



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

January 2018

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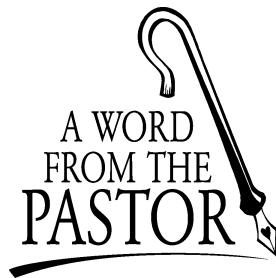
Making Resolutions for Improvement

In our culture, the New Year can bring us to consider resolutions for improvements. A traditional personal improvement has been getting in better physical shape either by working out or losing weight. As a church we are going to be looking at making resolutions for improvements in the year ahead. We have committed to a strategic planning process with a consultant named, Kristin Wiersma. Beginning in this new year, she will guide a process of looking at what changes we can make to improve our mission and ministry at Ascension.

As most of us know, resolutions with their changes are hard to keep. Our will power is a weak muscle and the forces against our changing are persistent. In our resolution to be in better physical shape, we can live with that hungry feeling in our stomachs or that early morning wakeup to exercise for a while but at some point we can find ourselves reaching for that donut or hitting the snooze button. The same kind of dynamic is true for us as a church. It can sound good to make changes to improve but the counter forces can be persistent. Change can bring out disagreements in perspectives and can require hard work. This can bring us to wonder if it is worth it.

What can help us succeed?

- First, work together. We do this as a community guided by God's Spirit. Making changes alone is much harder than doing them in a supportive community. What we decide to do, we decide together prayerfully looking to God's Spirit to guide us.
- Second, look back. In the past, we have launched IHN, KPC Kid's place, and our CLC. We have re-organized our leadership to raise up lay leadership. We have made positive changes to finance, stewardship, facility, and policy. Looking back at



changes that we have successfully made gives us encouragement and guidance to move forward.

- Third, have faith when things don't go your way. When people work together for change not everyone will agree on what needs to happen and when. We are individuals with differing perspectives. We will be as inclusive of people's perspectives as we can but there will be aspects of what we do that aren't what we would have wanted. It is important to trust that God can bring good things that may not align with our agendas.
- Fourth, take the next step. When I start my climb up a mountain, I often look up and take in how far away it is. A long journey always begins with one step. And it is completed by taking lots of next steps. Our hope is to have a compelling vision (mountain top) to reach for as a church. As much as that desired mountain top is motivation, it is the next step that gets us there.

- Pastor Dan Holt

Quilt Tying Event January 27. Join us!

Quilts for New Beginning will hold a quilt tying event at Ascension Lutheran Church on Saturday, January 27 (2018! – can you believe it!) from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. We will have a potluck lunch of soups and chili. Beverages, bread, crackers and dessert will be provided. Ascension & Beth-El Mennonite have held 3 quilt tyings in 2017, and we had a great time getting many quilts ready for World Relief. We hope many of you will join us at this fellowship event – all ages, men, women, children are welcome. Come, stay for the entire event or leave when you have to. We appreciate any help we can receive in making the world a warmer place. Questions – talk with Wanda Hughes or Anita Arends at Ascension. A sign-up list will be on the kiosk – please indicate if you plan to have lunch with us.



The council did not have a meeting in December.



What's Happening

Thanks to all who participated in our Advent activities this year. It is truly a blessing to see so many of our faith community involved in various ways. Here are a few ways in which you all served during Advent: Providing gifts to the Pueblo State Hospital, praying for the children of the CLC, caroling at homes of our shut-ins, bringing us God's message during the Sunday School Christmas program, sharing of musical talents through our Cantata, and all of the groups providing service to others. We are truly a blessed congregation.

On December 3 the congregation approved our operating budget of \$824,524 for 2018. Thanks to all who provided an Estimate of Giving card; board members and board directors who worked through their budgets; executive committee, and especially to Rex Rudy for putting everything together.

In January you will begin seeing information concerning our strategic planning process. Your participation will be important in formulating what Ascensions ministry will look like in the future.

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

Simply Giving

For those who use Simple Giving for their offering, please complete a new Simple Giving form to reflect your 2018 Estimate of Giving. Forms are available at the Welcome Center or from the office. Leave your completed form with Arlayne in the office.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

**Charles Lewis and family at the death of Pat Lewis.

Congregational Meeting February 25

The annual Congregational Meeting for Ascension will be held on Sunday, February 25, 2018, between services. Reports by each Board and the audited 2017 financials will be presented. The CPC will be making a recommendation to the congregation on how to spend any additional funds from 2017 and where to utilize a portion of our cash reserves. There will be a recommendation concerning funding for the remaining sanctuary finishes. All are highly encouraged to attend and see what your Congregation Planning Council is planning for 2018. Be watching the February newsletter and worship bulletins for further information.

