing issues between us, and it gives us both hope and direction for the future," she said.

At the heart of the document are 32 "Statements of Agreement" where Lutherans and Catholics already have points of convergence on topics about church, ministry and Eucharist. These agreements signal that Catholics and Lutherans are indeed 'on the way' to full, visible unity. As the 500th anniversary of the Reformation approaches, this witness to growing unity gives a powerful message to a world where conflict and division often seem to drown out more positive messages of hope and reconciliation. The document also indicates differences still remaining between Lutherans and Catholics and indicates possible ways forward.

In October both the ELCA Conference of Bishops—an advisory body of the church—and the Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) received and unanimously affirmed the 32 Agreements. ELCA bishops requested that the

Eschatology and Mission

(11) This perspective gives rise to agreement that the church on earth is an anticipatory reality, on pilgrimage and expectant of reaching its final destination in God's ultimate gathering of his people in their entirety, when Christ returns, and when the Holy Spirit completes the work of sanctification.

(12) But Catholics and Lutherans agree as well that the church on earth is mandated to carry out a mission in which it participates in God's activity in the world by evangelization, worship, service of humanity and care for creation.

Ministry in the Church

(13) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the ordained ministry belongs to the essential elements that express the church's apostolic character and that it also contributes, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the church's continuing apostolic faithfulness.

(14) Catholics and Lutherans agree that all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ. For both Catholics and Lutherans, the common priesthood of all the baptized and the special, ordained ministry enhance one another.

Divine Origin of Ministry

(15) Lutherans and Catholics affirm together that ordained ministry is of divine origin and that it is necessary for the being of the church. Ministry is not simply a delegation "from below," but is instituted by Jesus Christ.

(16) We both affirm that all ministry is subordinated to Christ, who in the Holy Spirit is acting in the preaching of the Word of God, in the administration of the sacraments, and in pastoral service.

(17) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the proclamation of the gospel is foremost among the various tasks of the ordained ministry.

(18) They declare in common that the essential and specific function of the ordained minister is to assemble and build up the Christian community by proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments, and presiding over the liturgical, missionary and diaconal life of the community.

Authority of Ministry

(19) The authority of the ministry is not to be understood as an individual possession of the minister, but it is rather an authority with the commission to serve in the community and for the community. (20) Catholics and Lutherans also agree that the office of ministry stands over against (gegenüber) the community as well as within it and thus is called to exercise authority over the community.

Ordination

(21) Catholics and Lutherans agree that entry into this apostolic and God-given ministry is not by baptism but by ordination. They agree that ministers cannot ordain themselves or claim this office as a matter of right but are called by God and designated in and through the church.

(22) Catholics and Lutherans both ordain through prayer invoking the Holy Spirit and with the laying on of hands by another ordained person. Both affirm that the ordinand receives an anointing of the Holy Spirit, who equips that person for ordained ministry.

(23) Both Lutherans and Catholics regard ordination as unrepeatable.

One Ministerial Office

(24) Both consider that there is one ordained ministerial office, while also distinguishing a special ministry of episkope over presbyters/pastors.

(25) They agree that the ministry is exercised both locally in the congregation and regionally. Both accept that the distinction between local and regional offices in the churches is more than the result of purely historical and human developments, or a matter of sociological necessity, but is the action of the Spirit. Furthermore, the differentiation of the ministry into a more local and a more regional office arises of necessity out of the intention and task of ministry to be a ministry of unity in faith.

Ministry Serving Worldwide Unity

(26) Catholics and Lutherans affirm together that all ministry, to the degree that it serves the koinonia of salvation, also serves the unity of the worldwide church and that together we long for a more complete realization of this unity.

High Esteem for Eucharistic Union with Christ in Holy Communion

(27) Lutherans and Catholics agree in esteeming highly the spiritual benefits of union with the risen Christ given to them as they receive his body and blood in Holy Communion.