Ascension Free Pantry

Ascension Free Pantry, located outside of the CLC, is getting regular use! Please remember to pick up some grocery items for the pantry when you are doing your own grocery shopping! Food can be put directly into the pantry or into the storage cupboard in the fellowship area.

~~US & THEM~~ WE: HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

As we begin a new year of service together, I thought I would share with you a prayer of blessing for Social Ministry that I stumbled upon in the ELCA Worship book:

"Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

I love that. I love the idea that divisions can be healed and that "the barriers dividing us may crumble" and "suspicions disappear." As this healing takes place, it allows us to live together in justice and peace. AND, it allows us to then extend that justice and peace to our neighbors in need. I love that it's not up to us to do the healing! God does it. All He asks is that we be willing and responsive. That is the best news I could possibly think of, and my favorite wish for 2018.

May we all experience His healing from any division in our families, relationships...lives. In this new year together, may we follow His leading into justice and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessings, Sharla Saunders –
Director, Ascension Board of Social Outreach

It's Nearly That Time Again: Soup Suppers!

It seems we just celebrated the birth of our Saviour, but we will soon be entering the Lenten Season and with it the Wednesday Lenten Services and Soup Suppers. Beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 14, Ascension will soup suppers prior to the 7 p.m. Lenten services on Wednesdays. We are looking for groups to host the Wednesday soup suppers, which basically means setting up and cleaning up after. If you are interested in helping out, please sign up on the sheet on the Kiosk in Fellowship Hall. You can also contact Sue Trinko, 719-473- 6470, ts.trinko@gmail.com.

Ascension Book Club

Join us for Ascension's Book Club **Faith Seeking Understanding**. Our next book is "Just Mercy" by Bryan Stevenson—a book about the judicial system, racial inequality, and the death penalty. We'll discuss the book and enjoy a potluck after church on February 11. Questions? Ask Pastor Daniel.

Connecting Ascension Riders and Drivers (CARD) Program

A few months ago, the daughter of one of our senior members approached me to see if our church had a ride sharing program for members without cars. Her Mom could no longer drive, but she still lives at home and needs rides to doctors' appointments, grocery stores, church, etc. The daughter lives out of town. I was sorry to say that we didn't have a ride sharing program at Ascension, but that we would start one up. As a result, the Board of Lay Ministry is connecting people who need rides with drivers who have some spare time. If you are in need of rides or are interested in providing rides, please contact John Hayes at [\(719\) 572-1052](tel:7195721052) or at blazehayes@aol.com. Drivers would need to use their own cars and have their own auto insurance. *We are now providing rides for three of our members.*

Name Tags and Cubby Holes

During the Fall, many of us participated in a Small Group study of a book titled "Reclaiming the L Word." One chapter of the book focused on making sure our guests feel welcome when they visit our church. Remembering names is a challenge for our guests and our new members, therefore the Board of Lay Ministry is creating name tags for all our congregational members and our guests so we know who we're talking to at church. A challenge associated with name tags is to make sure they don't go home and then forget to come back to church the next Sunday, so we will be erecting a mail box at Ascension that has a cubby hole for each of our family units. The name tags can be kept in the cubby holes and we can also distribute correspondence via the cubby holes instead of spending postage each time we mail something out to our congregation. Those members who can't attend church on a regular basis can still receive their correspondence via the US Postal System. See John Hayes if you have any questions.

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. We will be discussing Chapter 5 from the book *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*, by Joanna Weaver. You can join at any time. Hostess for the January 11, 2018 gathering will be Sally Walker. If you are new to Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us! Please see Nancy Shatto for a book, 719-426-9444 or njshatto@yahoo.com.

Thank You

Thank you to the people who volunteer to help with the Terrace Garden monthly BINGO games and to those who donate prizes. The residents enjoy the interaction with our volunteers and look forward to competing for prizes donated by our Congregation.

Thoughts on an Abundant Life

Oh my, a new year is here again. Too soon for some, eagerly awaited by others and an opportunity for all to experience the blessings of a loving God. We may have a long list of "things undone" in 2017 but I think this is a second chance to redirect our efforts for a new year of adventures and opportunities.

Our Lord has walked with us through another year and has seen and understands all our ups and downs. We have to do the same thing, give yourself "understanding" for your decisions and actions of 2017. 2018 is another year to walk with God and serve the mission He gave us. I know this may sound a bit 'fluffy' and it certainly isn't easy but we have a whole year to work toward that goal. Give yourself that time, even God took more than one day to create the world.

For me, I am going to celebrate accomplishing the end of 2017, with all its ups and downs. I can look back and find a list of moments clearly blessed by God, and also a list of moments that need God's forgiveness. That is the life of a child of God and there is another year ahead to continue that journey.

Celebrating New Year's Eve was not a loud event in my family, there was a church service of thanksgiving and then a quiet gathering of friends and family. Most years it was a challenge to make it to midnight. Not that I haven't celebrated a few wild loud nights as a young officer in the Air Force, the Turks thought we were crazy. TEE HEE

Whatever you think about a new year ahead, I know no one will experience the adventure alone. Embrace your traveling companion and enjoy the blessings and know you are forgiven for the missteps.

Happy New Year! Blessings on your journey. Sara Petz

Create A Legacy



Ascension Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund

Endowment Fund Legacies Created

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

Birthdays:

Jerry & Carolyn Smith
Sandy Trent
Craig Kelly
Bill & Dee Yocum

Anniversary: Phil & Sandy Trent

Pat Lewis Memorials:

Judy Leiseth & Dennis Bagenstos
Clara Remele
Phil & Sandy Trent
Kay Richardson
Bill & Arlene Schultz

Thank You!

Thank you to those who purchased poinsettias to decorate
the sanctuary for Christmas:

Troy and Marilyn Goodenough
Lucille Walker
Will and Barbara Strain
Daniel Smith
Jerry and Robbi Dollar
Jackie and Eric Gresh
Ralph Hathaway
Marilyn and Greg Gulliksen
Ann Marie Hindley
Ron and Jeanne Cornell
Sue and Tony Trinko

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.

****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 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 about 35 years. We call three games of
bingo from 10:00-11:00AM on the third Wednesday of each
month for the residents. We normally have about 15 players.
We call out 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: our #1 need is for gently used
men's clothing (sizes Large and higher), then we also have a
need for women's clothing (large and Plus sizes), hygiene
products (body washes, lotions, tooth paste, shampoo, etc),
playing cards, 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. The
residents really look forward to our bingo each month and it is
rewarding to help them. 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. *Thank you for your continued
support of this 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 5:30PM on 13 January 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.

Ascension's Nursery

Our nursery continues to offer a safe and fun area to those members under six during Sunday services and Wednesday choir rehearsals. Two Thrivent grants have enabled us to purchase a bookshelf and a variety of books for our youngsters to enjoy.



The Worship Board would like to thank Kirsten Johnson, who faithfully arranges and schedules the staff for the nursery, and Elizabeth Diehl, who took on the monthly and quarterly maintenance of the nursery. The Diehl family recently moved, and we are feeling the loss! We are looking for someone to take on the periodic maintenance of the nursery so it can continue to be a healthy and happy environment. If you are interested in this ministry, please contact Sue Trinko, 473-6470, email ts.trinko@gmail.com.

Save the Date for RTLC Day Camp

Rainbow Trails Lutheran Camp Day Camp is scheduled for June 17 – 21. This year, the Board of Parish Education is hosting a half-day, morning format with some special opportunities for our youth volunteers to have mentoring time with the RTLC Counselors in the afternoons. We are in need of one or two co-directors from Ascension. If you'd like more information about what is involved with co-directing RTLC Day Camp, please contact Elisa Thompson. She will even take you out for coffee if you like! Elisa can be reached at elisat92@gmail.com or 719.641.5184.

**Sunday School Resumes on
Sunday January 7 at 9:15 am.**



**SMALL GROUP
MINISTRIES
QUARTERLY
UPDATE**
All are welcome;
come join in the
fellowship!

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Contemplative Prayer Group

Discussions on theology and practice of contemplative prayer and contemplative silence together.

Meets: Bi-monthly on Monday at church 7:00 pm.

Contact: Pastor Dan Holt, 634-1694 or office@ascensioncos.org

LIGHT (Ladies in God's Hands Together)

A gathering of moms who support each other in our parenting roles.

Meets: Monthly on Sunday at church 9:15-10:15 am.

Contact Katy for actual dates.

Contact: Katy Snider, 603-767-6274 or katy.snider@asd20.org

Ruth Circle

Women in fellowship and Bible study from the book *Having a Mary Heart in Martha World* by Joanna Weaver.

Meets: 2nd Thursday at 9:30 am in Fellowship Hall except for June & July.

Contact: Nancy Shatto, 426-9444 or njshatto@yahoo.com

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

One of the Pastors leads study on Bible or religious topics chosen by group, or scripture for the week.

Meets: Tuesday morning at church 10:30 am, except during the summer months.

Contact: Pastors Dan or Daniel, 634-1694 or office@ascensioncos.org

Thursday Night Serendipity

Six-week studies with topics decided by the group. Meets October through May.

Meets: 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 6:30 pm at the church.

Contact: Rich & Judi Johnson, 264-8196, or jrajohnson@aol.com

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Ascension Artists

Bring your current art or craft project or start a new one & work on it with other creative folks. We share and learn from each other.

Meets: Weekly Thursdays from 3:00-5:00 at the church in

the Fellowship Hall or downstairs.

Contact: Arlayne McKee, 649-8265 or arlayne@juno.com

Bridge

Come play bridge once a month with others who love this card game!

Meets: monthly Saturday night at the church. Actual dates in church bulletin

Contact: John & Kathy Hayes, 572-1052 or kittypawz@aol.com

Dining Out

Group participants take turns selecting the date, time, and restaurant each month. The hosts then make reservations for all those who are able to attend.

Meets: Monthly on Thursday or Friday nights. Call to add your name to the email list. Actual dates in church bulletin and by email.

Contact: Laurel & Art Thorstensen, 550-2882 or revmeme@hotmail.com

Knotty Kneedlers

Bring your latest project and enjoy coffee & fellowship with others while working on it.

Meets: every Wednesday at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall

Contact: Bonnie Vawter, 579-6707 or bonnievawter@q.com

Men's Breakfast

Get together with other men for fellowship over breakfast.

Meets: Thursdays at 7 am at Big Train Restaurant, 3050 N Nevada.

Contact: Rich Johnson, 264-8196 or rajohnson@aol.com

NONY (Not Old, Not Young)

We're a group at Ascension who don't fit in with the youth and don't fit in with the seniors, but want to hang out together. If you feel neither old nor young, you are invited, and so are your friends.

Meets: Occasionally. Dates will be advertised in the bulletin and What's Up

Contact: Pastor Daniel, 634-1694, or office@ascensioncos.org

Quilts for New Beginnings

No experience necessary to make quilts for Family Promise and World Relief. We'll teach you all you need to know. Kits are available for those who would like to contribute, but cannot attend.

Meets: Wednesdays 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Contact: Anita Arends, 573-4747

Red Hat Flashes

Ladies 50+ invited to come out in red hats & purple to eat brunch & have a good time!

Meets: Monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at various restaurants. Actual location & time in church bulletin.

Contact: Grace Buhler, 528-8976 or fgbuhl@aol.com

Walking Group

Walks at various venues.

Meets: Tuesdays & Thursdays mornings as weather permits. Please call to confirm special times & locations as they can change from week to week.

Contact: Wini Klein, 636-1232 or wklein636@msn.com

SERVICE & SUPPORT GROUP

Terrace Gardens Bingo

Have fun helping nursing home residents play Bingo and win prizes.

Meets: Terrace Gardens monthly, 3rd Wednesdays from 9:45-11:15 am

Contact: John & Kathy Hayes, 572-1052 or kittypawz@aol.com

SEASONAL GROUPS

Biking, Holy Pedalers

Most weekends, rides are scheduled. Group members can sign up to schedule and lead rides. Bike riding is mostly on trails, with some lightly traveled roads. Most rides include a stop for breakfast or lunch in support of fellowship.

Meets: Weekly, March – October, weather permitting. Most rides are on Saturdays with occasional weekday rides. Time & location by email & in Ascension Office's *What's up* weekly email

Contact: Bev Godec, 550-9202 or bgodec@msn.com

Camping

Bring your RV, motor home, pull behind trailer or tent and join other folks who enjoy the great outdoors for fellowship and fun! We will share calendar dates and great camping sites with one another via email.

Meets: During the late spring and summer months at different times and locations based on interest.

Contact: Donna or Scott Crump, 622-0927 or donnac664@aol.com

Hiking/Snowshoeing

Breathe the fresh air and enjoy the pristine scenery as you explore Colorado's great outdoors.

Meets: Group will be notified by email when an outing is planned. Please contact Aimee if you would like to plan an outing!

Contact: Aimee Calderon, 387-7379 or aimeebuesing@yahoo.com



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CHURCH STAFF

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Pastor Dan Holt – off on Friday
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Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

February newsletter deadline: Jan. 21

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Dorothy Brown, Sharon Budd (Sister of Darcy Ayen), Brad Buhler, Grace Buhler, Jerri Butschky, Kate Campbell, Michelle Courtright (Daughter of Jeff & Renee Courtright), Libby Dollar, Jacquelyn Ellison (Granddaughter of Marilyn & Troy Goodenough), Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan Magee), Jeff Sebben, Jerry Smith, Cathy Stanley, Virginia Stanley, and all of our men and women serving overseas.