Trinitarian Dimension of Eucharist

(28) Catholics and Lutherans agree that in Eucharistic worship the church participates in a unique way in the life of the Trinity: In the power of the Holy Spirit, called down upon the gifts and the worshiping community, believers have access to the glorified flesh and blood of Christ the Son as our food, and are brought in union with him and with each other to the Father.

Eucharist as Reconciling Sacrifice of Christ and as Sacrifice of the Church's Praise and Thanksgiving

(29) Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic worship is the memorial (anamnesis) of Jesus Christ, present as the one crucified for us and risen, that is, in his sacrificial self-giving for us in his death and in his resurrection (Romans 4:25), to which the church responds with its sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Eucharistic Presence

(30) Lutherans and Catholics agree that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ himself is present: He is present truly, substantially, as a person, and he is present in his entirety, as Son of God and a human being.

Eschatological Dimension of Eucharist

(31) Catholics and Lutherans agree that Eucharistic Communion, as sacramental participation in the glorified body and blood of Christ, is a pledge that our life in Christ will be eternal, our bodies will rise, and the present world is destined for transformation, in the hope of uniting us in communion with the saints of all ages now with Christ in heaven.

Eucharist and Church

(32) Lutherans and Catholics agree that sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist is an essential sign of the unity of the church, and that the reality of the church as a community is realized and furthered sacramentally in the Eucharistic celebration. The Eucharist both mirrors and builds the church in its unity.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will meet at 5:30PM on June 10th 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.

BECOME INVOLVED...

****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 and baby burial buntings 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 (large and Plus sizes), 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. While we have gained a few more volunteers, 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.

Youth Fundraiser



Please save the date
and join us at
**California Pizza
Kitchen**
for a flavorful
FUNdraising event!

Thursday, June 15, 2017
(All Day - 11AM - 9PM)

Fundraiser in support of Ascension Lutheran
High School Youth traveling to Wisconsin.
Be sure to bring the flyer in this newsletter!

California Pizza Kitchen, 1645 Briargate Pkwy #203,
Colorado Springs, CO 80920 (Located in: The
Promenade Shops at Briargate) 719-260-8054



COMMUNITY PICNIC
JUNE 22, 5 pm - 7 pm
OPEN TO ALL!
Rainbow Trail Day Camp,
June 19 - 22!

The Board of Parish Education, along with the CLC Cabinet, is pleased to announce that ALC will be hosting our second annual Rainbow Trail Day Camp, June 19 – 22.

This is a very special week of the year where children from ALC, the CLC and other ELCA congregations, including Grace Lutheran Church get to interact, learn about Jesus' love for them and form new friendships.

Day Camp will wrap up on with a Community BBQ on Thursday June 22, 5 – 7 Pm. All members of ALC are invited to attend the BBO whether they attend Day Camp or not. Come for the food, fellowship and songs and even a bouncy house! Please RSVP to Elisa Thompson if you plan on attending the Community BBQ.

For more information about attending or helping with RT Day Camp, please contact Elisa Thompson, elisat92@gmail.com, 641.5184 or Mary Stoneback, m.stoneback@ascensioncos.org, 303.475.4886.



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Ascension Lutheran Church, ELCA
2505 N. Circle Drive
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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

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ts.trinko@gmail.com (newsletter articles)

Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

July newsletter deadline: June 18

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Dale & Dorothy Brown, Sharon Budd (Sister of Darcy Ayen), Brad Buhler, Jerri Butschky, Jacquelyn Ellison (Granddaughter of Marilyn & Troy Goodenough), Tom & Sandra George, Elaine Glover, Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan Magee), Mark & Laurie Hauschild, and their son & daughter, Ryan Hauschild and Heidi Woerdeman, Judy Heeren, Paul Johnson (Father of Russ Johnson), Teddy & Lynni Lockner (Great-grandson of Ruth Andersen & his mother), Jeff Sebben, Jerry Smith, Cathy Stanley, Joshua & Virginia Stanley (Parents of Marilyn Gulliksen), Jim Stannard, Bill Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas.